

inspiring
employee
volunteering

BEYOND
PAINTING
CLASSROOMS

Employee Volunteering Conference 2017

13 and 14 September 2017
Johannesburg, South Africa

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The third Beyond Painting Classrooms (BPC) conference took place on 13 and 14 September 2017 at the Wanderers Club in Johannesburg. The theme of the conference was *inspiring employee volunteering*.

The conference is a part of the FirstRand Beyond Painting Classrooms (BPC) initiative which was established by FirstRand in 2012 with the support of Charities Aid Foundation of Southern Africa (CAFSA). FirstRand sponsored the conference, with CAFSA as the service provider and co-sponsorship from Deloitte, MMI and LegalWise.

The conference was attended by 31 corporates and 48 NPOs with a total of 180 delegates. These delegates reflected on the practice and theory of employee volunteering, and also shared lessons, celebrated achievements and charted a way forward on the future of employee volunteerism in corporates and organisations. The conference had five plenaries and six breakaways which all delved deeper into strategic and operational aspects of employee volunteerism (EV).

Employee volunteerism is increasingly recognised as a key driver of active citizenship. To this end, both corporates and organisations have been very deliberate about harnessing the potential to bring about the socio-economic change articulated by the country's Constitution and National Development Plan, amongst others. The triple challenges facing the country of deepening poverty, growing inequality and increasing levels of unemployment require a comprehensive and holistic response from all sectors of society. EV is one of the ways that corporates can contribute in a tangible way to this agenda.

The theme of *inspiring employee volunteering* was deliberately chosen to focus the sector on how it can continue to inspire the design and implementation of employee volunteerism that is meaningful, strategic and impactful. The conference deliberations and reflections were framed around four sub-themes, which were

- creating an enabling culture;
- creativity and innovation for EV;
- education landscape and employability; and
- collaboration and its impact on the future of EV.

The conference keynote speaker, Advocate Vusi Pikoli (Western Cape police ombudsman), argued that active citizenship must not be mistaken for charity and must instead be seen as an act of solidarity and true empowerment. Companies, in their role as corporate citizens, must drive strategic volunteerism that can empower communities to be self-reliant. Pikoli's call for employee volunteerism that is strategic and impactful was supported by Kerry Krige (specialist in social entrepreneurship) in her session on ways to make active citizenship part of the DNA of companies. She argued that the responsibility to respond and change the current socio-economic situation in the country, "lies with each one of us" doing something as this is what being an active citizen demands of us, especially in the context where the three key stakeholders (business, government and civil society) that should be

to be working together, are working separately and in disconnected ways, to the detriment of social change.

Kerryn's core question though was how does the current funding model for civil society continue to be driven by benevolence, when civil society's value is recognised, especially since benevolence can also deepen inequality. Her concern with benevolence is that "it does not bode well for its long-term sustainability".

The first breakaway session delved into the theme of creating an enabling environment for EV. On the question of ethics in employee volunteerism, Lesley Haynes (LegalWise) and Sophie Hobbs (NACOSA) agreed that ethics do matter in employee volunteer programmes (EVPs). LegalWise's approach is asset-based and citizen-driven development (ABCD) and it has been instrumental in helping them implement an employee community services (ECS) programme that is also ethical. ABCD gives power to the employees and communities. This approach aligns with a principle that Kerryn Krige spoke of, that of volunteering needing to be based on equality and not charity. At LegalWise they "try to be conscious about human dignity and view people, no matter what their circumstances, as the experts in driving their own development agenda". Sophie Hobbs stated that an ethical approach to volunteering was necessary and needed to include mapping out all potential risks to host organisations and volunteers, including costs and/or benefits to targeted beneficiaries and clarity on the impact of the volunteering activities. She also offered some practical tips to manage some of the risks associated with volunteering and better ways to boost the benefits that come with volunteering for all stakeholders.

Samuel Payne (Deloitte) and Charlene Lackay (MMI Holdings) presented on the implementation of rewards and recognition systems in their respective companies. Samuel's input was about a reward and recognition system that was underpinned by the company's purpose statement of "making an impact that matters". The Deloitte system uses an online recognition portal to make it easy for employees to participate. Charlene told delegates that MMI's approach to rewards and recognition was about implementing a system based on the DNA of the company. The takeaway here was that such systems are more likely to succeed if integrated in the broader organisational strategy and supported by senior leadership.

The session on *Technical aspects of creating and sustaining an enabling environment* was led by Andy Hadfield (forgood) and Desiree Storey (FirstRand Volunteers Programme). Andy spoke about their digital platform which offers corporates and NPOs a streamlined and centralised way to effectively structure their EV programmes. He said one of the benefits of the platform is that it offers corporates and NPOs an opportunity to solve real problems in real time. Desiree spoke about the FirstRand Volunteers Programme's online intranet platform which hosts programme guidelines, policies and procedures, online training module, programme news, current annual group drives and support mechanisms to assist employees to participate. Employees at FirstRand are matched R1 for R1 for their donations of both time and money, and the online platform enables the matched funding. The platform provides programme management with real time statistics from across the group.

From creating an enabling environment for volunteering, the conference moved to the role that employee volunteering programmes (EVPs) can play in education and responding to employability. Two speakers from the education sector kicked off the session by sketching the status of education. Godwin Khoza (National Education Collaboration Trust) shared that their model addresses challenges in education through collaboration with different stakeholders. Through this collaborative approach, they developed a model *Fresh Start*, to implement specific interventions and to achieve incremental results, within limited resources. Ntuthuzo Ndzomo (Equal Education) made the case that in as much as progress has been made in some areas in education, a lot more is required to address the systemic challenges besetting the sector.

All three speakers in the session on entrepreneurship, employability and the role that EV can play, agreed that there is a role that corporates and employee volunteers can play in enterprise development, employability and education. Annie Blecher (Maharishi Institute) made the case that there is much that corporates and their volunteers can do through collaboration to achieve shared value, especially when such collaborations are a win-win for all parties. Such collaborations with corporates can be on the B-BBEE strategy, *pro bono* work and skills-based volunteering. Penny Foley of Harambee advised corporates that a win-win partnership must start off with the corporate seeking to understand the needs of the NPO and using this insight to design appropriate interventions that align with the purpose of that corporate. The founder and CEO of Speak Afrika, Mhlanganisi Madlongolwana said from an entrepreneur's perspective one of the surest ways to support small businesses is by procuring from them and opening business networks to them to access funding and skills support, amongst others. All speakers showed how corporates can get involved in enterprise development.

Gretchen Wilson-Prangley (Play Africa) spoke about the positive experience of working with employee volunteers. From her experience, this success was not based solely on the contract governing the relationship. The success was also due to Play Africa and the corporate being clear on programme goals, budget, preferred communities, targets and scheduling for the planned employee volunteering activities. In addition to this, all parties must articulate their understanding of success and failure and these must be used to develop a measuring framework of success for the programme. Nomxolisi Malope-Rwodzi of SmartStart also shared an example of success between their organisation and FNB. The main takeaway from this relationship was that corporates and employee volunteers should be allowed to participate and support in different ways. Kate Gardner (Reel Gardening) talked about their journey with employee volunteers. Reel Gardening, at some point, had to review their approach to employee volunteers after it proved ineffective and this led to them stopping the programme for 18 months. Following the review, their new approach now is to run a digital volunteer training programme and this is now achieving results.

Dalmari van Linde (Pivotal Talent), Balisa Ntloko (IkamvaYouth) and Phangisile Sibeko (Investec) spoke about their mentoring programmes. All three speakers had positive experiences to share where corporates have successfully partnered with NPOs to deliver effective mentoring programmes. Pivotal Talent's mentoring programme utilises an assessment tool to generate reports which are then used to tailor appropriate mentorship programme for mentees. Dalmari stressed that "these reports are not generalised because we realise that every mentee is different". Balisa Ntloko attributed the success of

their mentoring programme to the contribution of volunteers. Importantly, IkamvaYouth shared how, after realising the enormous contribution of volunteers, they undertook an exercise to quantify this value in monetary terms; this was estimated at R16 million. Investec's Phangisile Sibeko presented on how their mentorship programme is integrated in the employee volunteering programme. She also highlighted there are some institutional principles that guide their approach to mentoring. Overall, from this session it became clear that corporates already collaborate with NPOs to implement mentoring programmes and that employee volunteers do bring value to these programmes.

Strengthening employee volunteer relationships, in and between organisations and corporates remains critical for the future of employee volunteerism. Lindiwe Ginya (George Khosa Secondary School) and Frank Terblanche (Liberty) shared about their partnerships in education using the Partners for Possibility model. Both Frank and Lindiwe spoke about how their partnerships were guided by two principles: 1) the need to commit to learn from each other and 2) to do something that was going to be sustainable over time. This was the basis of their success. Bernie Dolley profiled Ikhala Trust's successful partnership with LegalWise. At the heart of this partnership is passion. She said that at the core of her approach to partnering is the realisation that with partnerships she can do more. She also shared some guidelines to managing partnerships in employee volunteering to help avoid having ineffective partnerships. Patrick Kulati describes Habitat for Humanity as being dependant on collaborations as they work with communities, government entities and corporates. According to Kulati, "without these partnerships, they would not be able to deliver on their mandate". This session gave delegates different partnering models and insights into partnerships.

The session on EQ, SQ and mindfulness was anchored by Jo Pohl (CAFSA chairperson) and Phuti Mahanyele (Sigma Capital). Both Phuti and Jo began by sharing medical challenges they have faced and which led to both re-evaluating their approach to life. Jo felt strongly that it was time that corporates open themselves up engage on emotional intelligence, meaningfulness, loyalty, job satisfaction and depression, amongst others. Such discussions are important in the workplace as these create opportunities for managers and employees to engage with the question of "meaning of their work" from different perspectives, including how employee volunteering be part of achieving meaning at work.

Linda Magapatona-Sangaret (Brand South Africa) and Greg Maloka (Kaya FM) addressed the delegates on *the power of marketing to maximise the impact of EV programme*. Linda stressed the importance of active citizenship in the national brand. As Brand South Africa, there are a few initiatives that they are implementing to drive active citizenship and volunteerism.

Greg confirmed that the question most asked of the media is about their role in promoting active citizenship and reporting good news about the country, in the same way that Linda posed a question on the media's contribution to the national brand. Greg informed delegates that best and effective way

"We all need a cause and pursue the common goal of making a difference, genuinely and together. We as NPOs, business and government need to put our hats in the ring". Jo Pohl, CAFSA chairperson, 13 September 2017.

to communicate is still word of mouth. He also challenged media platforms to ask themselves pertinent questions about their role in communicating good news.

The results from LUMI Connector, the conference evaluation tool, show that there was overwhelmingly positive feedback from delegates. The inclusion of the Employee Volunteer Programme awards ceremony and the creative LEGO® Strategic Play® session added to the experience of this BPC conference and these too were also well received. The content from the conference sessions will now be used by the organisers to drive content for future BPC events.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Beyond Painting Classrooms (BPC) initiative is an initiative of FirstRand, which was started in 2012 with the support of Charities Aid Foundation Southern Africa (CAFSA). The initiative is to enable employers and employees to become active citizens in building a just, equitable and unified South Africa. Its overall mission is to build a developmental employee volunteering practice that contributes to business and societal value. Employee volunteering is recognised as one way to drive and foster greater active citizenship.

BPC is a platform that is openly and intentionally inclusive, in that it includes practitioners from the private sector, civil society and any other entities aligned to its vision for employee volunteerism. BPC seeks to promote respectful and nurture long-term and enduring partnerships between business and NGPs invested in growing effective and sustainable employee volunteering. This intention is anchored in its commitment to create shared value for business, NPOs and communities at large.

Since it came into existence in 2012, BPC has seen a significant number of organisations and corporates participate in its workshops and conferences, platforms which also served as consultative platforms, to deepen understanding and thinking of employee volunteerism in South Africa. In addition to being consultative, BPC is also aspirational in that it is actively contributing to creating the kind of employee volunteering that is strategic, action-oriented, results and impact focused, and innovative. Its power as a shared platform lies in its ability to harness the value of all participating stakeholders and practitioners.

The 2017 Beyond Painting Classrooms conference is the third conference to be convened. This conference themed *inspiring employee volunteering*, as in previous conferences, was borne out of feedback from the 2015 BPC Conference and workshops which were used as additional consultative events on conference themes. Since the launch of the first conference in 2013, BPC has hosted a further two conferences, seven workshops (including three in Cape Town and four in Johannesburg) plus four networking breakfasts in Gauteng.

2. CONTEXT SETTING FOR EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

As much as employee volunteering is considered a key element of the South African corporate social investment (CSI) landscape, there remains great scope to grow and strengthen its practice so that potential benefits can be maximised. The latest research from the Triologue CSI Handbook, 20th Edition (2017), which involved a total of 92 companies and 198 NPOs, showed the following results in respect of employee volunteering (as reported by these participants):

- Majority of companies (68%) had employee volunteer programmes in 2017.
- Almost two thirds of the companies (63%) had formal volunteering policies and 53% had designated full- or part-time staff to manage volunteering. Only 38% of corporate respondents included the value of volunteer time as part of their social investment spend.
- Company-organised volunteering was the most common type of initiative, with 95% of companies running such initiatives, however, an average of just 20% of employees participated.

The above-mentioned findings give all stakeholders involved in employee volunteering a basis to build-on and an opportunity to improve on these results.

Employee volunteering and its benefits

There is now growing evidence that EV does not merely exist for its own sake. Different research shows that EV offers substantial benefits for all stakeholders involved.

Several reports show that employee volunteering is good and has substantial benefits for businesses with employee volunteer corporate programmes (Scott, 2012). Frontstream lists the following benefits of corporate volunteer programmes:

- improved employee engagement; and
- strong recruitment of younger employees and improved corporate visibility (Frontstream, 2013).

Other benefits are those offered by Sarah Ford (2016) listed as follows:

- increased employee engagement;
- keep employees through volunteerism;
- camaraderie;
- corporate culture and meaningful work; and
- employee recognition and financial stability.

In addition to the above, there is significant research that links employee volunteering to employee engagement. A PwC 2014 report titled *The keys to corporate responsibility employee engagement* stated that employee engagement is both a means to drive corporate social responsibility and an end in itself.

PWC's report shows that across different industries, 10% to 15% of the global workforce can be categorised as “disconnected” with low levels of engagement and a high likelihood to exit the organisation. The report concludes that companies that engage and empower their workforce are better positioned to anticipate and adapt to changing market conditions.

The research findings from Deloitte's 2016 Impact Survey show that:

- Employees are increasingly seeking opportunities to pursue social impact work in the corporate sector and that corporate philanthropy and volunteerism help businesses attract, develop and retain talent.
- Prospective employees may be able to improve their candidacies by volunteering and identifying themselves as volunteers.
- Volunteering experience may play a big role in building leadership skills considered to be “must haves” for successful leaders.
- Skills-based volunteering experience provides a marketability edge for those seeking gainful employment.

The above-mentioned findings on the benefits of employee volunteering continue to build a case in support of employee volunteering. This is why the BPC conference theme for 2017 was *inspiring employee volunteering* as it is important that EV continues to move towards sustainability (results and impact), forge collaborations and create a movement of active employee volunteers.

Employee volunteering and active citizenship

To BPC, employee volunteering is a critical aspect of active citizenship with immense opportunities to support South Africa's constitutional vision and build a strong South African brand.

The state of South Africa, since the dawn of democracy is acknowledged as having both some successes and challenges, especially in relation to the country's social, economic and political spheres. The successes have largely been in terms of basic service delivery and expanding access to these to the majority of South Africans. The three most critical socio-economic challenges are identified as those of increasing inequality, deepening poverty and rampant unemployment.

- South Africa is known for its extreme income inequality, which is the highest in the world. Ten percent of the population earn around 55% - 60% of all income, compared to only 20% - 35% in advanced economies. (Orthofer, 2016)
- Poverty data released by Stats SA in 2017 shows that poverty is on the rise in South Africa. The latest Poverty Trends in South Africa report shows that poverty levels in South Africa rose in 2015. More than half of South Africans were poor in 2015. (Stats SA, 2017)
- Unemployment results of 2017 showed a worsening state of employment in the country. The narrow definition of unemployment is reported to be at 27. 7%. When this definition is expanded, the figure increases to 36. 8%. For both definitions, the youth cohort remains the most severely affected group in terms of unemployment (Stats SA, 2017). These figures pose a serious risk to

the advancement of the national project of building a South Africa that is equitable, just, fair and inclusive.

The National Development Plan 2030 articulates an overarching approach to mitigate against this risk. The NDP effectively called for all South Africans to meet needs and to respond to challenges both within and outside of our own immediate environments. In line with this, one of the six priorities in delivering on the vision of the NDP is 'promoting active citizenry to strengthen development, democracy and accountability' (National Development Plan 2030, 2013).

Employee volunteering is part of answering the call to cultivate greater active citizenship and engagement in local environments and is a powerful resource for positive social change. Brand South Africa's biannual Domestic Perceptions Research is a national research study that contributes to understanding issues pertinent to national pride, attitudes, values and beliefs. It tracks three indices that assist Brand South Africa to understand the drives of perceptions around pride, active citizenship and social cohesion.

The Active Citizenship Index score for the Biannual Domestic Perceptions study for 2015 is 61 out of 100. This shows that over two thirds of South Africans have a good to strong score for this index. In addition to this, the study also tracked the reality in terms of participating in community activities/actions, which also includes volunteering, it shows that there is high involvement in tending to family (61%), 65% are helping people in need and 45% are members of church committees. (Brans South Africa, 2015).

Additional research on the volunteering culture in the country, comes from the recently published *South Africa Giving 2017 report* (CAF, 2018). This report provides an overview of charitable giving in South Africa. Some of the key findings are as follows:

- Six in ten people surveyed have volunteered in the past 12 months (61%), 49% for a church or religious organisation, 45% for an NPO/charity and 45% for a community organisation.
- The most popular cause for those surveyed to donate (58%) and volunteer for (43%) was helping the poor.
- Having more money themselves is most likely to encourage those surveyed to donate more time, goods or money in the coming 12 months (53%).

Clearly from the research, active citizenship in general and volunteering is embedding itself in society. The latter report in particular, flags the youth (18 – 24 years) as the one group that is more inclined to volunteer.

A good society is built by active citizens. "...We are all bound by a shared past and a shared future and destiny. Our country requires a sense of common purpose, hard work, integrity and selflessness!" (<http://citizens.za.com/ndex11.htm>)

So, it was this comprehensive background that served as the basis for the third BPC conference. 180 delegates participated in the 2017 BPC conference, an increase in attendance from the first two conferences. The participants were brought together by their common position that there is a place for employee volunteering and that it should be embedded into society in support of change. The 2017 BPC conference was held on the 13 and 14 September at the Wanderers Club in Illovo, Johannesburg, FirstRand was the main sponsor of the conference with CAFSA as the service provider. Additional co-sponsorships included Deloitte, LegalWise and MMI Holdings. KAYA FM was the conference media partner.

The 2017 Beyond Painting Classrooms employee volunteering conference themed *inspiring employee volunteering* was structured under four streams, namely:

- **Stream 1: Creating an enabling culture.** This provided delegates with the opportunity to explore how a culture of service and active citizenship can be embedded in companies and organisations.
- **Stream 2: Creativity and innovation for EV.** This stream showcased ways of creative and innovative problem-solving in employee volunteering.
- **Stream 3: Education landscape and employability.** This stream unpacked the current educational landscape in South Africa and began to explore current and future opportunities for employee volunteers to contribute in education and employability.
- **Stream 4: Collaboration and its impact on the future of EV.** This stream showcased different partnering models and reinforced the significance of structured and equal partnerships in EV.

The objectives of the 2017 conference were to:

- Consider how EV can strengthen active citizenship.
- Showcase EV practices that reflect successes, challenges, opportunities and threats.
- Share different EV models and initiatives implemented in different sectors and by different stakeholders.
- Promote learning and reflection on how creativity, innovation, partnerships and collaborations in EV can be strengthened to support active citizenship.

The conference was delivered using different discussion formats, such as plenary and breakaway sessions, and a creative and reflective exercise. This conference had a very interactive and participatory orientation designed to allow conference delegates to participate fully.

The delegates were from the private sector (medium and large corporates), civil society, representing different sectors such as youth, early childhood development, amongst others, who in the end, participated in two breakaway sessions, five plenary sessions and one interactive creative session.

The 2017 BPC conference saw the official launch of the inaugural BPC Employee Volunteer Programme Awards. During the ceremony, a total of six winners (three corporates and three NGOs) were announced in the three award categories. Each category had a corporate and an NGO winner.

The programme included a creative and reflective session facilitated by Sense to Solve. This session was structured to show how a creative process (using LEGO® Strategic Play® methodology) can be used to craft creative solutions and strategies to complex challenges in the EV sector.

The conference evaluation component was bolstered using the LUMI Connector. This is a device that was used throughout the conference to involve participants by inviting them to rate anything from facilitators, to speakers and sessions as well as to make comments about what they were hearing at the conference, in real-time.

DAY 1: 13 SEPTEMBER 2017

Introduction

The first day set the scene for the rest of the conference with three strategic-oriented conversations, one was the keynote address and two were plenary sessions on the overarching conference topic of active citizenship and the role to be played by different stakeholders to encourage and embed it in society. The keynote speaker, Advocate Vusi Pikoli's addressed delegates on *the case for active citizenship in a challenged society, and corporates and civil society roles to encourage active citizenship through EV*. The other two plenary slots were anchored by Kerry Krige, (specialist on social entrepreneurship) who spoke on *how to make active citizenship part of the DNA of your company or NGO and why EV is important for corporates?* The second plenary had Godwin Koza from NECT and Tutus Nomo of Equal Education tackle the topic of *the context of the education landscape and employability*. The plenary on education was included because the issue of free higher education had become topical in the period between the two BPC conferences, particularly in 2016.

We've seen BPC steadily grow from strength to strength. It's an example of civil society and corporate partnership and it is not often that we see this.". Jo Pohl, CAFSA chairperson, 13 September 2017.

3. PERSPECTIVES ON CREATING/ADVANCING A CULTURE OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP IN A CHALLENGED SOCIETY AND EMBEDDING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP IN THE DNA OF CORPORATES AND NGOS

Post 1994 in South Africa began as a phase filled with both hope and euphoria about the potential it held for the country. Twenty-three years since this historical moment, the country is beset with social, political and economic challenges, as acknowledged and experienced by many citizens.

One of the positive outcomes to come from this is the heightened individual and collective social activism that has emerged (seemingly) as a result. This individual and social activism formed the overarching theme of the 2017 BPC Conference, primarily because of the logic that outside of the forms of activism referred to above, employee volunteerism itself constitutes a form of active citizenship.

3.1 The case for active citizenship in a challenged society, and corporates and civil society roles to encourage active citizenship through EV.

“Stand up for what you believe, not just because it makes you feel good; but do it because it’s a good thing to do”. Vusi Pikoli, 13 September 2017.

In his keynote address, Advocate Vusi Pikoli’s, who is currently the Western Cape Police Ombudsman began by asking delegates some challenging questions about their attendance of the conference:

- because we’re expecting a Why do we do the things we do?
- What moves us? What motivates us?
- Why are we here? Are we here because our employer said we must come here? Are we here salary raise by attending this conference?

Vusi argued strongly that active citizenship must not be mistaken for charity, it must be an act of solidarity and true empowerment. South Africa’s future has its roots in our history and today we want to make sure we have a better tomorrow. He extended this link between the future and the past by sharing how in the past, during the defiance campaign in the 50s, volunteers were an integral part of that defiance against the apartheid government. In this campaign, protesters and volunteers were prepared to stand up and defy all unjust laws of apartheid and in that way showed courage. In his words, courage does not mean absence of fear, it means transcending fear for a higher cause and what makes us gather here today is that the national process is not complete. Ultimately, these acts of courage by people from different walks of life brought about the national vision of an inclusive South Africa. So, activists and volunteers of today are themselves working to achieve another national vision of a South Africa that is just, equal and unified.

“The power they hold, is not their power, it’s our power that we’ve entrusted to them and that is the reason they must exercise it responsibly”. Vusi Pikoli, 13 September 2017

Pikoli’s also touched on corporate citizenship and stated that corporate citizens, like other citizens, have a role to play in holding government accountable to the values enshrined in our Constitution, which speak to the issue of responsiveness. The government must respond to the needs of the communities. His view is that holding government accountable is necessary because the state holds power on behalf of the citizens.

In line, therefore, with being good corporate citizens, employers must give time to employees to get involved in the work of uplifting communities. This is a joint effort which benefits both employers and employees. In addition to time, volunteering must be strategic and empower communities to be self-reliant “teaching them to fish, as opposed to giving them a fish”. Ultimately, society needs to cultivate a culture of volunteering that goes beyond a day and beyond 67 minutes, and which ingrains it in our DNA, including that of companies. He suggested that one way to embed employee volunteering into the corporate DNA and to make it more impactful is through clear and measurable indices for EV; not only in terms of hours spent on activities, but in terms of impact on target communities.

Pikoli's submissions to the conference were as follows:

- active citizenship is a form of solidarity;
- businesses must fulfil their role as corporate citizens;
- employee volunteering benefits employees, employers and communities; and
- employee volunteering must be strategic and fully supported by a clear measuring system.

3.2 How to make active citizenship part of the DNA of your company or NGO and why EV is important for corporates.

Kerryn Krige, a social entrepreneurship specialist, made the active citizenship discussion more practical by sharing some considerations on how corporates/organisations can integrate it into their DNA to drive active citizenship and employee volunteerism.

Kerryn shared a global context that showed the "dire" state of socio-economic affairs in SA when compared to data from the Human Development Index (HDI). This index measures three factors, which are the ability access great education, to live a long life and access opportunities. Based on the results of the HDI and on the state of the three measured factors, South Africa's situation could be compared with that of Syria, a vulnerable country and one at war.

Her case was that based on the HDI example, to change this reality must "start with each one of us" and this responsibility cannot be relegated to government or to any other big institutions. This is the heart of what active citizenship is about and begins with each person asking themselves what actions they can initiate to bring change. The ideal response lies in the three key stakeholders (business, government and civil society) working together. Currently, however, the interaction between these three stakeholders sees them working separately and in disconnected ways, to the detriment of social change.

The two key roles that civil society fulfils are firstly, to provide goods and services which government and business cannot provide or are not well placed to provide, and secondly, accountability. Civil society in this disconnected reality is increasingly important as it fulfils a role of being an ethical watchdog that holds business and government to account. Thus, if civil society is recognised as central to the overall functioning of society and since it has had to take on additional roles due to non-delivery of other players, why then is its funding logic based on benevolence? Krige extended her argument by stating that for South Africa to really tackle inequality, society needs to find another way because (from her insights), benevolence deepens inequality.

"Until society can move away from benevolence as the model of change, until we know that 'doing well is not good enough' we all must embrace this".
Kerryn Krige, 13 September 2017.

Volunteering is another way of giving, but for it to achieve the intended change, it must be underpinned by a few, yet important guiding principles, which are listed below:

1. It is based on equality (this is not a favour).
 - Volunteering should be on an equal footing. Both parties have and bring value.
 - The currency of volunteering is not just time. It is reciprocal, as I learn from you and you learn from me.
 - The heart of active citizenship is connecting equally with each other, as a counter to dominant power relationships.
 - Volunteering should be anchored in equality.
2. Think differently.
 - Society must rethink its model of change that sees change as charity-based.
3. Little is large.
 - We get attached to grandiose.
 - Active citizenship is about connecting at individual levels. It's about how you see each other and that's what we're transforming.
 - Small steps can create big and lasting change.
4. It is part of you.
 - This (EV) is part of your DNA.
5. Lastly it makes business and personal sense.
 - Active citizenship is part of a global agenda and conversation and so it is a must that we connect globally, including within business.
 - We cannot relegate volunteering or active citizenship to Nelson Mandela Day, to do this perpetuates the silos and this is problematic.

She ended off by encouraging delegates to start working towards a different model of active citizenship; one which is based on these three elements: ask yourself:

- What are your values?
- How do you want to contribute?
- What is your active citizenship?

Both Pikoli and Krige shared strong views about the meaning, value and necessity of active citizenship at both a macro and microlocal level and both at an individual and at a group level. Importantly, their insights set the scene for panellists and delegates to deliberate further through the rest of the conference sub-themes to deepen the delegates understanding, theory and practice on employee volunteering.

4. CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

The first breakaway session of the 2017 BPC conference was framed on the need for corporates and NGOs to create an enabling environment for employee volunteering to thrive. The three breakaway themes for this session, were as follows:

- importance of ethics in fostering a culture of employee volunteering;
- what are the different models of rewarding and recognising employee volunteering; and
- technical aspects of creating and sustaining an enabling environment for employee volunteering.

The three topics were identified based on environmental/cultural issues that had been raised by BPC delegates in previous engagements. Furthermore, their selection was aimed to provide technical guidance in terms of constituent aspects that are required for EV to thrive in corporates and organisations. The speakers in these three breakaways represented both NPO and corporate perspectives on these diverse topics. The fact is that employee volunteer programmes require more than approval or will to thrive and grow; they also need resources (financial and human), enabling internal structural arrangements, and policies and procedures.

A definition that is useful is one offered by the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness, which defines an enabling environment as “a set of interrelated conditions – such as legal, organisational, fiscal, informational, political, and cultural – that impact on the capacity of development actors such as CSOs to engage in development processes in a sustained and effective manner” (OSC Open Forum Workshop, 2009).

Lesley Haynes (LegalWise) and Sophie Hobbs (NACOSA) tackled the issue of the importance of ethics in fostering a culture of employee volunteering.

Lesley's submission posed a few significant questions intended to probe deeper on the matter of ethics in employee volunteering. From her perspective, ethics do matter in employee volunteering programmes and these should be reflected in how these programmes are implemented.

Her opening question to delegates was “whose agenda is being driven through EV?” She argued that traditionally, EVPs have tended to foreground the corporate, even though this relationship has three distinct stakeholders, namely corporates, employees and communities. According to Haynes, “it is only when we take into account all three stakeholders that we can start to talk about shared value”. The traditional approach is not a strong basis for solid employee volunteering nor for community engagements. LegalWise has been very deliberate in applying a different approach from this traditional one. The organisational culture that they have sought to create and nurture is one where employees drive the volunteering agenda as trusted experts since they are after all the ones who actually volunteer.

LegalWise's volunteering initiatives are part of their Employee Community Services (ECS) programme. The approach to this ECS programme is called asset-based and citizen-driven development (ABCD) and it gives the power to employees and reinforces their key role in driving such programmes, including employee volunteer initiatives. Through this approach, LegalWise is mindful about how it engages with communities in a way that affirms the latter and their inherent power, knowledge and experience. One way is the way that LegalWise initiates relationships with communities through listening to them describe their own needs and LegalWise assisting them to lead their own development. In this way, the company comes into the relationship not as a lead change agent (saviour), but as a supporter of community-led change processes (fellow -traveller). This approach aligns with one of the principles that Kerryn spoke of, namely that of volunteering needing to be based on equality and not charity. Lesley concluded by reinforcing that at LegalWise they try to be conscious about human dignity and view people, no matter what their circumstances, as the experts in driving their own development agenda.

The second panellist was Sophie Hobbs from NACOSA, a network-based organisation that works to turn the tide on HIV/AIDS and TB. She made a strong case about volunteers being the lifeblood of many organisations and being at the coalface of the AIDS response, especially of organisations providing community-based care. In their work, they have seen benefits that volunteers get from volunteering, ranging from wellbeing to overall health benefits and career benefits.

"Central to the ethics of volunteering is acknowledging that volunteering is a two-way street. This approach explicitly foregrounds both the benefits and the risks that come with volunteering." Sophie Hobbs, 13 September 2017.

She argued that an ethical approach to volunteering was necessary and needed to include mapping out all risks (direct and indirect risks) to the host organisations and volunteers, including costs and/or benefits to targeted beneficiaries and clarity on the impact of the volunteering activities. Sophie closed by sharing practical tips to managing some of the risks associated with volunteering and better ways to boost the benefits, for all parties, that come with volunteering.

"It is only when we take into account all three stakeholders that we can start to talk about shared value. The company's reputation for caring is strengthened, the employees feel good about themselves and the community receives the assistance that they need." Lesley Haynes, LegalWise, 13 September 2017.

The Q&A between panellists and the audience also shed light on other issues related to this topic of ethics and employee volunteering. Some key takeaway lessons from the session:

- The question of ethics is indeed relevant and applicable in employee volunteering. It is important that "our ethics" manifest themselves in how employee volunteering programmes are implemented.
- An ethical approach to employee volunteering is important for sustainability.
- Create a performance tool that would allow NGOs to rate the performance of employee volunteers, as part of strengthening the two-way street.
- Ethics in employee volunteering also means that corporates/organisations must engage in meaningful volunteering.

- In terms of the issue of compensation for volunteering, both panellists argued that authentic employee volunteering is not paid.

The second breakaway explored different models of rewarding and recognising employee volunteering. It was included because participants at previous BPC events had raised it and more corporates are considering rewarding volunteer participation.

The session featured Charlene Mackay from MMI Holdings and Samuel Payne from Deloitte, who were selected/invited as their respective companies reward and recognise employee volunteering.

Samuel began by tracing the steps that Deloitte took to solidify the structure of its CSI. A key aspect of this process was articulating a clear purpose statement “making an impact that matters”, which was underpinned by the three pillars of clients, talent and society. At the centre of the Deloitte approach and culture was the expression of gratitude. Reward and recognition at Deloitte is implemented via a recognition portal that was created as part of the purpose statement, a process which included the company creating a system for engagement with staff.

“Deloitte feels by engaging and providing a platform where millennials and broader staff can be rewarded and recognised is great as they are living the Deloitte purpose, which was created by the global Deloitte office and is lived by the Global CEO” Samuel Payne, Deloitte, 13 September 2017.

This online portal enables employees to nominate an employee who has done well in the three key pillars mentioned above. Nominated employees may receive points based on set criteria.

There have been some challenges and these have had to be addressed to mitigate risks and protect the integrity of the system and awards to ensure that it functions as intended. Payne emphasised that at the centre of this reward and recognition approach is the desire to encourage all employees to live the Deloitte purpose statement.

Charlene shared that the MMI Lesedi Recognition Awards Programme: Lights of MMI focuses only on rewarding employee volunteering. This EV programme brings all the brands under MMI together under one banner and has encouraged more programme coherence and structure.

The MMI employee volunteer programme is underpinned by employees and the realities of the country. The company wanted to promote a sense of community, grow the pool of volunteers and

“For MMI, the idea for a rewards programme and encouraging volunteerism by making sure that volunteering becomes part of the DNA of MMI and a particular kind of volunteerism, purposeful volunteerism and not the benevolent kind. For us that speaks to our MMI values and speaks to the MMI way”. Charlene Mackay, MMI, 13 September 2017.

also activate positive social peer pressure to get more employees involved. This programme was clear from inception about the need for the participation of senior managers and, as a result, the EV programme is proudly supported by the company’s senior leadership.

The Lesedi Recognition Awards Programme: Lights of MMI has several award categories. Each category is broadly aligned to the values of MMI and specifically to the volunteer programme.

Since inception, the award programme has done well. For example, between 2016 and 2017, the awards showed a growth in terms of the number of community volunteers engaged and NPOs assisted.

Some of the key factors that have made the award programme a success are that it includes a staff voting component, a clear communication strategy and MMI creates a build-up marketing campaign before nominations open. A very transparent judging panel and process is in place to ensure the integrity of the awards process.

MMI's award programme does not give monetary rewards to their volunteers, but goes to the charity/ies the volunteer/s support/s.

Three key takeaways for the session:

- Both corporates shared their own practice and approach to rewarding and recognising employee volunteers. Both programmes do not give financial awards for employees, instead both awards programmes offer financial support for the charities supported by the winning volunteer teams or individuals.
- In both cases, the systems implemented were part of the DNA of the respective companies, rather than outside of it. This is an important structural arrangement principle.
- Recognising what staff do through employee volunteering drives employee engagement, the company brand and brings life to the purpose statement of the company.

The last breakaway in this stream focused on the practicalities of implementing employee volunteering programmes in an effective manner. The session unpacked the nuts and bolts of what a structured employee volunteering programme looks and feels like in some corporates and organisations. The anchors of the session were Andy Hadfield, CEO of forgood and Desiree Storey, manager of the FirstRand Volunteers Programme.

forgood's offering to the EV arena is that it provides a digital platform to respond to the increasing need of employee volunteering. Through the platform, forgood connects up to 150 volunteers a week to verified organisations, which should at least be registered for a year or more. forgood sees its value proposition as its ability to allow those involved in volunteering (corporates and NPOs) to connect to solve real problems in real time.

"forgood custom makes an online platform for corporates (EV Platform) which is exposed to volunteers and allows for real time tracking of how staff volunteer and the impact they make". Andy Hadfield, forgood, 13 September 2017.

This platform is one way that corporates can start to structure their EV programmes and Andy gave an example of a corporate they worked with to centralise their EV data and content on a single platform, which has given them the opportunity to solve real problems.

In terms of employee volunteering, from their perspective, the future of volunteering lies in skills-based volunteering, rather than the traditional volunteering activities of planting gardens and painting walls. The importance of skills-based volunteering is one of the issues that had also come up in other

sessions, reinforcing this point. He concluded by sharing three main points that are necessary for any EV programme. These are clear, consistent and multi-channel communications and incentives such as volunteering leave, and reward and recognition.

The employee volunteering programme at FirstRand includes some key elements that have ensured its success over time. Desiree took the delegates through some of the FirstRand's volunteer programme's main elements.

FirstRand's programme includes surveys to their non-profit partners, employees and senior to top management to regularly receive feedback on volunteering services, strategies and general giving to ensure that their programme continues to make the desired impact. The use of these surveys reflects FirstRand's commitment to a culture of listening and learning, when it comes to employee volunteering. The company also has an online platform to support employee volunteering activities. This platform also allows employees to register their NPO and school partners, provide any feedback stories, photographs and proof of utilisation of funds for the purposes of good governance. The site provides programme management with real time statistics for reporting to group management. Furthermore, FirstRand employees can apply for matched funding for donations of both time and money via specially designed workflow on the portal.

The design of the volunteer recruitment process is such that volunteer champions in business units across the group must complete the online training/starter pack module to be familiar with the programme's policies and procedures and governance structures.

Key session takeaways:

- For an employee volunteering programme to be effective, it requires structure. This can range from an organisational digital platform that allows staff to volunteer seamlessly, policy guidelines in terms of leave and time allowance for volunteering activities, clear guidelines on recruiting volunteers, induction or training as well as guidelines on monitoring volunteer activities against needs and/or specific objectives.
- The forgood platform on volunteering enables NPOs and corporates to connect to use volunteerism to solve real problems in real time...
- FirstRand's volunteer programme offers an online portal that has policies and procedures, group initiatives, matched funding applications and overall "who and how" on organisations and schools.

There is a need for monitoring and evaluation to be two-way. This means that any monitoring must enable the volunteers to rate performance of NPOs and vice versa.

5. EDUCATION AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

The afternoon slots of the first day of the conference, focused on the education landscape. According to the 2017 Trialogue CSI handbook, corporate South Africa continues to spend most of its CSI spend in this sector. Yet, despite this injection of much needed financial resources, the sector remains severely challenged.

Below are some high-level facts about the state of education in SA:

- In South Africa, there are 12.9 million learners in 30 000 schools. 26 000 of these are public schools, while 15 000 of these state schools are primary schools. There are 450 special schools for learners with special needs.
- The retention rate for the first nine years of schooling, which are compulsory, is at around 95%, however, the high dropout rate after the nine years of compulsory schooling is worrying. From high school students, who started schooling in 2003 and could have written their final Grade 12 exams in 2015, only about 45% finished high school.
- South Africa ranks at the bottom of all middle-income countries in maths, science and literacy, according to the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Literacy Study (PIRLS).

Godwin Khoza of NECT and Nthuthuzo Ndzomo of Equal Education shared this plenary platform. Khoza shared that the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) was established to drive collaboration with different stakeholders (labour, business and government) in the education sector in support of the implementation of the National Development Plan and its goals for education in South Africa.

The NECT began by trying to understand the width and breadth of the education landscape and the actual scale of the sector. Following this exercise, they developed a model Fresh Start, to implement specific interventions over time and thus achieve incremental results. According to Khoza, it was important not to go for a big bang approach and instead to find ways of replicating. “We had to find a way to do much, with limited resources”, said Khoza.

The NECT agreed to work in Level 2 districts and used 415 schools with 12 million learners as laboratories to test initiatives with the biggest potential to improve the education system. In this pilot phase, they worked with officials in the identified districts and used the successes to then move those schools to Level 3. The overarching approach was to use the pilot results to provincialise and universalise the programme.

The NECT has been able to show tangible, quantitative results of what it has achieved since its establishment in the areas of learning and teaching material and on the completion rate of the curriculum.

An area that Khoza sees as one of great need and that corporates and employee volunteers can get involved in is in school reading programmes, helping to build a reading nation. At the end of 2017, the issue of literacy came into sharp focus following the release of the results of the 2016 PIRLS, which gauged the reading standards of 9- and 10- year olds in 50 countries. In this report, South Africa ranked last out of the 50 countries (Kahn, 6 December 2017).

Ntuthuzo Ndzomo from Equal Education continued unpacking the education narrative by sharing details of the work that Equal Education has done in education.

Equal Education is a South African movement of learners, teachers and community members working for quality and equality in South African education. They analyse government policies and use global research in education to advocate and lobby for changes in the sector. They identify systemic challenges and bring about changes in education. Even though they also acknowledge the gains made in education such as notable successes in access and school enrolment, roll-out and management of the nutrition programme, and budget allocation, for instance, they also highlighted systemic challenges that beset the sector.

Equal Education undertakes campaigns, in response to the myriad of challenges in education. One of its high profiled and successful campaign was when they (supported by other organisations) initiated (and won) a court case against the Minister of Basic Education to compel the department to adopt norms and standards for school infrastructure policy, inclusive of water and sanitation, size of the classroom and roofing matters affecting schools. They also tackle other issues such as privatisation of education, issues of feeder zones, matric results and rationalisation for resolution through similar campaigns.

Key takeaways from the plenary:

- There are many challenges and this is partly due to the scale of the education ecosystem and these tend to be at a systemic level.
- Despite the challenges, there have been successes that have been achieved by various stakeholders.
- The challenges provide opportunities for corporates to get involved, including through their employee volunteer programmes.

This plenary was followed by three breakaways, two of which zoomed in on the state of education and the role played by corporates and EV programmes and the third, focused on entrepreneurship and the possible role for corporates and employee volunteers. On the latter, entrepreneurship has been touted as a possible response to the high levels of unemployment facing in particular the South African youth.

According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Q 3 of 2017:

- Youth (15-34) unemployment rate was 38.6% which is 10.9 percentage points above the national average.
- Of the 10.3 million young persons aged 1 - 24 years, about 30% were not in employment, education or training.

The first breakaway was entitled “How can EV contribute to entrepreneurship, enterprise development and employability? What are the opportunities that EV offers?”. Three organisations (The Maharishi Institute, Speak Afrika Consulting and Harambee Youth Accelerator Programme) spoke in this session. These organisations all either work in this space or offer entrepreneurship interventions to the youth.

“The Maharishi Institute is looking to educate 100 000 leaders for the future of South Africa, future Madibas and Ghandis. Pertinent leaders that will change the situation for everyone else. Annie Blecher, Maharishi Institute, 13 September 2017.”

Annie Blecher shared about how at the Maharishi Institute, they facilitate university education, vocational training and employment for unemployed youth. Through its work, the Maharishi Institute is showing that education at tertiary level and vocation training in relevant areas is a ticket to bring lives and families to middle class status. 17 000 youth have been educated with a 90% job placement rate with a combined annual salary of R1 billion by the graduates.

Annie made the case that corporates and their volunteers can do much through collaboration to achieve shared value. In her words, “it is important to form win-win partnerships with companies”. She outlined three possible ways to achieve these partnerships. Firstly, by setting up various structures to be compliant to receive B-BBEE funds.; secondly by accessing *pro bono* services for various areas, such as financial, accounting and legal services and thirdly, by employee volunteers from various companies implementing a form of skills-based volunteering. The Maharishi Institute run an in-house enterprise development business called *Central on Campus* where corporates provide workplace experience and help set up IT companies. Students are then given an opportunity to intern where they spend four hours a day at a company and are exposed to real work and experience whilst studying.

Penny Foley shared the model to entrepreneurship that the Harambee Youth Accelerator Programme implements. Harambee’s target group is young people who are currently “locked out of the economy to be able to access existing jobs in the economy suitable for matriculants with no experience”. In pursuit of their placement targets, Harambee has established relations with companies and their volunteers where they collaborate to deliver specific interventions in support of Harambee’s vision.

Harambee uses employee volunteers in two areas, namely in mock interviews and in workplace placement for work experience purposes. For mock interviews, professionals come in once a month, mostly on Saturdays to interview the young people who are part of the Harambee programme. Mock interviews are particularly beneficial for youths who may not have had exposure to formal interviews. For workplace placement, employee volunteers give youths exposure and insights to different jobs. In addition to these, there

“Volunteers must learn what people want to do, are able to do and what the organisation needs”. Penny Foley, Harambee, 13 September 2017.”

have also been times when employee volunteers have been seconded to Harambee to help provide specific skills that Harambee does not have.

Foley also offered some advice to companies about what to consider when choosing to engage with organisations like Harambee and other NPOs. Companies should look at areas of the Harambee business that lend themselves to different elements for EV engagement. This is to ensure that there is always alignment between the two entities.

Mhlanganisi Madlongolwana of Speak Afrika Consulting, also a panellist on this breakaway, spoke as an entrepreneur himself and offered an insider perspective to the world of enterprise development. He told delegates that successful entrepreneurs only exist in ecosystems that have the following components: resources, people, EVP and social capital.

“One thing entrepreneurs want from you is not your money. Validate it by buying the product if you like it. Get them onto your supplier database as companies and NPOs as that validates the business idea. Once these people are able to build the businesses; the more likely they are to employ the young people we want to bring in”. Mhlanganisi Madlongolwana, Speak Afrika, 13 September 2017.

In terms of the opportunities for participation by corporates and employee volunteers, there are different ways that these can connect, support and enable entrepreneurs. He shared very practical ways that corporates and their employee volunteers can plug into entrepreneurship in meaningful ways. He shared the following:

- Facilitate access to networks – this is about corporates and volunteers introducing entrepreneurs to their networks that may hold value for small businesses.
- Develop an experience funnel – use skills-based volunteering to support entrepreneurs and their business ventures. Mhlanganisi said that skills-based volunteering is important because these are the skills that entrepreneurs cannot necessarily afford, but where corporate industry specialists can volunteer their skills and contribute to these new businesses directly.
- Partner for innovation – Entrepreneurs are great places to see innovation, which for big and established companies may not be so easy to deliver on or replicate. He advised big companies to spend time connecting with entrepreneurs to identify innovative opportunities to build on and/or procure.
- Buy – the best way to validate the businesses of entrepreneurs is to buy from them.

Key session takeaways:

- There is a role for corporates and employee volunteers to play in supporting the development, growth and sustainability of enterprise development/entrepreneurship.
- There are already examples of successful collaboration on different focus areas between providers of enterprise development and companies and these must be supported and strengthened.
- There are practical ways of supporting entrepreneur ventures, other than only through financial contributions, such as opening and giving them access to corporate or employee networks or

through skilled volunteering and buying their products and services. The latter would constitute the biggest stamp of approval to their business ideas.

The second breakaway tackled the question of *How do/can EV programmes assist with current interventions of early childhood and primary school education in South Africa?* The three organisations that led this conversation were Play Africa, SmartStart and Reel Gardening.

Play Africa describes itself as a groundbreaking early learning social enterprise that brings children and families together for high quality transformative play and learning. According to the Founder and CEO, Gretchen Wilson-Prangley “we help children and families spend quality time together, strengthening bonds and building social cohesion”. They develop customised EV programmes designed according to both their own mission and which also draw from and reflect the corporate’s development objectives so that they create mutually beneficial programmes.

The organisation has three beneficiaries for their employee volunteer programmes, namely, the children, their families and teachers; the corporate and/or department leaders and the volunteers themselves. Gretchen shared recommendations to improve the interaction between employee volunteers and NPOs, beyond the normal contractual arrangements.

It is important and necessary for corporates, employee volunteers and NPOs to meet to discuss the EV programme goals, budget, preferred communities, targets and scheduling issues. Furthermore, all parties must articulate their understanding of success and failure and these must be used to develop a measuring framework of success for the programme. Gretchen Wilson-Prangley, Play Africa, 13 September 2017

SmartStart is an organisation that is active in the ECD arena and its vision is to see children in South Africa benefit from early learning and give their growing brains the opportunity to succeed at school and in life.

According to Nomxolisi Malope-Rwodzi, SmartStart, already has a partnership with FNB and some areas included in this partnership are nutritional support, provision of stationery, provision of books in all languages, age appropriate toys, provision of equipment, administration training, and sponsorships for community activation events, amongst others. SmartStart allows corporates and employee volunteers to get involved in different ways.

Kate Gardner of Reel Gardening shared their experience of working with employee volunteers. Reel Gardening is a social enterprise that aims to connect people with natural, healthy food by making the growing journey simple.

The work of Reel Gardening lends itself to the use of employee volunteers. Their journey though of working with employee volunteers evolved over the years. They tested various EV approaches, which produced important lessons.

Reel Gardening's initial approach to EV was not effective because the management of volunteers required too much time. As a result, they were compelled to review this strategy and decided to place the programme on hold for 18 months as the benefits of the volunteer programme far outweighed the management burden.

Their new approach has a digital volunteer training programme. They have transformed their train the trainer programme into a series of online videos and tutorials that can teach a volunteer everything they need to know to set up Reel Gardening gardens themselves in schools. It also includes an assessment aspect. The volunteers receive a certificate once they have passed the online assessment, which allows them to train in any language, anywhere. This new approach is achieving the intended results which is to create impactful volunteers who arrive at schools equipped with the skills to set up gardens and train teachers to use them, without requiring extensive oversight from Reel Gardening.

Key sessions takeaways:

- Corporates and EV programmes are already connected to the ECD space and they are doing different things.
- For employee volunteer programmes to work, all stakeholders must be in-sync on the goals, expectations and intended results of the EV initiative.
- Meaningful employee volunteering for all stakeholders involved is the goal and so a considered approach must be applied, even if it means that the volunteer initiative must be tweaked along the way to ensure greater effectiveness.

"The most important part of this journey, and what we would strongly recommend other organisations do before deciding to work with volunteers, is deciding up front what you want from the experience - for yourselves, the school, the volunteers and the company they work for". Kate Gardner, Reel Gardening, 13 September 2017.

The third breakaway tackled a similar question to that of breakaway two, but its focus was on *How do/can EV programmes assist and get involved in secondary schools and higher education*. The speakers were Dalmari van der Linde (Pivotal Talent), Balisa Ntloko (IkamvaYouth) and Phangisile Sibeko (Investec) and each profiled their approach to mentorship.

This focus on mentoring is because this is one of the ways that employee volunteers are known to collaborate with NPOs in education. According to Points of Light, one model of skills-based volunteering is coaching and mentoring, and this sees corporates partnering with NPOs to lend their functional expertise www.pointsoflight.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/sbv_101_getting_started_new.pdf, Accessed on 3 January 2018).

The 2015 BPC conference report, made the following statement about collaborations on mentoring.

While skills-based volunteering may not be the right fit for all employee volunteers or organisations, when approached with a spirit of reciprocity and underpinned by structure, great things can be achieved. Mentoring in particular has been shown to strengthen organisations, promote learning, inspire innovation and build social capital among participants. Given the urgent need to strengthen South Africa's education system, address youth unemployment and support organisations that work in these areas, mentoring should be included as an option in employee volunteering programmes across the country.

Van der Linde told delegates that the mentorship programme they run targets communities. Pivotal Talent uses an assessment tool as part of their overall mentoring engagement.

The assessment of mentees occurs prior to the mentoring engagement and assesses the interests and skills (e.g. life skills) of the mentee and reported weaknesses and strengths. From this assessment, a short report provides an analysis of the data and an outline of 21 different career paths that the mentee can take up and a profile of their strengths and weaknesses to be addressed. It also includes suggestions of academic courses for the mentee to address identified educational gaps. Dalmari stressed that "these reports are not generalised because we realise that every mentee is different". Pivotal Talent successfully piloted this kind of mentorship programme with both Khulisa Social Solutions and the FirstRand Volunteer Programme in 2016.

Balisa Ntloko of IkamvaYouth said their vision is to empower the youth and offer them a holistic programme that responds to some of the identified systemic challenges in education. Their programme includes career guidance, mentoring, life skills workshops, computer literacy, at home support and a two-week winter school programme.

IkamvaYouth attributes the success of its programme to what they call their greatest asset, the volunteers. In light of this, the organisation undertook an exercise to quantify in monetary terms the value of the contribution made by volunteers. This value was estimated at R16 million.

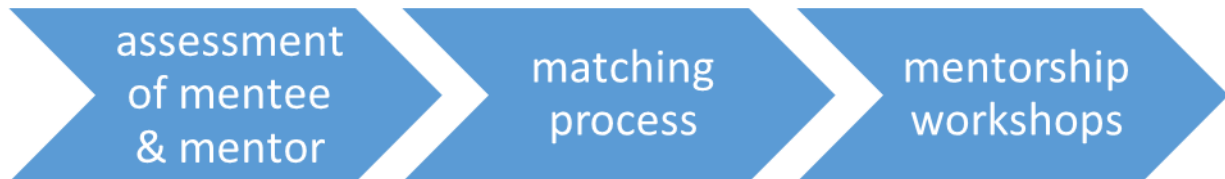
According to Balisa, the mentorship programme offers three way benefits: it gives volunteers an idea of what IkamvaYouth as an organisation does, it allows funders to see the value of the money they invest and it has a great social impact.

The importance and value of employee volunteers was again highlighted when Phangisile Sibeko from Investec spoke about their bursar mentorship programme. Their programme is based on three pillars, namely, time for mentorship, staff volunteerism and staff attending a mentorship workshop.

"There is an aspirational piece that affects their beneficiaries because most students are first generation students and this programme helps them realise that they can break away from chains of disadvantage". Phangisile Sibeko, Investec, 13 September, 2017.

An important part of the programme is linking Investec employees with high school learners who qualify for this bursar programme.

Below are some programme elements that are key for its overall success.



Phangisile shared the institutional principles that underpin the execution of this programme, for instance, mentors may choose the amount of time spent on the volunteer activity. Investec offers funds for recreational purposes and also recognises mentors and mentees at the end of the year through an award programme.

Key takeaways from the session:

- For a mentorship programme to succeed, it must be structured with stated processes and components.
- Corporates already collaborate with NPOs in implementing mentoring programmes and EVs bring a lot of value add to the programme.
- All corporates showed that this is one area where employee volunteers tend to be very effective and instrumental in the functioning of mentorship programmes.

DAY TWO: 14 SEPTEMBER 2017

Introduction

The second day of the BPC Conference offered delegates an opportunity to engage on overarching themes that, over time, across the volunteering landscape (local and global) are acknowledged as being integral to strategic and operational developments in EV. These themes are collaboration, EQ, SQ mindfulness, marketing and its overall role and impact on employee volunteering. In addition to these, a session was added to introduce delegates to creative ways of responding to both strategic and operational challenges in EV.

The sessions were as follows:

- collaboration and its impact on the future of EV;
- creative play for change in EV;
- emotional intelligence and mindfulness/enhancing personal and professional potential; and
- power of marketing to maximise the impact of EV programmes.

6. COLLABORATION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE FUTURE OF EV

Since the establishment of BPC in 2013, one of the most recurring themes, both in workshops and conferences, has been that of partnerships/collaborations. Practitioners in the EV and CSI space have realised that the change (depth and impact) sought is not possible outside of strong partnerships.

There is general agreement that the future of society generally and EV specifically depends on strengthening collaborations and ways of collaborating and developing more effective and results-oriented partnering models. A case can be made that the stronger the partnership, the greater the opportunities to learn, facilitate development and ultimately to be transformational.

Because of this, the 2015 BPC conference focused on partnerships and so the conference spent a considerable amount of time unpacking this sub-theme of collaborations and partnerships in the sphere of EV. It sought to explore the relationships that shape employee volunteering, and specifically relationships between business and society (e.g. inter-sectoral), relationships between business and NGOs (inter-organisational), relationships within organisations (intra-organisational) and relationships between individuals (inter-personal). Subsequently, every BPC workshop held in 2016 and 2017 highlighted the centrality of this concept to employee volunteering.

This plenary slot was included to add new insights to our understanding of what it looks like, what it can help us achieve and what underpins it. The slot profiled four perspectives on the art and experience of collaborations, with each showcasing a different model of collaborating.

The first panellists were Frank Terblanche (Liberty Holdings) and Lindiwe Ginya (George Khosa Secondary School) who discussed their partnership experience through the Partners for Possibility model. This model is about partnering corporates and schools (specifically school principals) to drive change in the education sector, starting with the schools. Both Frank and Lindiwe spoke about how their partnership was guided by two principles, namely, the need to commit to learn from each other and to do something sustainable over time. These principles were key in developing a meaningful and a results-oriented partnership over an 18-month period.

Ginya gave some background information about her school and the profile of her learners. She also touched on assumptions that are often made about management expertise and capabilities of school principals and how these are not always correct. Based on the school profile, she and Frank agreed to focus on three areas, introducing sports, unleashing talent and building social cohesion.

“Call to Action: Politicians tend to ask all of society to get involved, the same way they asked for the 2010 World Cup. In that example, we all worked together. We need to become activists”. Frank Terblanche, Liberty, 14 September.

The pair reported on some tangible results that were achieved through this partnership. For example, school performance increased from 69% to 84%, an after-school programme was introduced, partnering with George State University which led to the school receiving tablets to use in the classrooms and introduced a school blazer for Grade 12 learners. This came after they realised that the school needed not only to focus on quantity, but also on quality changes.

The next panellist was Bernie Dolley who founded Ikhala Trust in 2002 to facilitate asset-based citizen-led development. In her words, “Ikhala Trust is based on the philosophy that no matter your material poverty, we all have a talent and a skill and my job is to unpack that talent”.

“We don’t have to do everything. I don’t have to know everything, when I do not know something, then I find those who know and we work smarter.” Bernie Dolley, Ikhala Trust, 14 September, 2017

Bernie profiled one of the key partnerships she has with a corporate, LegalWise. She attributed the success of Ikhala Trust to the role played by LegalWise and to both parties’ passion. She said her approach to partnering is based on the realisation that she can do more with partnerships.

In terms of partnering with employee volunteer programmes in particular, she recommended the following guidelines to ensure that the experience is not energy sapping.

- find out what I need as an NPO;
- match that need with your skills as a corporate and as employee volunteers;
- both parties must acknowledge that challenges and possibilities are enormous; and
- we must work together as I cannot do it alone.

These two inputs also highlighted the importance of skills-based volunteering. Skills-based volunteering is coming up as one way of broadening the “giving” landscape to beyond traditional giving described mainly in terms of finances and hands-on giving. Skills-based volunteering involves the sharing of skills, knowledge and talents of volunteers and is often defined as a strategy for building the impact and capacity of civil society organisations. *Pro bono* service is a form of skills-based volunteering, but relies specifically on volunteer core professional skills and expertise.

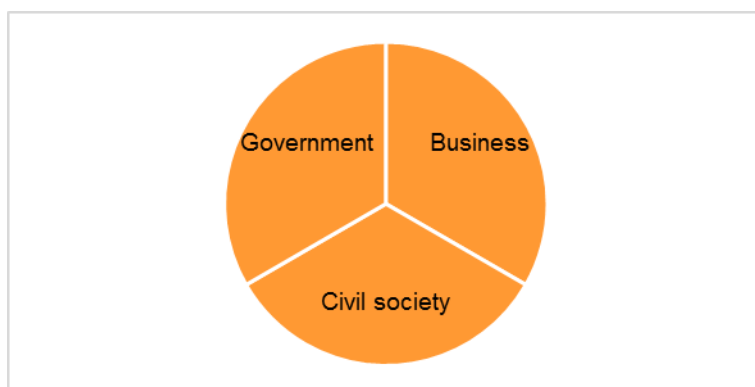
According to the Points of Light Corporate Institute, there are some specific benefits linked to skills-based volunteering. These include talent management, engaging younger workers, business development and achieving high-impact social change, amongst others (www.pointsoflight.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/sbv_101_getting_started_new.pdf. Skills-Based Volunteering: Getting Started, accessed on 3 January 2018)

The final speaker on this panel was Patrick Kulati, CEO of Habitat for Humanity. He described the mandate of the organisation as more than building homes, but also being about community development, since they also do homeowner training, community action plans, repair work, renovations, and water and sanitation.

In terms of partnering, Habitat for Humanity places itself in the middle of the diagram below which was shared by Kerry during her plenary on *How to make active citizenship part of the DNA of your company or NGO and why EV is important for corporates?* The diagram shows that all three entities individually and collectively are key for change making.

In her session, Kerry stated that each entity has specific characteristics and plays a particular role and when one does not fulfil its role, that function must be performed by one of the other two entities.

Entities for social change



Habitat for Humanity works with communities, different government entities and corporates and in their view, without these partnerships, they would not be able to deliver on their mandate. Patrick reiterated that the three circles must work together. Ultimately, the core of their partnerships, is the desire to reduce poverty, enhance livelihoods and encourage active participation.

Key lessons on partnerships from this session:

- collaborations are not only important, but necessary in the EV space;
- successful partnerships tend to be more long term, than short term;
- each partner often brings different aspects to the relationship and should be allowed to offer it in the partnership;
- partnerships can involve different aspects and ways of giving, such as technical skills, HR, recruitment and accounting knowledge, fundraising support, access to networks and resources;
- there must be clarity about the basis for and purpose of the partnership. What are you partnering for? What do you want to achieve;
- partnerships should deliver results;
- collaborations must respond to identified needs (as opposed to solving predetermined problems with predetermined solutions) - it is important to start off by identifying and understanding those need; and
- shared vision and intent between partners is key for partnership success.

7. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MINDFULNESS/ENHANCING PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL POTENTIAL

In line with the conference theme of engaging on how BPC, companies and NPOs can continue to inspire employees to participate in volunteering, a segment on emotional intelligence (EQ), spiritual intelligence (SQ) and mindfulness was added to the programme. Its inclusion was based on that employee volunteering is often predicated on a company pursuing a social purpose. Anecdotal evidence suggests that employees are increasingly opting to work for and seek out corporates with a clear social purpose. It makes sense that companies factor such developments into their strategy to create attractive and sustainable employee volunteer programmes that engage employees in meaningful ways.

Alison Alexander' in her article titled *The Power of Purpose: How Organizations are Making Work More Meaningful* emphasises this point when she states that "today, the lines between social issues and business are blurred. There is mounting pressure for companies to go beyond a basic standard of 'doing well by doing good' to operating with an explicit purpose: to make positive contributions to society. At the same time, individuals are increasingly looking for meaning in their lives and, given the amount of time spent at work, it makes sense to look to the workplace as a source of meaning. Purpose in business is a growing trend that might actually shift our way of thinking about employee engagement". (www.sesp.northwestern.edu/masters-learning-and-organizational-change/knowledge-lens/stories/2016/the--power-of-purpose-how-organizations-are-making-work-more-meaningful)

It was on the basis of the above that EQ, SQ and mindfulness were included on the programme as these practices increasingly find their way in corporate boardrooms, business school curricula, *inter alia*, as offering a way to respond to a rapidly-changing and uncertain world. Sophie Hobbs from NACOSA in her presentation titled *Volunteering is a 2-way street* shared some of the benefits for employee volunteers which align with the argument made above and goes further to highlight specifically mental health benefits associated with employee volunteerism.

"Ask yourself each day - what did you do today that was really good? We're quite task orientated. But if I think about what I've done today in any way such as making someone smile, it changes things. Have you been kind to yourself? Be okay with the fact that you're not going to be everything to everyone". Jo Pohl, CAFSA chairperson, 14 September, 2017

For this session, we had two accomplished business leaders (Phuti Mahanyele of Sigma Capital and Jo Pohl as chair of CAFSA) share their thoughts and experiences on emotional intelligence, mindfulness and its value for EV.

Phuti spoke on her experience of being a successful business leader at the highest level and having to deal with a medical setback that compelled her to re-evaluate her approach to her professional life. Before this, she believed that she was living a balanced life and so was very surprised when she suffered a stroke.

Following the stroke, she realised that the changing work environment comes with immense demands and pressures and it requires different skills and approaches, including a higher EQ to increase one's

resilience. Through this entire experience, she realised that being emotionally intelligent positions one to play a leadership role.

Jo Pohl's own story had some similarities with that of Phuti's, as she herself had to deal with a medical issue (cancer). She shared three profound lessons from this experience.

- What I know is that when you're not centred, you're the worst person to manage others. "I was the worst person to work for".
- The world is busy, actually Joburg is busy. If you can slow it down even just a little, it will help.
- It is about consciously trying to slow down the world by asking ourselves:
 - What is the 'why' in what we do?
 - Where has the love for the real person gone?
 - Has empathy been replaced by apathy?

She challenged the workplace to show more emotional intelligence by openly discussing topics like meaningfulness, meaning of work, loyalty, job satisfaction and depression, amongst others. She felt strongly that these conversations are important in the workplace as they create opportunities for both managers and employees to engage with the question of 'meaning of their work' from different perspectives. Furthermore, she shared about her view of seeing volunteering as a part of achieving meaning. In her experience, volunteering is about your head, heart and hands and trying to be in-sync.

Key take-outs from the session:

- EQ and mindfulness do have a place in the world of work in this current and future work environment.
- EQ and mindfulness are more than just about living a balanced life, but they are also about staying connected. The link between IQ, EQ and mindfulness are key for meaningfulness and to staying connected.
- Company/organisational social purpose is often not divorced from employees' social purpose and, therefore, workplaces must create spaces for conversations of this nature to take place if they are to enhance employee engagement, meaning at work and overall employee well-being.

8. INITIATIVES FOR GOOD IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE POWER OF MARKETING TO MAXIMISE THE IMPACT OF EV PROGRAMMES

The final session of the conference was on the power of marketing and on its role to maximise the impact of EV programmes. The topic was borne out of a strong view from BPC workshops and conferences that the media should be profiling the good work and results achieved through employee volunteering. BPC strongly believes that EV is key to nation-building, hence its success must be widely communicated, in particular via mainstream media.

The other reason for its inclusion is that increased profiling and marketing is the basis for cultivating a movement of change driven by employee volunteers. A case can be made that greater marketing of EV initiatives is likely to encourage more employees to join EV programmes and support the social causes.

The session explored the role that the marketing fraternity play and could play to drive the volunteering culture in South Africa and the reporting of good news achieved through volunteering.

The two speakers who anchored this session were Linda Magapatona-Sangaret from Brand South Africa and Greg Maloka of Kaya FM.

Linda told delegates that each of them are each a walking and talking brand of South Africa. Brand South Africa as “holders” of the national brand, realise, firstly, that active citizenship is an important aspect of the national brand and secondly, that citizens are important influencers. These stakeholders include each of the 56 million citizens that make up the South African population, the business sector, civil society, government and the media.

In respect of active citizenship, Brand South Africa actively works to drive greater active citizenship and volunteerism through their Play You Part initiative, amongst others. Play Your Part is in response to an active citizenship index that the entity compiled which provided insights into the culture of active citizenship and volunteering in South Africa. The Active Citizenship Index Score for the Biannual Domestic Perceptions study is 61 out of 100. This study shows that over two thirds of South Africans have a good to strong intention or likelihood of citizens to participate in community initiatives (2015). From their side, active citizenship is something that all the different actors of society should be involved in, i.e. government, civil society, citizens and corporates in their capacity as corporate citizens. They see the media playing a particular role, due to its power and capacity to either “make or break” a country and would like to partner with all media to discuss their role and contribution to the overall branding of the country and communicating the good news about South Africa.

Greg Maloka CEO of Kaya FM, a national radio station, introduced his station as one that talks to and about “Afropolitans”. They define this individual as a person who lives, invests and loves Africa, and who sees Africa as their beginning. He started off by acknowledging that the question posed by Linda is indeed the question most asked of the media is about their role in promoting active citizenship and reporting good news about the country.

In his experience, the speed at which information travels makes the word of mouth channel still the best and most effective to market information, not necessarily the media as traditionally understood. Successful marketing begins with people/NPOs understanding of who the most influential people in their networks and circles are. These are the people NPOs need to talk to as they represent 16% of the market, which equates to 6 million the population. He also stressed the importance of messages being consistent and truthful when telling EV success stories and other good news.

Greg challenged media platforms to ask themselves pertinent questions and, at Kaya FM, a key question they often ask themselves is “what is the purpose of our generation?” From Kaya FM’s

perspective, the purpose is to master how to prepare the soil to plant the seed, and to teach the current and next generation that they are not going to eat the fruit that they are going to plant.

He closed off with a pledge of R1,5 million per year (radio airtime value) towards the promotion of active citizenship and employee volunteering campaigns and drives, in partnership with BPC.

“There has been a conscious shift in the newsrooms and journalists are mindful of how the state of the country is weighing down on the nation’s psyche, so journalists are always looking out for good news stories”. Greg Maloka, Kaya FM, 14 September 2017.

Key takeaway lessons:

- Any marketing of South Africa as a national brand must include the care and compassion face of this nation.
- Volunteerism contributes to building this care and compassion face and should, therefore, be integrated in the country brand.
- The power of word of mouth as a marketing channel should not be underestimated. It remains a powerful channel to communicate issues of good and social purpose and NPOs should tap into it, but use it more effectively.
- Successful marketing requires all stakeholders sharing the responsibility of communicating consistently about the good and positive in the country.

9. VALUE-ADD SESSIONS INCLUDED IN THE 2017 BPC CONFERENCE

In line with the overarching theme of the 2017 BPC Conference *Inspiring Employee Volunteering*, the conference included other elements aimed to further inspire EV practitioners. These sessions were the inaugural BPC Employee Volunteering Awards and on the LEGO® Strategic Play® session. Below are delegates meeting and getting to know each other during the networking session on day 1. Each delegate had the opportunity to engage with four new people for ten minutes.



The feedback from delegates on these elements was very positive. This feedback confirmed to the conference organisers that their inclusion as value-add sections was indeed the correct decision as the delegates’ responses showed both an appetite and an appreciation for this kind of content extension and format.

9.1. The inaugural BPC Employee Volunteer Programme Awards - 2017 BPC Conference

The designation of 5 December as International Volunteer Day was to mark globally the crucial role played by volunteers. According to the UN Volunteers flyer, “estimates suggest that there are a billion people in the world who volunteer each year. Despite their contributions, the vital role of volunteers is not always sufficiently recognised or acknowledged” (UN Volunteers, November 2017, International Volunteer Day (IVD) 2017 campaign)

The initiation of the inaugural Employee Volunteer Awards is a way for BPC to recognise those corporates and organisations already doing good work on EV. By showcasing these as case studies of successful and inspiring examples of EV, BPC hopes to inspire more corporates and organisations to get involved in EV and through it work towards social change.

Award winners were formally announced at the end of the first day of the conference. In total, six awards were presented to corporate and NPO winners. Three awards went to three civil society organisations and three to companies running inspiring employee volunteer programmes and initiatives. The award categories were as follows: ***Inspiring leadership, Partnering for change and Creating real value.***

The winners of the 2017 inaugural BPC awards were as follows: **Smile Impact, Old Mutual, Symphonia for South Africa, Volkswagen (Pty) Ltd., Stop Hunger Now and LegalWise.**

Inspiring change

From left to right: Smile Impact and Old Mutual



Partnering for change

From left to right: Symphonia for South Africa and Volkswagen (Pty) Ltd



Creating real value

From left to right: Stop Hunger Now and LegalWise



In terms of how the delegates viewed the awards, comments were solicited via the LUMI device. There were three questions:

- Do you think a national platform to recognise EV programmes in both corporate and NGO sectors is a beneficial initiative?
- Share your experience of the awards ceremony in ONE word.
- Any general comments about the awards.

The results to the first question appear below and show an overwhelming support and approval of this initiative.

Do you think a national platform to recognise EV programmes in both corporate and NGO sectors is a beneficial initiative?

10



inspiring employee volunteering



Positive feedback from delegates about the awards programme was received. As this was the first year of the awards programme, all learnings and comments shared will be taken into consideration for the 2019 awards.



Feedback from delegates: About the awards

- Long overdue
- Authentic
- Eyeopening
- Great platform of recognition...
- Bestpractice
- Fair and transparent
- Great that this important work is being recognised
- Very informative and inspiring
- Keep it going
- We will win next year

Room for improvement

- Needs national coverage so people see how much is actually being done
- Would like to see more entries
- Not knowing before hand how process works
- Tell us more about what they do. Eg make a 2 min video. Then we learn



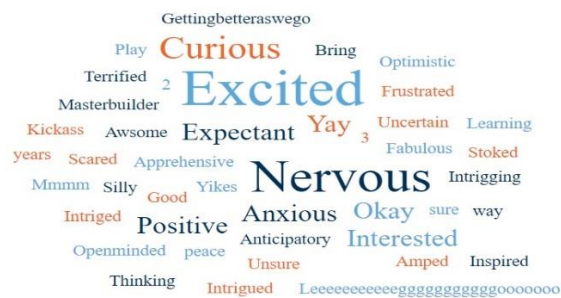
9.2. LEGO® Strategic Play®

This session fell under the stream of creativity and innovation in EV. It was used to showcase how creativity and innovation can be used to solve problems in employee volunteering.

There is increased research on adult play and its benefits for both the personal and professional lives for those who participate. An excerpt from *The Benefits of Play for Adults* states that while play is crucial for a child's development, it is beneficial for people of all ages. Play can add joy to your life, relieve stress, supercharge learning, and connect you to others and to the world around you. Play can also make work more productive and pleasurable. According to Stuart Brown, a psychiatrist, what all play has in common is that it offers a sense of engagement and pleasure, takes the player out of a sense of time and place, and the experience of doing it is more important than the outcome (Wallace, 2017).

In the session, Itha Taljaardt of Sense of Solve, took delegates on a two-hour journey of structured and functional play using Lego. In this session, play was structured to identify and solve challenges identified in EV work. The session aimed to give the brain a hand through LEGO® serious play, identify future possibilities, make it real, developing realistic action steps and to show the power of collective intelligence.

At the start of the LEGO® Strategic Play® session, the LUMI device was used to source delegate's views before the play session began. Below are comments:



In the session, delegates were divided into 18 diverse groups (in that they included representatives from corporates and NPOs) where they had to respond to a challenge identified during the conference by creating a Lego mode' in their response to the challenge. The process of creating a successful and responsive model required the groups to work as teams, communicate effectively and regularly, be inclusive, use each other's strengths to arrive at the best possible outcome and be willing to co-

create. Following the completion of the model and the presentation thereof to another team, the teams had to reconvene to then develop a detailed and implementable list of actions to bring the solutions to life.

The 18 challenges the groups' tackled included some of the following categories: changing mindsets, storytelling, collaboration, reward and recognition, self-regulating system, education, leadership, employee volunteering and inspiration, amongst others.



The action plans in response to these challenges were both strategic and practical. The BPC platform will integrate discussions emanating from these groups into programme activities planned for 2018/19 to further advance EV in South Africa.

At the end of the two-hour session, conference delegates were asked to share their session experiences via the LUMI connector device. As the graphic below shows uncertainty, fear and unknown expressed by some of the delegates at the start of the Lego session were replaced by a sense of achievement and increased energy.



9.3. LUMI Connector - the monitoring and evaluation device

Through the work of BPC and reinforced by BPC delegates both in workshops and in conferences, the evaluation element has become integral to any BPC process.

Overall the conference was rated highly by delegates in terms of all the factors that were monitored and evaluated. These factors were speakers, facilitators, usefulness and overall enjoyment of the sessions;

Below are some comments from on the overall views of the conference content over the two days.



Comments from delegates : About conference in general

- Got to learn massively about ev holistically
- Would have loved to attend all 6 breakaway sessions
- What a lovely na and diverse plenary. So lovely to HEAR FROM SUCH EXPERIENCED ACTIVISTS
- This conference is of great value and cost of being here substantial...Please can sessions be longer and breaks shorter...
- EV is the personification of EQ and SQ
- Please make this conference available in other provinces
- Influence my organisation to be open to EV
- Make sure i include influencers
- Implement what i have taken from the conference
- Send my ceo a report about the conference
- We are inspired by this conference and its given us new ideas to explore



10. CONCLUSION

The 2017 Beyond Painting Classrooms conference, like previous BPC conferences, continued to provide a space for stakeholders in employee volunteering to share, learn, celebrate and engage. The conference content sought to dig deeper into what inspiring employee volunteering “looks and feels” like. The conference reinforced the importance of EV for social change. EV was again presented as being of relevance across different sectors such as education, enterprise development, emotional intelligence. Importantly though, delegates discussed structures, systems, resources and attitudes that are key to create impactful EV initiatives.

Out of the 2017 BPC conference, some of the key issues were elevated and others reinforced are as follows:

- EV is an integral part of active citizenship;
- corporates and NPOs must embed EV organisations' DNA so that EVPs are strategic and impactful;
- an enabling environment, for example, in the form of policies, strategies, induction, training, amongst others, is key for successful EVPs;
- strategic and meaningful partnerships remain critical for the future of EV; and
- the conference fleshed out the role of marketing in the growth of EV, and the media in particular.

This BPC conference contributed significantly to deepening both the understanding of theory and practice of employee volunteerism. The inclusion of a discussion on the ethics of employee volunteerism, in particular, sought to draw attention to the ethos of EV. This conference strongly made the case for corporates and organisations to invest in creating an enabling culture and building solid partnerships for the effective implementation and sustainability of EV. These factors must be integrated into the design and implementation of employee volunteer programmes.

Conference delegates were also afforded an opportunity to experience first-hand how creativity and innovation could be used in employee volunteerism and were also reminded that these too can be seamlessly integrated into employee volunteer programmes.

Through the LUMI device, the conference delegates could share their feedback on the 2017 conference. Overall, participants rated the 2017 BPC conference highly in terms of content, speakers, facilitation, usefulness and enjoyment. In addition, the instrument also enabled delegates to provide qualitative feedback on the experience of the conference. The qualitative feedback was also very positive. BPC is grateful to all participants for making the conference such an enriching learning environment and looks forward to future engagements in support of the initiative's vision and mission. The success of BPC is dependent on inputs, insights, lessons that the stakeholder community in EV brings to the platform.

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