THE MABONENG PRECINCT: DYNAMIZING URBAN RENOVATION IN JOHANNESBURG
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Throughout the journey which led to the writing of this report, many people and organisations supported us in different ways; they gave us precious information, communicated their passion for Maboneng, Johannesburg and South Africa and provided us with the essential guidance required for such a work. We thus want to thank them all, and especially the ones listed hereafter: Ms Alice Cabaret, M. Bheki Dube, Ms Pauline Guinard, Ms Fanny Hervé, Dr Mpho Matsipa from Columbia and Witwatersrand University, Mafadi and Propertuity staff members, Charities Aid Fondation Southern Africa (CAFSA), the City of Johannesburg, Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), Urban Genesis, Urban Works Agency, shopkeepers, creators, workers and residents of Maboneng.

We also want to acknowledge InSitu, the association of Sciences Po masters “Stratégies Territoriales et Urbaines” and “Governing the Large Metropolis”, for its help in the launch and sustaining of our project and, what’s more, supporting the organisation of further study trips in Maboneng.
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We are a group of eight, students and alumni from the Sciences Po Paris Urban Affairs school, who decided to spend some time trying to understand the emergence, characteristics and success of the Maboneng urban renovation project, located in the Johannesburg inner city, South Africa. The following report stands as a written base for our thoughts and reflections on this project. We were fortunate enough to plan an on-site trip to Maboneng from the 15th to the 29th of August 2013, for which we had prepared for, with five months of preliminary research.

Having met in December 2012 with an Urban Affairs Sciences Po alumni living in Johannesburg, the project of studying the Maboneng renovation project appeared quickly and soon the “study team” was formed. Eight Urban Affairs students and alumni showed a strong interest in being part of the first edition of the Maboneng-InSitu study.

Once the team was complete, the members met once a month from April to August 2013 in order to carry on proper preliminary research to arrive in Maboneng with the most acute possible contextual knowledge which could be acquired from abroad. We then arrived in Johannesburg on the 15th of August 2013 for a two weeks stay in the Maboneng neighbourhood in order to better grasp the reality, the complexities, the challenges and the perspectives of this apparently very innovative urban renovation project. During our stay, we conducted over forty interviews, and made sure we could see as many parts of the city as possible. Maboneng, Soweto, Kliptown, the city centre and Yeoville, were the areas in Johannesburg we were able to visit, as to properly understand Maboneng within the broad Johannesburg context, from which it is inseparable.

The Maboneng project, originally an industrial area, was started in 2009 by Jonathan Liebmann, CEO of the property development company Propertuity, and a few friends and early partners. Early in the conduct of the project, the area was renamed by Liebmann as Maboneng which means “place of lights” in Sotho (a Bantu language, one of the 11 official languages in South Africa). The project has been financed and shaped up until now essentially by the private sector with Propertuity still leading and dominating the shaping of the urban renovation of the area.

We decided to present three deliverables to formalize our work in the most satisfying way for the different audiences we would need to report to;

- We presented our first findings, analysis and suggestions at the end of our two-weeks stay in Maboneng to a diversified audience composed of Maboneng residents, individuals who work in the neighbourhood, people interested in the project and members of Propertuity, including Jonathan Liebmann.
- Our second deliverable was a conference in Paris at Sciences Po, on the 3rd of October 2013 in front of an audience of fifty to sixty people to which we presented our first findings and our study project in a more formalized format.

- This report is the last deliverable for the first InSitu study on the Maboneng project. We intended this report to be an introductory work to this urban renovation project, laying on the ground for the next study-trips to Maboneng which will take on the lead for the study of this fast-growing and innovative neighbourhood.

This report has neither academic nor professional ambitions in terms of content or format. It only reflects our view of the Maboneng project, with our own ideas and suggestions, independently from the Sciences Po Paris Urban Affairs School and Propertia. Consensus was not always found among the members of the team in trying to understand the Maboneng project. It is thus important to note that this report reflects not only one but eight different points of view, brought together in a single format with commonalities concerning the main lines.

We hope you enjoy the reading,
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A brief History of Johannesburg and Jeppes Town

Johannesburg is a young city. Aged barely 128 years, the city was founded 20 years after the opening of the London underground and had a flash growth, roughly parallel with São Paulo’s, another global city in an emerging country.

The foundation of Johannesburg

Johannesburg owes its birth to a gold rush. In 1886, prospectors discovered gold in a rocky outcrop of the Witwatersrand area, the Main reef, in the heart of the Boer Republic of Transvaal. This deposit later proved to be the largest in the world. The discovery of gold very soon attracted more prospectors in their thousands, mostly of British origin, but also Portuguese, Dutch and other Europeans.

The first attempt at urbanization was a private initiative led by enterprising prospectors who bought farmland to accommodate their mineworker employees. Initially a mere canvas camp, the place was soon covered in concrete buildings grouped into small urban centres. The main centre, called Marshall’s Town, was named after the prospector Herbert Marshall and still exists nowadays as a district of Johannesburg, located in the central area.

Faced with the rapid development of a private city beyond its control, Paul Kruger’s Republic of Transvaal decided to take over its development. A triangular field, later called Randjeslaagte, with limited dimensions (2.5 km long, 1.7 km wide), wedged between Braamfontein and Doornfontein farms, was selected as the location of the new city. The de facto owner of this ownerless land with no water supplies, the State of Transvaal, drew up a master plan and started subdividing the field into very small units consisting of 70 m-wide quadrangles, which is an area half the size of Manhattan’s blocks.

The master plan was for a medium-sized town because the government did not believe in the development of this new city, as several mushroom cities had sprung up and very soon been abandoned. Everybody actually thought that the gold deposit underground would be rapidly exhausted. In addition, the small size of the blocks produced many street intersections, more expensive because of their commercial value, which increased the benefits from the sale of land.

This undersized city plan had negative long-term consequences as it was not conducive to the development of a modern city: too many narrow streets and crossings would generate congestion and pollution. This is one reason why metropolitan activities subsequently tended to move to more modern and more developed areas.
The economic development of a dual city

Along with the development of the mining industry, a strong financial sector settled in the heart of the Randjeslaagte triangle. Various institutions (post offices, administrations) and high-level services (gentlemen’s clubs, high class hotels) were also set up in the city centre, which was soon to become a Central Business District (CBD), following the north-American city pattern.

By the 1890’s, Johannesburg was connected to the railway which linked the cities of Cape Town and Maputo, the capital city of the Portuguese colony of Mozambique, two maritime outlets—one on the Atlantic and the Indian oceans respectively—for the ore extracted from the mines. The track layout followed the axis of the gold reef, and in its turn, led to the creation of new industrial areas south of the city.

In the following years, the city experienced sustained growth and high social polarization. The development of mining, industries and banking created a substantial upper class that settled in the city centre and in the eastern suburbs. Meanwhile, artisans, merchants and workers were attracted to the popular suburbs of the west. Among them were many European immigrants as well as many Indians.

Large numbers of black miners of all ethnic groups converged on Johannesburg from all over South Africa but a majority were Zulus and Xhosas from the State of Natal, south of what has been known since 1910 as the South African Union. Unlike other Europeans and Indians, Africans did not settle within the city but were accommodated along the gold reef, next to the mine shafts, in large barracks called compounds—temporary housing where black workers were supposed to live only for the duration of their work contracts, but which often became permanent. Their numbers increased with time and with the increasing need for labour in the mining industry.

As time went on, the Main reef was gradually covered in mine dumps, which created a physical barrier dividing the landscape into two parts. Southwest of the barrier, separated from the city by the line of mine dumps, the continual increase in black
population resulted in the creation of townships, grouped under the name of SOWETO, short for 'South Western Townships', which became gradually a huge city itself, home of Nelson Mandela for many years and heart of the 1976 rebellion of township’s black youth.

A segregated city which outgrew its limits

At about the same time as the rise of the National Party, which ruled South Africa from 1948 to 1994, Johannesburg’s black population exceeded the white population in numbers. The new authorities endorsed the pre-existing segregation by giving it legal status under the system of ‘separate development’—apartheid in Afrikaans. Black people, being considered to be unsuited for urban life, were treated as a labour force in the service of the whites, and were not allowed to travel to Johannesburg without a pass signed by their employers.

With the acceleration of urban development, the city soon outgrew its limits. The downtown CBD spread beyond its original narrow triangle towards Braamfontein, where the City Hall was relocated in the 1960s. Meanwhile, the white middle- and working-class settlements grew northwards and the city had to extend in order to encompass them, but it did not extend as far as Sandton, which was created as a distinct municipality in 1969. Black townships, however, also emerged in the north, for instance the largest one, Alexandra, adjacent to the rich neighbourhoods of Sandton, which it provided with a large domestic workforce.

Figure 2 - The rich northern suburb of Sandton.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the city built facilities to match its new metropolitan dimensions. An international airport was inaugurated as well as a vast network of highways, linking Johannesburg to other major cities and creating a sort of ring road around the urban area. As new industrial zones had cropped up on the outskirts of the city, an economic slump occurred: gold ceased to be the main economic resource and manufacturing and services became more important than gold mining, which however did not stop altogether. The northern districts continued to develop fast with multiplying shopping malls and middle- and upper-class developments, as well as new businesses, including many banks and firms headquarters.
Johannesburg, the main city of the rainbow nation, but a city still divided

After the era of *apartheid* and the first multi-racial democratic elections in the country's history, which brought the African National Congress (ANC) to power, the scope of Johannesburg changed. Narrow administrative boundaries were removed in 1995 and the urban area, including rich northern districts and the townships of Soweto, passed under the control of the *Greater Johannesburg Authority*. Then in 2000, a new municipality was created and merged with the metropolis, which was subdivided into 11 administrative regions.

With the prospect of hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the city modernized and built new equipment. Mostly, however, to the benefit of its northern area, with new connections by a fast train, the *Gautrain*, to the international airport and the city of Pretoria, the administrative capital of the country. Today, the economic capital of South Africa is a high-ranking metropolis and a global city, with a 3.8 million municipal population and an estimated 10 million people living in its urban area.

The end of *apartheid* brought about the final decadence of the historic city centre as it became totally deserted by white people. Among them, landlords who stopped maintaining their properties moved to the northern suburbs, followed by large businesses, such as the stock market which moved to Sandton in 2000. As a consequence, real estate prices have collapsed and the CBD has become the refuge of the poor, mostly black people, while informal trade has grown and crime increased to an alarming level. At the same time, Soweto has developed into a relatively proper city, hosting a new black middle-class. But Johannesburg remains strongly racially polarized, as we can see on the map below.

![Figure 3 - Racial self-identification in Johannesburg in 2011 (based on Adrian Frith’s map).](image-url)
In recent years, the city of Johannesburg, through its operational arm, the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), began an ambitious urban renewal programme in the city's downtown. Neighbourhoods like Newtown and Braamfontein, Berea and Hillbrow are experiencing major renovations and going through a process of gentrification. The associated projects sometimes generate high tension, especially when people and families are expelled from the dwellings they occupy without legal proof of ownership.

This policy of active renovation by the municipal authorities has encouraged some private actors to undertake similar actions of their own accord, with no direct support from the public sector authorities, even if the city has set up a mechanism for tax exemption that encourages private landowners to renovate their properties.

**Jeppestown, the fate of an inner-city sector**

Maboneng is a striking example of the kind of urban renewal project based on private initiative. This once industrial micro-district is mainly located in the historic sector of Jeppestown, one of the oldest neighbourhoods in the city, situated between the eastern boundary of the CBD and the industrial area bordering the gold reef.

Once marked by social diversity, part of the city section reserved for the white population during the apartheid era, Jeppestown is now a popular and mainly black area. With 89,3% of black residents out of 15 000, according to the 2011 census, it is characterised by a strong immigration from other African countries but also by the presence of a large Zulu-speaking community (55,8%) from KwaZulu Natal, often grouped in hostels, residences for single male migrant workers (almost 52% of Jeppestown population are males).

Thus, Jeppestown is also an electoral bastion of the Inkatha Freedom Party, a party of Zulu obedience and long-time opponent of the ANC, which has controlled the
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Johannesburg municipality since 2001. This could be one of the factors explaining the low level of involvement of municipal authorities in Jeppes-town's projects. Today, the municipality is only involved to a very limited extent in the rejuvenation of Jeppes-town and Maboneng, although its official discourse supports the project and even sometimes claims it as one of its own achievements.

Our French eye on Maboneng

Anyone coming from the inner city would be stricken when arriving into Maboneng. The neighbourhood is quite distinct from the centre. There are no walls around the Precinct, however there is no mistake possible that you have entered a different kind of place, differently ruled and inhabited.

Maboneng is part of the inner city and previously an industrial area. It is emplaced close to a highway, which is the main entrance of the neighbourhood for the rich inhabitants of the North suburbs. Disused, most of the buildings were empty until J. Liebmann started to buy them and redevelop them through his company, Propertuity.

To describe the originality of the neighbourhood, this part of the report will present different landscapes of the City, but also encompass different feelings or sensations one can get when coming and walking through Maboneng. Think of it as some kind of guided tour.

Three key-elements to keep in mind to get the measure of the neighbourhood we discovered:
Considering its age and its size, Maboneng is still a recent project covering few streets. Watching its growth and evolution will actually be part of the interest of yearly study trips in Johannesburg, in order to see how this neighbourhood is reinventing a way to live within the City, with new methods of renovation, facing the question of urban redevelopment in an unequal City. This is one of the reasons why this project has been noticed by many newspapers, and has brought about many criticisms, both positive and negative.

Once the living heart of Johannesburg, the inner city is today a surprising and composite area. It has declined since the 1970s, with upper and middle-class populations moving outwards into the suburbs. At first, this population was only white, but today there are both white and black people within those areas, as most of the people who can afford it left the centre. The impoverished inner city is now mostly inhabited by poor Black population, in abandoned or even hijacked buildings (empty buildings whose owner is often unknowns and which are illegally occupied). Although major companies
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remain, most of them are located in the CBD built in the suburbs during the second part of the 20th century (Sandton or Rosebank). Emblematic buildings - such as the Carlton Centre (with its previously elitist hotel, the Carlton), the Ponte Tower, the Radio Tower - mark the skyline of the City. They testify the past glory of the centre but, disrepaired, have now lost their splendour.

The City Council has made many works to improve the inner city, in particular in view of the 2010 FIFA World Cup (redone pavement, public transportation, etc.). Still, one can see that some of these improvements did not last. The redone pavements are now smashed in many places. The mosaic representing the Randjeslaagte triangle which adorned the pavement is generally damaged for lack of maintenance. Looking around, one can see a recycler burning his daily harvest, aiming to separate different components before selling. The streets are busy with Hawkers (street merchants), forcing the pedestrian to slalom between them. The City tried to put them in some kind of stalls, but those were never properly used: Hawkers did not arrange the booth as it was meant to be (inside), but hung their merchandise on the outside. Nevertheless, on top of everything, what would surprise in a European perspective, is that people do not stroll in the inner city: people walk, buy something, but will not gather. Remnant of the apartheid, public spaces are not a common place to meet, for they had been very visible places of discrimination during the apartheid rule.
To most White people, walking through the inner city is unthinkable. Many suburb inhabitants will only drive through the inner city, in order to go to work. During a two-hour walk in the city centre it is thus possible not to see any white people.

In order to tackle this spatial segregation, different experiments took place in the inner city, trying to bring back the rich citizens within Johannesburg: a few blocks from Maboneng (20 minutes by foot) is the Fashion District. It was initially meant to be a creative area, hosting designers, appealing to the rich inhabitants during fashion shows, but it happened to be a failure, and now hosts simple shops.

Among those attempts, two neighbourhoods distinguish themselves, in two different styles: Braamfontein and Maboneng, both redeveloped neighbourhoods with quite different aesthetics and components, but both are well-known middle-class hipster neighbourhoods in the city centre, which is a sign of their rebirth. Let’s enter Maboneng, a peculiar urban experience for a pedestrian.

Coming from the city centre, the view of the Maboneng precinct is full of surprises. There are different ways to enter the area: by foot, the contrast is striking for the pedestrian, changing the atmosphere from one street to another. While the surrounding streets seem neither safe nor well-maintained, the arrival in Maboneng reveals a redeveloped industrial neighbourhood, clean and hospitable. There is no physical fracture between Maboneng and the other streets (no wall or security control), yet the visitor feels that he has entered a different neighbourhood.

It is also possible to arrive from the highway, thus, not by crossing the city centre. In fact, the Johannesburg highway has an entrance under the bridge that brings to Maboneng. People can come directly from their upper-class neighbourhoods -such as Sandton- and visit Maboneng without seeing the rest of the city centre. Therefore, Maboneng is accessible both for people who live nearby the area as well as for people coming from other parts of the city.

What strikes any visitor is the specific atmosphere and aesthetics prevailing in Maboneng: from the bridge or from the street, one can catch sight of colourful buildings, a skate park, large graffiti and art pieces. Several buildings have an industrial past with...
red bricks, like other “hipster areas” in the world. Different lights are enhanced, streets are large and bright; Maboneng is precisely called “place of lights”. Then, the streets host several original structures, from a container to a wooden ball. They all have a specific use besides their aesthetic input. Also directly striking to visitors is what people do in Maboneng: contrary to the rest of the city centre, they stay a lot outside, just for pleasure, chatting, playing. A lot of people stay at the terraces with their laptops, which would not happen normally in the city centre. No doubt then that Maboneng has something special.

We will describe this atmosphere by going from one spot of the area to the other, explaining what it implies and produces.

Located at the western end of Maboneng’s Main Street and gracefully introduced to its visitors by a little but elegant courtyard, Arts on Main stands proudly. This building, probably the most emblematic one of the precinct, has also been the most popular gathering point for the populations of Maboneng, and also attracts people from the whole city and even its surroundings. It is also and consequently, one of the most capital elements regarding Maboneng’s past and present developments.

Reopened in 2010 and built out of deep-red bricks and along majestic iron structures the building used to be, successively, a liquor store and a warehouse; the main foundations were conserved. Arts on Main and its aesthetic seem to have inspired the general aesthetic of the precinct, and not the other way around: the renovation of Arts on Main was the very trigger of the precinct’s entire redevelopment indeed. It was the pioneer, a model of success, and Maboneng’s developers and architects actively kept its industrial but “cool”, arty-looking features in mind while working on all the other new buildings in Maboneng. Through its physical aspect but also – if not especially – through its history, Arts on Main has always represented these actors’ global vision of what Maboneng should be and look like.

Everything began in 2009, when William Kentridge, one of South Africa’s most famous artists, exhibited his work in the recently renewed building (the building’s ceiling height was very convenient for his work, and its location was quite attractive). The accomplishment and visibility of this event was such that they created an exponential dynamic of success, and allowed Mr. Liebmann to think even bigger. Propertuity could engage more strongly in the ambitious and remarkable urban renewal project one can now observe. Today, Arts on Main hosts multiple activities: its users and visitors can, indeed, enjoy the dishes of the “Canteen” -a restaurant offering outside tables in Arts on Main’s delicate, flowered courtyard-, but also the exhibitions of the work of South African
artists, permanent clothes and bookstores and, last but not least, a massive and crowded Sunday market of food, vintage clothing and hand-crafted products.

The branding of the Maboneng precinct through Arts on Main’s aura and lifestyle is now increasingly put into question. As we will develop again further on, the “hipster”, bourgeois characteristics of the place and the massive communication procedures surrounding it are approached, indeed, with hostility by numerous citizens as much as by several artists. The fact that the population coming to Arts on Main's Sunday market is mostly white with some upper-class black people, is not particularly well-perceived either, and could reveal the flaws of Maboneng's attempted racial integration.

A few meters away, on Fox Street is a noticeable green container, fit as an information point. Besides providing news about events and pieces of information on the neighbourhood life and history, it is also the place where one can inquire about buying a flat in Propertuity’s newly-redeveloped buildings. Apart from leaflets and maps, Propertuity's staff is there to take the potential buyers on a tour to discover the buildings. Most of the future inhabitants buy on the architects plan, but last flats are bought after visit.

Figure 6 - The Maboneng “area” in 2013.
Propertuity offers a much diversified housing typology, from one-room flats to penthouses. It is thus dedicated to different kinds of people, from students to very wealthy people-only families with kids seem to have been a bit forgotten, for lofts do not seem fit for them-. This diversity exists within the same building. Main Street Life, one of the first buildings comprises a hotel (with simple spaces for-rent and penthouse suites), one-room apartments (some rented by students, sometimes sharing one, some inhabited by young workers), and amazing penthouses with a breath-taking view on Johannesburg's inner city. Still, all of these remain in the high-standard accommodation scale in the Johannesburg's context.

As a consequence, the price by square meter is said to be higher than in the suburbs - in Sandton for example. Nevertheless, the kind of accommodation one can find here is different, for there are a lot of small surfaces. Therefore, the neighbourhood attracts a lot of young people, single or couples, eager to access property by buying a first (and small) place in the city. Moreover, apartments appear to be safer than a house (less risks of thefts).

Propertuity’s apartments are bought as places to live in or as rental investments. The neighbourhood's growth rate is actually quite impressive, with a displayed capital gain of 10% a year. This fact actually has multiple consequences:

- First, it is an important argument for Propertuity not to renovate and sell too many buildings at the same time. As it has 38 buildings to redevelop, it cannot think short-term and try to sell quickly as many buildings as possible, as expensive as possible: They do not want to unbalance supply and demand, and they need to keep some control on the neighbourhood development. It explains their strategy of diversifying the size and typology of the flats available - there is indeed a project of social housing within the neighbourhood.
- Second, it has an impact on people buying the flats, because it appeals investors who would then rent the flats and thus potentially affect the profile of people moving in. People living in those flats are not investing in the neighbourhood, they do not necessarily plan to stay here for long and might consider this place only as a passage.

- Last but not least, it changes the way people owning other buildings within the neighbourhood might look on their belongings: when seeing that those buildings which used to be no more than disused, empty industrial or - which is where the problem might lie - low-rent buildings, are now made of gold for investors, there is actually a risk of seeing those other populations of the neighbourhood evicted (we will actually focus on those people a little bit further).
A skate park and a tennis table are available for anyone on Fox Street. In donation from an association, the skate park was a way to encourage the inhabitants of the Property buildings who were playing with the kids of the neighbourhood - skating with them was a spontaneous initiative from a local resident who provided his own skateboards.

Streets are actually set so that people would want to spend time there. For someone coming from the centre of the city, it is quite surprising. Kids from Maboneng’s un-renovated buildings are playing on the pavement, or around the skate parks. A few blocks away, kids are found playing in the gutter. They are from the same social background, live in the same kind of buildings, but have very different facilities according to where those buildings are - inside or outside Maboneng.

Mostly in Johannesburg, people live in private areas, even in the suburbs where walls are everywhere, around the precinct, but also around each property. There is no “public place” where one could stop and hang out with friends. Walling up what could be seen as public space is not the prerogative of the rich. On the contrary, the same kind of isolation system can be seen in less wealthy neighbourhoods. 300 meters away from Maboneng there is a traditional healer market, “The Mai Mai Market”, but in order to access it, one has to pass an iron gate, for it is surrounded by walls. The same phenomenon can be seen in slums, in the poorest part of Soweto, where people also protect their home with a fence.

The very existence of public space testifies of the ambition displayed by Maboneng of erecting this lifestyle as a marketing asset, almost as a brand. This opportunity of social interactions with people from different social backgrounds on the street are both a decorative urban setting, an aesthetic, and an excuse to actually meet people.
How expensive is it?

One of the issues that struck us from the start was the relatively expensive life in Maboneng. We heard different points of view about the costs of life and notably the price of coffee, which is a good comparison indicator. Some people told us that the cappuccino price was very high in Maboneng - 22 ZAR - whereas for some other people this was a normal price.

As in almost any nice and safe area in the world, the quality of life that is typical to Maboneng, quite naturally goes with this type of economic phenomena. However, one can still wonder if, considering Maboneng’s racial and social integration goals, these relatively high prices will eventually go against the ambition of social mixity.

If the precinct is open to all *de jure*, it might not be *de facto*. Maboneng’s atmosphere, partly created by the dominant presence of relatively expensive restaurants and retail stores, might make some people feel uninvited.

Social, racial, intergenerational mixity?

We noticed that there were not so many families with children, not only because of a “non-kid-friendly” atmosphere but also and mostly because parents in South Africa usually want a house and a garden to raise their kids. However, some families which were already living in the neighbourhood prior to the Maboneng project still live there, notably in social housing.

Figure 10 - Recycler passing by in Maboneng.
Maboneng never stops distinguishing itself from most areas downtown or in the suburbs: a recycler, living in Fox Street (200m down the current limits of the precinct and in front of one of the buildings about to be renewed), and a businessman can cross each other’s way every day. Maboneng is secured but open to everyone, which makes it a theatre for this kind of unique and encouraging scenes. Everybody there seems to peacefully go about their business but other measures add up to the precinct’s integrative dynamics.

Whoever has ever walked down Fox Street on a Saturday morning already knows what we are referring to. Little notes and hesitating melodies floating in the air, young and older laughs lighting up the street, all coming from a little crowd that has gathered around something one cannot see yet. A few steps closer Maboneng surprises the visitors again: a white, young and smiling woman is standing in front of around ten black and white children from the precinct – all of them have a little guitar in their hands and all of them are there for their weekly guitar lesson.

Interestingly, we learned that some of the children attending these lessons were living in a non-Propertuity building whose inhabitants had repainted so it could match the general aesthetic of the precinct. This process even led Propertuity to consider integrating the building in the project.

The two types of events we just developed are what makes Maboneng such an exceptional place and what can feed one’s hopes for the future of the city in troubled post-apartheid times and the South African context, regarding striking social and economic inequalities. Now, one can still wonder if Maboneng presents enough of the criteria necessary to achieve a complete and stimulating social, racial and intergenerational mixity, if it will attract enough different people. Many people we interviewed fed these interrogations: if it is a nice spot for artists and ambitious businessmen, if it is a safe place of exchange in downtown Johannesburg, many households are still attached to having a garden, a school next to their place and so on. Some of these elements are not necessarily out of reach, the real question is whether or not the dynamics driving Maboneng will be strong enough energy- and time-wise to support such evolution and improvements.

In the same street as several restaurants and fashion stores, a building hosts the headquarters of Propertuity - Liebmann's firm - a massage and sport salon, other offices and at the top, an arty café called the Living Room. This spot enables to have a look over the entire precinct and to observe what kind of people live in and visit Maboneng. The Living Room can be seen as a meeting point for several types of people. The café is a cliché of so-called “hipster aesthetics”: clients seat on hammocks or huge sofas, contemplating the wooden terrace and eating vegetarian meals.

Depending on the day of the week, clients are not the same: during the week, most of them are Maboneng inhabitants (including Propertuity employees) who know each other. On weekends and especially on Sundays when the market takes place, the Living Room becomes full and welcomes people from the suburbs or other renewal areas (Braamfontein). In both cases - weekdays and weekends - clients seem to be mostly upper-class and white. The prices offered by the Living Room precisely target those populations.

Observation at the Living Room leads to this central question: who do you meet in Maboneng? Three categories can be established: people living here, people working here and people passing by. In fact, we have already mentioned interracial and social mixity and it is important to note that mixity is not identical in public and private spaces.

While the three categories of people indeed meet in the streets, the Living Room does not seem to be a place frequented by cleaning and transportation people, recyclers,
or people living in the streets surrounding Maboneng. They either live in Maboneng or come from Sandton and other suburbs. Besides, we should mention that any person entering the building is submitted to control: a guard ensures that nobody that could “damage the building” enters. Nobody is theoretically retained, but it can lead to a self-restriction by people who think that they do not “belong” to the Living Room. Therefore, Maboneng’s mixity has to be discussed: public space is not the only spot to study, since it is not necessarily where people really meet and discover each other.

In any case, the difference in temporalities is enlightening for understanding the role of Maboneng: seeing the explosion of people in the streets and shops during Sundays, it appears clearly that Maboneng is high-ranked among “entertainment areas”. At those moments, social and interracial mixity is less visible than the flow of suburb visitors who share a common “Maboneng experience”. During weekdays, Maboneng functions as a real “village” with most people knowing each other and apparently coexisting well.

Going up the street toward the “Main Street Life” building that hosts the Twelve Decades Hotel, the visitor walks along a strange ball made of wood and glass. What strikes even more is that this ball is occupied by a security guard that anybody can see. This piece of art is clearly here to be interpreted: Maboneng appears as a “transparent” neighbourhood where security is not something impenetrable or arbitrary, but still ensured by kind guards. Therefore, can Maboneng be called an open neighbourhood?

Studying the “Maboneng miracle” requires looking at security in the area, since it is often evoked as the major problem of the city centre. If well-off people decide to live in Maboneng, it means that they consider this area as safe, while there is no barrier between Maboneng and the city centre: there is a substantial “security paradox”. Even if in a European perspective, any guard presence is exceptional, the visitor has to analyse Maboneng in the South African context, and more particularly, Johannesburg: a context where the entrance of numerous neighbourhoods, shops or streets is reserved to people who live there or their visitors and where houses are surrounded by fences and need several security tests to enter. Quite to the contrary, the city centre has few guards except for huge business buildings, therefore well-off people refuse to live there.

In Maboneng, there is security presence but it is never aggressive; guards are not armed. There is in no case a limitation of entry to certain people. It seems that a feeling of safety has been installed and has reached everyone. It is in fact surprising to see white people walking in the streets at night, which would quite never happen in the city centre. How is it possible that well-off people flow to Maboneng without attracting robbers and hijackers, which are numerous in Johannesburg? It may be the absence of obvious richness signs (no luxury cars but a more hipster aesthetics, simpler) or the atmosphere produced by the few guards, that appear very efficient in their work. It may also be a kind of social pact that repulses people to damage Maboneng because of its social and interracial mixity. The transparency of the area and of its security installations leads to think that people have nothing to hide in Maboneng, therefore nothing to steal.

As we expressed earlier, a certain resentment and criticism have started to grow among Maboneng’s local population. During our field study and thanks to interviews and other observations, a problematic side of the precinct’s redevelopment became clearer indeed: not everyone thinks that the model followed by Propertuity and Maboneng’s other actors is optimal or entirely acceptable.

Two main factors are at the origin of these negative opinions.

First of all, many believe that the marketing surrounding the precinct is excessive, if not aggressive. One of the area’s main original elements, if we may say so, is Maboneng’s artists, who are progressively trying to distance themselves from the precinct and the
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paradoxical lack of artistic freedom they think it currently provokes. According to them, art, which is Maboneng’s principal booster, has somehow become a product, to sell or to use to attract visitors and business. They are rising against this perceived denaturation of their art and of Art in general, and rejecting the artsy but commercial image of the precinct. This is something any developer should reflect on: the marketing techniques used for Maboneng could backfire and make the area lose the “alternative” spirit that once originated it. For a few, marketing should be actually absent from the precinct.

The second main element of criticism Maboneng is encountering is the feeling that the precinct is maybe not, de facto, the model of racial integration it wants to put forward for downtown Johannesburg. Among other factors, the lifestyle it promotes and the relatively high prices within its boundaries has led to a more or less wanted gentrification process. Which also triggered, consequently and considering the economic inequalities between Johannesburg’s black and white populations, a racial unbalance. Because of these intertwined phenomena, some have started to fear the apartheid-like (re)appropriation of downtown Johannesburg by white people through the Maboneng precinct.

After this short walk through the Maboneng precinct, some might have a positive impression, seeing it as an urban paradise, other might analyse it as a hypocrite hipster spot playing with mixity to attract visitors. Escaping those value judgments on the area itself, one should consider its objective role in the city of Johannesburg.

The most appropriate concept seems to be the one of “transitional space”. In fact, what nobody can deny is that on the one hand, Maboneng brings rich people from the suburbs to the city centre, even if they come only on Sundays and stay inside the area. It is the first step. On the other hand, Maboneng brings poor people from the city centre towards more opportunities: they are welcome in Maboneng to meet other people and to start their business.

Thus, it is a double transition that profits very different types of people. For both rich and poor, Maboneng can be the beginning of discoveries in a world they have never frequented before; it is a gateway. It has a huge role on collective imagination: since people know Maboneng is part of the city centre, it might change the image of the entire area for some persons who would never go there. For tourists as well, Maboneng offers the chance to go to the city centre while they could have stayed in the suburbs. Several people we have interviewed talked about Maboneng as a transitional moment in their life: the area and its particular ecosystem enabled them to start some professional projects. Bheki Dube (see the "Creative Neighbourhood" part) is the perfect example of that: thanks to Maboneng, he got a job and will now open a youth hostel while coming from a modest background.

In a context such as the Johannesburg’s, symbols are very important and Maboneng seems to be an excellent one for the city: a symbol showing that social and interracial mixity is indeed possible, that security is possible without fences and guards everywhere. The effects on imagination go surely beyond the small Maboneng precinct.
Who governs Johannesburg, who governs Maboneng?

Territorial planning, through strategic guidance or land uses and building regulation, is an important and essential public prerogative. However, as often observed in developing countries, strategic planning largely escapes the local authorities’ realm.

In South Africa, this is explained by several factors, the first one being the lack of affirmation of public authorities in the field of urban planning for historical reasons. Secondly, urban governance is made more difficult by the superposition, confusion and even conflict between different levels of government corresponding to different spatial scales. However, since the transition period which followed the apartheid government (1995-2000), the municipal authorities, nevertheless, remain present in Johannesburg's town planning, through their operational prerogatives but also by encouraging the emergence of a different type of actors, such as property developers like Propertuity.

Figure 11 - Johannesburg, a dual and diverse metropolis (City Centre and townships).
In that perspective, Maboneng, with its unique promoter and pyramidal organization, appears as a small city inside the bigger metropolis, with its property developer's CEO acting like as a kind of mayor at the neighbourhood scale. The day-to-day affairs are dealt with by the Propertuity staff, who is identified by most of the inhabitants as the “authority” and decision making power in Maboneng regarding a wide variety of issues. Indeed, inhabitants of Maboneng tend for most of them to turn towards Propertuity and Jonathan Liebmann for help, information or even fixing a malfunctioning elevator. The interesting fact here is that Propertuity is far from being the sole decision-making actor in Maboneng but it is identified as such, or at least as the most important and appropriate one for most issues regarding the governance of the neighbourhood. The city hall, the state, and other local public and private actors are clearly set at the back today and rarely considered by the inhabitants and individuals working in Maboneng as actors to turn to for handling their day-to-day and even long-term issues and projects. As a private actor Jonathan Liebmann, Propertuity's CEO, has, more or less, taken over the governance of the neighbourhood but has had inevitably to increasingly exchange with the municipality. Thus, the public-private actors' relationship in Maboneng is both developing and getting more complex.

Between public and private actors, new kinds of organization are emerging, like landlords associations in various forms, and among them CIDs. This is what the researcher Claire Bénit-Gbaffou calls the South-African «flexible governance» (C. Bénit-Gbaffou, M. Morange; 2008) which adapts to the different natures of urban areas and relies on alternative actors or networks, which often occupy empty spaces of the city's governance. Propertuity finds its account in this flexible governance, insofar as it offers it a high degree of autonomy to develop and manage not only its property portfolio, but also the neighbourhood as a whole, including public space.

Nevertheless, this independence comes with a great responsibility and represents a high cost, that it would rather share with others stakeholders. To address this issue, new forms of participatory and collaborative neighbourhood management are being implemented and will determine the evolution of urban governance in that sector of downtown Johannesburg for the years to come.

1) The governance of the Johannesburg metropolis

1.1) Historical Background

South Africa is a young democracy where all public policies are still marked by the memory of apartheid, which plays the role of an absolute anti-model. That is why we should keep in mind that during the 43 years of apartheid, the role of the authorities in the urban development of South African cities was essentially to organize a radical spatial segregation of populations based on ethnic criteria. This policy was designed and implemented by extremely powerful legal instruments, especially the 1950 Group Areas Act, which organized the absolute segregation in urban development.

Actual urban planning in the democratic South Africa is still marked by this huge trauma. This explains why actual politicians, and among them a majority of ANC members, are so reluctant to play a central role in the spatial development of urban areas, assimilating a strong urban governance to a new kind of authoritarianism. Moreover, another fact to remember is that the end of the apartheid was obtained through tough
negotiations with the authorities of the time, during which the opposition led by the ANC agreed to adopt a liberal economic policy, leaving de facto the economic power under the control of the white economic elite (F.Hervé 2008). In return, this limited the possibilities of the post-apartheid government to pressure the private sector and real estate players, for any kind of reason, including their spatial investment strategy and cities development.

That historical reluctance to intervene in urban planning and the lack of lever actions on the economic sphere explain the relative absence of the authorities from the urban governance since the beginning of the democratic era, in 1994. Still, in Johannesburg the economic capital, despite the absence of a real centralized city’s public governance, a development strategy for the metropolis exists anyway and is implemented, collectively with other actors.

1.2) The South African territorial organization and practice of urban planning

According to the new South African Constitution of 1996, three spheres of government cohabitate, each one with both executive and legislative dimensions: the national, the provincial and the local (or municipal). For the reasons mentioned above, and apart from the effort to build housing for the poorest, urban planning has not been properly addressed by any of the three territorial levels in the first decade of the democratic South Africa. But the reconstruction of the urban governance mechanisms reappeared in the early 2000s.

**National government** plays only a small role in the urban planning policy, excepting by the enactment of rules of governance through the Department of Housing and a catch-up policy for the creation of housing for the most disadvantaged, a major focus of the ANC. The Breaking New Ground action program, launched in 2004, has had a particularly significant impact on the South African cities.

**The provincial government** has important prerogatives in strategic planning on its territory. In addition to the enactment of their own strategic planning document (Provincial Spatial Development Framework, PSDF) provinces also assist municipalities in developing their own strategy. In the case of Gauteng, the both smallest and most populated province which hosts the country’s main metropolis, the strategy of the province and the city are often closely linked, but clashes also appear sometimes. Thus, the province has published its Spatial Development Plan in 2000 (revised in 2008) but in fact, it is rather the development of Johannesburg as a city which guides the development orientations.

**Municipalities** are of several types, depending on the size of the cities concerned. Johannesburg is one of six Metropolitan Municipalities (or Metro) resulting from the post-apartheid white and black municipalities fusion. Municipalities, and especially metros, are today the government level with the most prerogatives of urban development. Thus, since the Municipal System Act of 2000, they are responsible to enact development goals through a strategic document, (Integrated Development Plan, IDP) which must be approved by the provincial administration and declined in a Spatial Development Framework (SDF) a graphic document that allows to view and spatially project the development of the city. Johannesburg was one of the first to complete its SDF metros in 2001. It also approved its long-term development strategy, focusing on economic development, through another strategic document: Joburg 2030.
1.3) Land regulation and building permissions: a complex system shared between several actors

Unlike strategic planning, regulating the right of the soil remains an essential prerogative of public power, but is torn between multiple instances.

The control system of land use has not been truly reformed after apartheid. Thus, the new ANC government had initially ruled out any new opportunity for local authorities to regulate land use. In addition, like many municipalities after the apartheid, the municipality of Johannesburg went bankrupt in 1997 and was substantially restructured since. Much of its service was entrusted to agencies and other municipal companies with separate budgets to clear the accounts.

During that period, in order to overcome this gap, the control of building authorizations that cities could not exercise was entrusted to the provinces through conventional courts (Development Facilitation Act, 1995). Despite these derogatory powers given to provinces, municipalities kept under their responsibility the general regulations and the land zoning, gathered in a document called the Town Planning Scheme, based on a very functional zoning distinguishing only residential areas, economic areas and public spaces. However, since these documents remained a long time after the end of apartheid (those old apartheid plans still prevail nowadays in many smaller cities) the province retained a strong decision-making role in urban matters for a long time. In
Johannesburg, they were 13 different plans based on the old municipal boundaries, which did not at all reflect the new city's development strategy. But they remained applicable until 2011, when the new **Town Planning Scheme** entered into force.

For many years, there were two parallel building permissions systems, one organised by the municipality and the other one by the province. Thus, the city of Johannesburg entered in a juridical conflict with the province of Gauteng in 2008 because it accused the latter to assign building permissions contrary to the spatial strategy of the municipality.

The **Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act**, promulgated in August 2013, finally enacts a clear and unified guideline of urban regulations and transfers most of the responsibilities for urban regulations to municipalities, which are finally able to implement their own development strategies and ultimately become key players in town planning. The provinces are now primarily a function of control and assistance to municipalities across their territory. However, the provinces are still the competent authorities when it comes to environmental authorizations (which are also the case in France, the central state playing the role of environmental authority).

The fact that the plain authority of the municipal government is rather new implies that municipal teams in charge of land management have been quite weak for many years, but it has been recently improving. Still today, the distribution of urban authority among several administrations makes the procedure for allocating rights to build relatively complex. Thus, developers and builders in general are almost always assisted by professional planners to perform all of these steps.

This late clarification of urban planning jurisdictions explain why the city of Johannesburg did not fully play its role in urban governance, opening the field to other private actors to conduct large-scale urban projects. Time will tell if the legal stabilization and rise of the municipal administration on this field will bring a true deep change.

**1.4) A perennial local democracy but fragmented and inefficient**

What role display the people in city governance? How does the new South African democracy deal with urban affairs?

The City of Johannesburg, ran by the ANC, has a very high democratic ambition and says it governs the city in full consultation with the people. Yet, in fact, participatory governance is a difficult pass and still has not found much practical application. Indeed, the democratic nature of the South African regime, based on the militant and participatory tradition in the ANC, needed to involve civil society in policy decisions regarding the city. That's why new participatory and electoral processes attempt to organize popular participation in the context of urban projects, but without giving it a real decision-making role.

Historically, the manifestations of civil society have been important in South Africa. The *civis*, associations born in the townships, have played a significant role in the fight against *apartheid*. Some of their activists have joined the civil service and local government after the *apartheid*, but many *civis* still exist as neighbourhood associations. They often play the role of intermediaries between the people and the government, and feed the system of local democracy and elected personnel.
Moreover, the governance mechanisms of South African municipalities provide popular participation through representative bodies, appointed wards. Cities are divided into wards in which councillors wards are elected locally. Then, ten ward committee members are elected and are the closest to the population policy level, each ward committee representing a community of individuals.

New municipal strategic documents, like the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), are necessarily subject to consultation in the ward committees. This participative town planning remains theoretical, because in practice, those wards work reasonably well as a source of information for the people, but ward committees have only little influence on the ward councillors, who have only limited power in the council.

This local democracy is therefore partial and imperfect. For the city of Johannesburg however, participation is especially important as a process to create "urban citizens", to develop a territorial identity and participatory bodies, able to ask the questions and create a space for dialogue. In Johannesburg, social tensions are sometimes acute, especially in the city centre where xenophobic reactions are common in established communities. Thus, when a wave of riots hit the city in 2008, Jeppestown witnessed many acts of violence against migrant workers. The dialogue process, especially through the wards, is extremely useful to drop the tension, but it seems ill-suited to a process of consultation and participation open to urban development issues, which are often referred to another level and by other actors. True participative mechanisms and intermediaries between the people and governments, remain to be built.

1.5) An important operational role serving an ambitious strategy of urban renewal

Johannesburg at the turn of the new millennium

If the City of Johannesburg could not play a decisive role in urban planning, it played however the role of a leading operational actor since the early 2000.

Going back again to the city's history, let us remember that the new South African democracy inherited a fragmented and under-equipped capital, whose urban area was drastically extended overnight, multiplying its scope of management and related costs. Like other South African municipalities, the city's finances have not resisted such an upheaval and the municipality found itself facing an unprecedented financial crisis in 1999, at the same time the city centre experienced a strong influx of migrants and squatters as well as a severe decay and rising criminality.

The first response of the municipality has been to recast municipal boundaries. The urban area was divided into 7 zones with very clear boundaries, corresponding to distinct urban fabric and issues. Maboneng thus belongs to area F, which corresponds to the CBD and other nearby dense neighbourhoods on its eastern side, including Jeppestown. The second answer has been the outsourcing of certain municipal functions through autonomous agencies with separate accounts. Thus the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) was created in 2001.
Operational strategy

Since that day, the municipal strategy is based on three main pillars: renovation of the city centre, economic development of marginalized areas, and standardization of informal settlements.

JDA was established as an operational actor who uses a single tool of public action: capital funding. It was given the task of working on the first two objectives, with a strong focus on the city centre which was then decaying and transforming into an economic desert, with only informal economy remaining (taxis, street sellers, etc.)

Strategy to revitalize the city centre was to inject massive capital into the local economy through a policy of public works, thereby hoping to play on the multiplier effect of public investment in distributing income and stimulating local demand and encouraging private investments thereafter.

After a diagnostic phase, some areas were identified by the JDA as carrying a significant development potential: Newtown, Fashion District, Capitol Hill, Faradale market, Ellis Park Station and Jewell City (the latter two near Maboneng). Property programs have been developed as well as renovation of public spaces. The spatial strategy was to create strong cores of urban renewal, which would then broaden and re-join each other through "corridors" where people could start to circulate freely, without fear of crime and grime.

Jonathan Liebmann’s urban project, a private initiative of capital investing in urban renewal, is an example of the effects that JDA wanted to create through its strategy. Attracted by the renovation of Jewel City, next door from Maboneng, he showed interest in Arts on Main since 2006. He created Propertuity in 2008 and an informal agreement occurred between him and the city, which renovated the sidewalks around the building complex. Maboneng really took off later, after the arrival of Kentridge in Arts on Main and the opening of the Sunday market, and the extensive media coverage given to Maboneng.

Tax Strategy

Indirectly, Propertuity’s project was born from the municipal strategy, who initiated the rebirth of the city centre. Maboneng also benefits from the municipal tax strategy, which aims to encourage owners to invest downtown to renovate their heritage. That policy is rooted in the national initiative established in 2003, when the Minister of Finance announced the promulgation of the Urban Renewal Tax Incentive in
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respect of 16 South African Urban Areas, designated to promote private investment in property to rejuvenate the inner cities’ economies. The Urban Development Zone (UDZ) approved in Johannesburg, includes the Johannesburg CBD and the close areas, such as Newtown, Braamfontein, Hillbrow & Joubert Park, and also Jeppes-town (see map below). This incentive comes in the form of an accelerated depreciation allowance to promote private sector investment in construction, extensions, additions and improvement or refurbishment of buildings specified in the urban development areas (UDZs). The deductible amounts are equivalent to 20% of the cost of improvement of the building in the year, or equal to 20% of the cost of the oven in each succeeding year.

Propertuity benefited from this tax deduction for its own operations, but as we can read in the 2013 growth report, it also uses it as sale argument for its customers, who could then benefit from it as well.

Maboneng and the City of Johannesburg

Propertuity undertook the Maboneng project alone and invested its capital at its own risk, without the operational support of the city, except for the initial requalification of the sidewalks and the indirect support through the tax incentive. However, Maboneng is fully compatible with the municipal strategy, which was to encourage such private projects. The agency, that we interviewed, is pleased to see that its "Keynesian" public investment strategy pays off, with the emergence of private capital invested in the CBD renewal, showing that trust has been re-established. Other renovation projects such as those of Hillbrow and Berea, also started thereafter, largely under private auspices, which prevents the public sector to invest itself in these areas.

JDA does not see Maboneng or the gentrification as a threat. The only downside is this one: JDA is sceptical about the niche of the fashion and art chosen by Jonathan Liebmann, which put Maboneng in direct competition with Newtown, another inner city CBD area renovated by the JDA which also offers artist studios and exhibition spaces. The "creative class" in Johannesburg is relatively limited in size, so JDA sees a risk of "drying" the market, of vampirisation of Newtown by Maboneng, or even of Maboneng by some other district, because the mode is volatile.

Figure 14 - Map of the UDZ sector, inner city of Johannesburg.
Jonathan Liebmann likes to present himself as the sole promoter of Maboneng, alone at the wheels without any help. However, he always enjoyed the full support of the public authorities, even from a far distance, and this partnership is getting more operational. In 2012, a call for tenders for urban projects was launched by the JDA. Propertuity responded and won, so they benefit from public subvention to implement their new urban project, Maboneng 2.0, based on the new urban framework scheme designed with the town planners, such as the renovation of sidewalks in Fox Street (which was done in 2013) but also the Maboneng Canal, the covering of an open sky sewer crossing the area and creating quality public space above.

However, this operational partnership was not easy to negotiate with the public authorities. In Fox street, the main axis of today’s Maboneng, Propertuity had to pay 40% of the requalification, even if it owes less than 40% of the street properties. This is the limit of the central role of Propertuity in Maboneng: as the hegemonic actor and the only one able or eager to pay for the renewal of public spaces, Propertuity complains that it is the only one to take its responsibilities, even if other landlords benefit from its investments and Jonathan Liebmann would like the other stakeholders to participate more to their common good.

2) Maboneng: a unilateral model of governance?

From a French and European point of view, the Maboneng project is completely out of the ordinary in terms of governance. First, because it starts from a purely private initiative –the one of Jonathan Liebmann-. The entire area is shaped by a private developer –Propertuity- that defines both the identity of the precinct and the development guidelines, which would never happen in France. The scheme of actors is now much more complex as can be seen in the graph below, however the governance model can still be easily questioned as “unilateral” since Propertuity stays at the centre of all decision-making steps.
2.1. Description of Maboneng’s game of actors

As can be observed in the graph, there is a multiplicity of actors around Propertuity. First, while Propertuity is a property developer, it is not a property manager, which means that Propertuity is not in charge of the daily technical aspects of the properties it owns (for example elevators, broken furniture...). The property manager firm, Mafadi, deals with those aspects, in direct relation with Propertuity. Then, it is crucial to mention that Propertuity does not own all the buildings in Maboneng: it has to deal with some other private property owners. As for public space, Propertuity delegates minor technical problems to an urban managers firm, called Urban genesis. Both firms meet every week to fix neighbourhood issues. Urban genesis is also in charge of discussing with the Municipality of Johannesburg when its action or authorization is needed for a project in Maboneng. Besides, Propertuity is advised by other firms: urban managers help Propertuity for defining its strategy. On the public side, two actors count: the Municipality of Johannesburg and the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA). Both have not been at the initiative of the Maboneng project but have been present in the process since the beginning. Their position regarding Maboneng is not easy to define, since they have themselves developed “concurrent” neighbourhoods such as Braamfontein, an area with similar aspects to Maboneng. It seemed to us that as Maboneng is growing physically and in the minds, public actors are reinforcing their partnership with Propertuity. Finally, as will be studied at the end of this part, the City Improvement District (CID), a citizen’s tool, is going to gain importance in the next years, changing the governance of Maboneng.
2.2. Why is Maboneng’s governance perceived as unilateral?

What we observed is that there is a distortion between the perception of governance and its reality. In fact, most inhabitants perceive Propertuity— and Jonathan Liebmann more precisely—as the only interlocutor for any problem, while in reality tasks are much more distributed among actors. In fact, as explained above, there are now several firms working with Propertuity for the development and daily management of Maboneng. This also happens with the streets: while there is a team of “urban managers” independent from Propertuity, taking care of numerous technical aspects (Urban genesis), local people are not aware of it. We were the first to be surprised when observing the professional ecosystem working for Maboneng, much larger than Propertuity itself, or Jonathan Liebmann alone. This questions Propertuity’s strategy of communication: it seemed to us that they do not valorise a lot the other firms. It is beneficial in a certain way: people—and the medias—“identify” the area to one firm, one man, which reinforces the image of the precinct. It makes the project even more impressive. However, it is certainly a loss in efficiency for Propertuity to centralize all complaints and not to clarify the different roles.

A first conclusion would therefore be that the Maboneng governance model is less unilateral than it seems. However, it remains very different from any European model. We had the opportunity to meet several public actors, being from the Municipal Council or the Johannesburg Development Agency. Some public actors know the project since its beginning; other ones are discovering it only now; which reveals a lot about the public governance of Johannesburg. Even if there is now a project undergoing in partnership with public authorities (a renovation of a street passage), it appeared clearly that Propertuity is carrying the project mostly alone. Moreover, the Maboneng precinct is in a way competing with some public initiatives. The “Fashion District” we have evoked in the first part, or Newtown, where the Johannesburg Development Agency is installed; both are supposed to be “creative neighbourhoods”. Like metropolis competing at the world scale, these different areas are in competition to attract the creative class, families on Sunday and tourists anytime. Since the other projects were led by public authorities, it may be that they felt Maboneng as a less proprietary project. It would certainly be a success for the municipality to communicate internationally about Maboneng and to encourage tourists to go there, but it seems not to be the strategy for now.

This distance from public actors could justify the unilateral model of Maboneng: it is logical that Propertuity stays at the centre if nobody takes this role. From a European point of view, it looks dangerous for an entire area to be managed by a private actor, a first reaction would be to think that this model is dangerous for general interest since it could be driven only by profit. However, what is particularly striking in the Maboneng project is that the private actor has been very innovative in terms of public space, of social policies and integration. It could surely have been different if the private actor had no concern about those topics. However by showing some, it has brought new insights and solution for city management. It has favoured common interest much more than some public projects. This does not mean that the particular governance model of Maboneng always leads to those situations, it definitely depends on the project holders. By giving independence and a large scale of action to a private actor, it seems that the social gains can be huge. The specific past of South Africa, where the State has played a role of segregation, may explain that gap. City dwellers might trust some private actors more than the State itself. Since Jonathan Liebmann has expressed his vision and values from the beginning, people trust him and have no interest in stopping his project. In that way,
Maboneng is very unilateral: the entire area reveals the spirit and values of one man and one firm.

3) The CID, a strong tool in the service of governance issues

To solve some problems related to internal governance in Maboneng, particularly the issue of costs participation, Propertuity is committed to the creation of a City Improvement District (CID). In August 2013, an independent firm of consultants was working on this project and, following a phase of diagnosis and identification of landlords in the area, was to propose a geographical perimeter and build a financial model of the CID. An information meeting with the owners took place on August 26th 2013, in which we participated. The CID is a legal tool that already has an eventful story in South Africa, and it is a strong challenge in terms of governance for the future of Maboneng.

3.1) Principles and History

CIDs are an adaptation in the South African law of a model invented in North America in the 1960s. Under the name BID (Business Improvement Districts), they appeared in Canada in the late 1960s. They spread to the USA in the mid-70s and then to Australia, New Zealand, the UK and more recently, South Africa and Germany.

The concept was brought to South Africa in the mid-90s and was renamed CID. It is defined as "a geographic area within all which property owners and/or tenants agree to pay for some services supplementary to those supplied by the local Authority and which will enhance the physical and social environment of the area" (E. Peyroux, 2008). It is a kind of additional voluntary tax from private proprietaries, who hope to improve the urban environment around their property and at the same time increase its value. The CID consultant working in Maboneng defines it “as a way for homeowners to help the city to do its job, not to replace it”.

3.2) CIDs in South Africa

Since the 1994 democratic transition, CIDs have been implemented under various forms in the Johannesburg metropolitan area as well as in other cities (in 2013 they were 18 CIDs in Johannesburg, 18 in Cape Town and 4 in Durban).

In Johannesburg, CIDs enjoy the backing of the public and have become a centrepiece of the urban regeneration policy. As in other cities where the North American BID model was adopted, those public/private partnerships have been used as a response to inner cities decadence and insecurity.

According to the Gauteng legislation (CID Act of 1997), CIDs are created through a referendum among property owners, only if the measure is supported by 51% of voters. Services provided through the CID can be area management, security, cleaning, landscaping, maintenance, and marketing.
Since its origins, the CID was invented to enhance business areas, not residential ones. In Cape Town and Johannesburg, the CIDs were imported primarily for economic spaces, especially where large companies are located, including international ones, the “showcases” sectors of the cities. Business CIDs are the only cases originally planned by provincial decree in 1997. However, CIDs have tended to grow in residential neighbourhoods and focus primarily on security, making this device a complement to enclosures and other gated communities, although the official position of the City of Johannesburg was to allow economic CIDs, but not residential.

Indeed, the ANC did not want to develop legal exceptions for the more affluent residents, which recalled the legal segregation and the “separated development” of the apartheid period. For example, the district of Sandhurst, in the northern suburbs, which has a very rich and influent population, created a CID with powers on security, cleaning and beautification of streets, street lighting etc. A master plan was even drawn by the association before being approved by the municipality. Sandhurst was then called a micro-autonomous municipality and critics were made by some ANC members, denouncing the excesses of a two-speed city, where the rich have the means to fund services inaccessible to the poorest.

However, a certain tolerance existed and legal uncertainty continued until 2003 when the City of Johannesburg produced a regulation on this issue. This long delay was due to a pure dilemma. Despite its ideological opposition, the ANC knew that the development of these additional services was a necessary condition to maintain some of those economic elites in Johannesburg. For pragmatic reasons, residential CIDs have been authorized under its program of urban regeneration.

As a business site, but also a living area, Maboneng is in an intermediate position. It is located in the city centre and included in the area of municipal CBD regeneration policy (and as such may benefit from a CID status), but also has residents and could be qualified as a residential CID.
3.4) Issues of the Maboneng CID in terms of governance

The creation of a CID, an emanation of the joint interest of all owners, but desired and launched by Propertuity, meets several objectives more or less clearly stated by the property developer.

First, the aim is to improve the neighbourhood. The document to the landlords on August 26th lists all the operational objectives and expected benefits for homeowners and businesses:
- Well Managed Areas
- Increase in Property Value
- Low Vacancy Rates
- Pride in Communal Achievements
- Create Social Responsibility
- Environmental Awareness (recycling, greening, energy efficiency, conservation)
- Attract New Capital Investment
- Marketing & Promotion
- Partnership Opportunities (Public & Private Sector, Urban design frameworks etc.).

The mere fact that Maboneng is a CID area is itself a benefit in terms of image, since CIDs concern affluent areas and are an outside marker of social and urban wealth.

The second goal, also announced to the owners, is gaining visibility and weight in the negotiation with the municipality, by providing a single point of contact for all owners. Propertuity often complains of a lack of interest of the city to this area and hopes to benefit from a better attention from the government.

The latter objective, never publicly announced but yet clear, especially when one looks at the distribution of properties and votes among owners, is a goal of governance. Remaining the dominant and majority owner in the CID (Propertuity owns 50 buildings and manages many residential and commercial lots, including through Mafadi, its subsidiary) Propertuity retains a significant control over the decisions of the CID, but will have the opportunity to outsource common expenses (security, cleaning, beautification), charging the owners in proportion to their real estate holdings. Beyond security spending and neighbourhood improvement, already widely supported by Propertuity, the CID is a way to involve the other owners in the neighbourhood management and empower them financially.

Thus, Propertuity may disengage from its responsibilities of «neighbourhood manager» and refocus on its core business of property developer, with the assurance that the neighbourhood’s management will still be supported in accordance with its wishes. This will create a neutral space for dialogue, no longer under the auspices of Propertuity. Also, as we were told, Jonathan Liebmann’s strong personality sometimes tends to tense up many owners and block some debates. The establishment of the CID could therefore also be a “calming element” between owners, who will overcome some interpersonal barriers.
Figure 17 - Maboneng's governance after the CID.
PART II – MABONENG, A CREATIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Defining Maboneng as a creative neighbourhood is both an attempt to qualify the object in terms of what it represents, the image it conveys, and a way to describe its development process. This is also an opportunity to bring to light some of the precinct’s potential further developments and threats identified through this specific lecture grid.

At first, we will review the elements of Maboneng’s context which convey its creative identity. Then, we will present the global creative dynamic at stake in the precinct. Finally, we will return to the complexity of the development process and the different dimensions on which it lies and spreads.

1) A context soaked with creativity

Maboneng provides a context in which creative expression is encouraged. Indeed, creativity seems at the core of the neighbourhood’s recent success story, a pillar in its construction, branding and simply being.

Three elements convey this context. First of all, the renewal of the area was launched by a project – Arts on Main – fully dedicated to art and creation. It gave the tone to all further developments in the district. Second of all, Maboneng distinguishes itself from other areas of Johannesburg thanks to a lifestyle embodied by a community, and which concerns both personal and professional spheres. This distinctive way of life is broadly promoted and is a constitutive part of the precinct’s brand. Last but not least, the creative context is conveyed through the aesthetic displayed on the public space. It makes it clearly visible for both visitors and inhabitants and urges them to get involved in the dynamic.
1.1) Arts on Main: the launch of a project dedicated to art

Arts on Main is the first opened building of the precinct. At the genesis of the neighbourhood’s dynamic growth, it is centred on artistic creation. It served the reinforcement of Maboneng’s creative context in two ways: firstly through the implementation of extended favourable conditions for creation and secondly by giving visibility and credibility to the renewal thanks to the participation of world class art professionals.

A building allotted to art

Being the first renovated building in Maboneng, Arts on Main paved the way for further projects and gave the tone of the neighbourhood itself. It appears that the choice of the location – Maboneng – and the orientation of its use are a matter of a strategic decision.

The multiple uses of Arts on Main implement conditions for creation in diverse ways. The building gives space to artists as it provides some housing, as well as great spaces for workshops. It is also a place where their creations can be displayed and sold. Its internal organisation, in itself a demonstration of creativity, allows a dynamic interaction among artists, other professionals and visitors.

The choice of arts and creativity thus appears distinctly, and it has proved to be a wise one up till now as Maboneng found a place in both the artistic scene and the local economy.

A credibility gained through iconic figures

Maboneng reached its momentum through international visibility and credibility on the economic and artistic scenes. Those were made possible thanks to the involvement of world class artists such as Kim Lieberman, David Krut and William Kentridge. The latter distinguished himself in various activities, such as theatre, opera, animated films, sculpture, prints or drawings. His work was exhibited in many cities and prestigious venues, among many others the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New-York, the Louvre in Paris and the Venice Biennial. The announcement of the installation of his workshop in Arts on Main revealed the project in the eyes of a wider public, and boosted the artists’ subscription to work in there.

The dynamic created resulted in the momentum the precinct has known. As a consequence, Maboneng appeared to the eyes of the world through Arts on Main, in other
words, in the image of a renewed space dedicated to art. In visitors’ representations, the district is thus increasingly seen as a privileged space for creation, raising equally the attraction of creative people.

1.2) An experienced and promoted lifestyle

The creative identity Maboneng emanates is also conveyed through a distinctive lifestyle which is shared by a community as well as largely promoted. This “arty metropolitan” way of life appears distinctive in the South African context, especially in Johannesburg, and at the same time corresponds to the global metropolis standards, allowing Maboneng to play a role at an international scale.

An “arty metropolitan” lifestyle

The development of the neighbourhood went along with the creation of a brand to its name – Maboneng. The promotion surrounding this brand advertises a particular lifestyle. It displays the district as a trendy village-in-the-city in which a community peacefully blossoms in an innovative and refreshing spirit. To some extent, it portrays Maboneng to the image of its targeted being.

Several aspects of this idealised way of life are actually concretised. For example, the area is meant to be free of franchises, and indeed shops are exclusively issued from independent local brands. For example, the installation of a Woolworths franchise store was explicitly refused. The neighbourhood also provides cultural entertainment, both during daytime and at night. This takes the form of both permanent installations, such as the independent cinema or the theatre, and punctual events. In addition, the street furniture is also thought to suit the lifestyle, as suggests the implementation of guard posts designed by artists. The display of uncommon everyday life features reinforces the creative-friendly context of the precinct, leading the thousands of inhabitants and weekly
visitors to embody the idealistic image sold with the Maboneng brand, forming a
community of users operating in the neighbourhood both as consumers and distributors.

An international dimension

The distinctive lifestyle promoted in the precinct is set to fit international
standards for a developed country. Maboneng streets are meant to resemble ones in other
comparable metropolises.

This international metropolis lifestyle consists of several assets which are also
part of the “arty” lifestyle described above, such as the opening of several cafés and ethnic
restaurants, as well as the emergence of world class galleries. Other aspects that may
seem natural in Paris or New York represent a challenge in the local context. Indeed, in
global metropolis, to a European or Northern American perspective, people have the
opportunity to hang out in the streets to do some shopping, or simply walk from work to
home. In Joburg, walking in the street is not a natural step, among other things because
of insecurity, the absence of pavement or the lack of maintenance.

The relationship with public space is more complicated, and the fact that
Maboneng has been able to reach international standards on that field, both, allows the
local population to think outside of the box (on a South African perspective) and the
district to be attractive on a global scale. Safe and clean streets bordered by large
pavements, among other things, enable the neighbourhood to reach notoriety outside
South Africa. This is a crucial dimension, considering the will to develop on an artistic
market.

1.3) Maboneng: a street art aesthetic

The creative neighbourhood context is conveyed by the streets themselves. This
is evident on the walls and in the outside occupation, reinforcing the creative atmosphere
and encouraging people to get involved.

On the walls

Maboneng’s fondness for creativity is inscribed on its walls. Fox street, Main
street, Kruger street... they all display murals. Some of the pieces of art spring from official
projects, such as the “I Art Joburg” initiative launched by Adidas, and which now is the
theme of a guided tour around the neighbourhood. Those visuals play a role in
distinguishing the area from the rest of the city centre and map its contour. For instance,
Maboneng is painted in capital letters under the highway bridge, marking its entrance.
The murals are displayed in diverse styles, spreading various messages. They decorate,
raise concern and can also incite people passing by to take possession of the walls
themselves, as does the “Before I die...” mural. Wall-appropriation also results in non-
official works such as graffiti, stickers or posters. However, they do not always stick to
the overall nice and clean aesthetic of the neighbourhood and, as a consequence, can be
less appreciated.
Take the streets

The appetite for creativity works along with a redefinition of the streets’ uses. Indeed, as already mentioned, part of Maboneng’s context specificity is that it provides with clean and safe streets for people to circulate by foot. This particular feature allows a reinvention of the relationship with the street. A wide range of regular and punctual events now happen there. For example, weekly guitar lessons, musical performances, a bouncy castle as well as community shared meals are to be seen. Some urban furniture evidences the existence of a strong will to reinvent the streets on an everyday basis, and an organised strategy to do it. On Fox Street, a skate park and a table tennis have been installed, and are now the playground to the neighbourhoods’ kids as well as some youngsters from nearby districts.
Maboneng, thus, appears as a favourable context for the expression of creativity. It is moved by a global creative dynamic described below.

2) A global scheme

Our shared experience of the precinct led us to identify creativity as a powerful motor of development. However, we had to detail our definition to explain more precisely the phenomenon. This led us to portray the broad innovation process we witnessed, in which talented expression is at the origin and an important driver of the neighbourhood’s success.

An equation: Entrepreneurship + Inventiveness = Creativity

Maboneng’s creative dynamic seems to have been triggered by an interesting and fruitful combination between a well-targeted inventiveness and an acute entrepreneurial sense.

We perceive inventiveness as a mix of imagination and experience. Imagination, indeed, allows us to think outside the box and to find new solutions to our problems, while experience is what makes our imagination fertile by making us able to sort out the good from the bad solutions our confused mind comes out with. In other words, inventiveness, in the context of Maboneng’s (re)development, translates into the way the precinct’s actors have managed to develop their visions in a pragmatic way.

This inventiveness is conveniently accompanied by a strong sense of entrepreneurship. This quality sums up as the ability to implement ideas into concrete
actions and business models. It is highly complementary with inventiveness because it is the ultimate tool one needs to implement a vision or any project in a reasonable, sustainable and, hopefully, profitable way. The spirit of entrepreneurship which we find in the actors of Maboneng's development, enables them to come up with visions and projects with their own goals that they are able to adapt to the local context.

Innovation and entrepreneurship add up to a creativity at the service of urban development. It is about coming up with new plausible ideas, and to make them real by using the available resources of the environment. It is also about finding paths to resources which seem inaccessible at first sight. In this process we find a path towards artistic creativity, applied to economic and urban development. Indeed, artists are not creative only because they thinks of something new, but because they are able to concretise ideas and make them intelligible to the public.

**Maboneng's broad innovation process**

Maboneng's innovation dynamic is a way to explain the broad model of development of the district, the many projects implemented, and giving its creativity.
A first spark of creativity

The whole renewal process started with one spark of creativity: the one of Jonathan Liebmann. His vision and determination, when he launched Maboneng's redevelopment through Arts on Main, triggered everything. This first initiative launched the dynamic of creativity, attracting artists and other creative professionals to the precinct. These new actors implemented their creativity proposing new uses to Arts on Main. Then, the success of this first project facilitated the renovation of other buildings, giving more space to welcome new actors and new uses of space.

The main dynamic

Maboneng became perceived as a land of opportunities, notably thanks to the provision of dedicated spaces, the mixed uses of renovated buildings. This allowed the gathering of very different people and ambitions, favouring a vivid exchange of opinions and ideas, as well as contacts among capital actors of the precinct, especially potential entrepreneurs and investors. Maboneng has become a host and stage of human and professional enrichment, and an extremely dynamic ideas and business incubator. It seems dedicated to finding new models and combinations, permanently questioning Johannesburg's and pushing forward a metamorphosis process.

The work and destiny of Bhekifa Dube - a young, ambitious and multi-talented South African man we had the pleasure to make friends with and to have as a guide in Maboneng - is one of the most representative embodiments of the precinct's creative dynamics we have described. “Bheki”, indeed, started as a guide for Maboneng's visitors and was able to keep up greatly with his passion for photography. Thanks to his great work, Bheki has become a crucial actor of the precinct, and thanks to the adapted and helpful specificities of his work contract with Propertuity, Bheki has been able to stay in Maboneng itself and in very good conditions at an affordable price. The partnership between Maboneng and him is a complete win-win. Thanks to this fruitful structure, Bheki has recently been able to grow and give birth to his own - already very successful - big urban project: Curiocity Backpackers, Maboneng's first hostel for national and international travellers. The precinct can be a place where one can come with dreams, turn them into possibilities, and furthermore into accomplishments.
3) Creative Neighbourhood: complex and fragile dynamics

3.1) Two types of influence

An ability to attract professionals to a former no-go area

![Diagram of the virtuous circle between investors, infrastructures, new uses, new professionals, and creativity.](image)

The promotion of inventiveness and entrepreneurship, and the facilitation of the expression of these qualities, are leading aspects of a dynamic policy meant to attract professionals to Maboneng. Actually, Propertuity dedicates part of its activity to the detection of potential new ideas, opportunities, and actors to accompany in order to enhance the development of the district. These efforts result nowadays in partnerships with companies specialised in various activities necessary to Maboneng’s current needs, such as security and maintenance.

This attraction results from a kind of mechanical movement that can be described as a virtuous circle. In the first place, the investment in the renovation of a former factory to open Arts on Main attracted professionals and artists. Then, the success and visibility brought by the project favoured new investments. This capital has been invested in the renovation of new spaces. Eventually newcomers took up these new infrastructures. Little by little, new actors occupy new infrastructures, broadening the range of
professionals existing in the precinct and, thanks to some economic success, attract even more and diverse people as well as investors.

For example, in a mixed-use building on Fox street, a hotel has been implemented. Twelve Decades Hotel logically required many workers such as a manager, receptionists, cleaning and maintenance staff. Furthermore, the decision to furnish the rooms and apartments with local furniture supported local artisan companies. At the same time, the arrival of customers rose the needs for practical means of transportation, especially between Maboneng and the international airport. Thus a shuttle has been introduced to fit the clients’ punctual and flexible needs. This example illustrates how the implementation of new uses to infrastructure can result into new opportunities for companies already existing, as well as new ones.

In the end, it appears one key of success in the neighbourhood has been the constant emergence of new opportunities for local actors as well as newcomers; a favourable climate to attract professionals.

An ability to incorporate the local population

ECONOMIC DYNAMIC

IDEAS

IMPLEMENTATION

PROJECTS

creativity

Figure 24 - Maboneng integrates local population.

The economic development of the precinct leads to the increase of job opportunities for local workers, as new businesses need employees to sustain their activity and people are progressively keener to work in this former no-go area. There is also a context in which local dwellers are supported to develop their own companies.

Indeed, a second virtuous circle is also engaged into the development process, linking inspiration and implementation. Dynamics at stake into the district’s development foster better life conditions and create new opportunities, which contribute to Maboneng’s evolution. Examples of working entrepreneurship are obvious, and
Part II - Maboneng, a creative neighbourhood

contribute to create a climate of success which encourages actors to take their chance into business. Dreams become projects, and the possibility to meet investors or fellow entrepreneurs multiply the chances to convert those projects into concrete actions.

To illustrate this phenomenon we might mention the example of a woman passionate about sewing and fashion. She used to design her own clothes, sew them at home and then sell door-to-door to customers. She has been spotted by a merchant who left some space for her creations in his shop. The success of her collection gave her the opportunity to open her own fashion retail store in the precinct. In 2013, she was participating to the South African Fashion Week. Similarly, it is not rare to meet kids from the neighbourhood out in the streets, their heads full of dreams to become involved in the creative economy. One of them managed to develop his hat designer skills with a perspective to start earning his life through it. He found both inspiration, financial and logistical support in Maboneng under the form of a business space with rental advantages.

Opportunities in the district take different forms, ranging from capital investment to the disposal of an exhibition space, which constitute tools to incorporate the local population.

3.2) A double scale of influence

The development of Maboneng implicates various professional spheres and the local civil society. Those two directions might seem contradictory. Indeed, the increasing influence of the district in professional spheres corresponds to a widening movement. The neighbourhood gains visibility and credibility in more important scales: Johannesburg, South Africa and even at an international level. The broadening of Maboneng’s influence, driven by professional spheres, is parallel to a rooting in locality. As a matter of fact, one of the key elements in the success of the district’s renewal is its ability to connect with the local population, local workers, and to be recognised at the scale of the city as a successful place. This phenomenon results in a movement of focus on the local scene and embeddedness to the territory.

Nevertheless, these movements of increasing influence are the result of a happy conjecture in which the interests of key actors converged. The ambition of Jonathan Liebmann met the will of the local population to redevelop their neighbourhood and rise their living standard, as well as the desire for new opportunities of the artistic world, and the appetite of entrepreneurs for a new market; all this at a time when no other investor seemed interested in the area.

These interests might not converge eternally. First of all, the artistic world is a world of trend, and the main characteristic of a trend is that it is ephemeral. Then, economic success and business opportunities are tendencies that can always reverse, reducing equally the attractiveness for professionals. At the same time, local population is not unanimously looking at the precinct in a favourable light, and even though it has not yet taken any action against it, a growing dissatisfaction from residents protesting against regulations seen as intrusive, could disturb the smooth development of Maboneng.

In parallel, several actors happen to be lukewarm if not critical towards the project. Fields such as public transportation, security, urban planning and housing are indeed among their prerogatives, and some local successes are still threatened by the rigidity of Johannesburg’s regulation. Moreover, some fragile elements are at risk like security, Maboneng’s specific lifestyle and community spirit. Indeed, what if some
spectacular crime would happen in the district? Or if the newcomers refuse to take part to the community life which is being built now? Those elements are difficult to apprehend and control, however, not insignificant.

3.3) A double creative dimension

Creativity displays itself in two dimensions in Maboneng. On the one side, it is to be seen in the ways the district was developed, and on the other side the economy itself is centred on creation.

A neighbourhood creatively developed

Creativity is expressed in the way the precinct is developing, both in terms of the infrastructure's organisation and in the uses implemented.

Most infrastructures in Maboneng are renovated buildings, mostly industrial. The renewed factories are also innovative in terms of internal organisation. Indeed they are often adapted for mixed-use, meaning that different sorts of activities, usually put in separate buildings, are emplaced under the same roof. For example, the Main Change building contains offices, a co-working space -that is also a conference hall-, a massage salon, a café and restaurants and retail stores on the ground level.

Another element of creativity to witness in Maboneng's development is the way entertainment has been thought and organised around facilities which are both indoor and outdoor and sometimes somewhere in the middle. For example, Uncle Merv's shakes & coffee provides take-away drinks and snacks that can be consumed sitting on the bench just outside, walking through the streets or back at home or work. This could describe any kind of take-away food shop, if it did not also play the role of a meeting point (located at the corner of a street), where musicians find a place to play. The outdoor entertainment, and more globally the streets appropriation is part of the lifestyle above mentioned. This, completed by a large set of guards, relates to a strategy to make streets safer. Indeed, the more people use the streets, the more they are able to spot unusual settings or unwanted elements and so to participate to the implementation of security in the precinct. This investment in the streets is also a pretext for creativity, with the installation of shops, or of the information point, into containers filling up the large pavements. In the same vein, an ice-cream shop opened in a renovated truck.

Creativity is also present in the multiple uses implemented in Maboneng. The co-working space and conference hall already mentioned inscribes itself in a modern movement of questioning and redefinition of the workplace and the boundaries among companies. The neighbourhood is also dotted with many showrooms competing in inventiveness, sometimes in a dedicated space, sometimes in a hotel, on the side of a café, imbricated with workshops or housing. Last but not least, "lighthouses" have been created on tops of buildings: these small housing units can be used by artists to isolate from the city's motion in search of inspiration. Their name evokes the essence of Maboneng: “Place of Light”.

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Part II - Maboneng, a creative neighbourhood

Creative economy and uncertainty

Finally, Maboneng can be defined as a creative neighbourhood thanks to its creative economy. Most workers on the precinct are involved in creative professions. A lot of them are artists, as diverse as sculptors, musicians, photographers, painters or actors. At the same time, architects, urban or graphic designers, engineers or landscapers complete the list of creative activities to be found in the neighbourhood. This aspect links with the lifestyle promoted by the Maboneng brand, however it is very concrete and reflects the actual occupations of the community.

Nevertheless, the choice to base Maboneng’s development on the culture market is risky. Indeed, culture is a very uncertain market subjected to trends, as already mentioned. Furthermore, art production does not benefit from high public funding and the local culture is not highly turned towards art consumption, as conceived in the district, whether it is the purchase of pieces of art or the visit of museums and galleries. Thus, the local market is quite narrow, and could limit further economic and urban growth. The ability to diversify the neighbourhood’s activities, and to reach a wider public appear crucial for the success of Maboneng to a larger scale.
PART III – SOCIAL COHESION

Introduction

What does social cohesion mean in Maboneng? An “integrated” neighbourhood in one of the most unequal cities in the world

In the last couple of decades, Johannesburg and South Africa as a whole have been undergoing a rapid and intense transformation of political, economic, spatial and psychosocial order. Although reminiscences of fragmentation and exclusion due to apartheid are still embedded in everyday activities, places of renewed spirit that intend to consolidate such transformations have emerged. Maboneng is no exception and therefore, social cohesion has been identified as a need and a cornerstone strategy for the success of its urban renewal.

As the project is led by a private property developer, it eventually calls our attention that social cohesion is a concern for Propertuity. At the individual level, we were able to grasp that many staff members have a genuine engagement to create a sense of community in the neighbourhood, based on principles of inclusiveness and fair opportunities for the new and old inhabitants. Let’s keep in mind that most of the contributors to Maboneng’s renewal lived the fall of apartheid in their childhood and have experienced profound social transformations ever since, which could explain their individual will to produce social change. However, we were quite intrigued to understand how these personal engagements reconcile with the interest of a private property developer which, in principle, is majorly concerned with the real estate market.

The following chapter intends to provide explanations for the identification and adoption of social cohesion as an imperative for the success of the project. The first part frames the slippery notion of social cohesion in the context of Maboneng, placing special attention on the dimensions of scale, time and actors involved. In this section we raise the issues of the promotion of a particular lifestyle and the strengthening of security as major drivers for Propertuity’s interest to push for social cohesion.

The second part draws on an Emile Durkenheims’s analysis to interpret Propertuity’s emphasis to create an “organic neighbourhood”. This second part also uses Maslow’s pyramid as a tool to better understand the evolution of social integration and we provide some examples of concrete actions currently happening in Maboneng that seem to advance in the right path towards creating an integrated community.

Finally, the third part presents a reflexion on social capital, urging for the creation of actions that dynamize the economic activity whilst building a sense of belonging and fostering trust within and beyond the limits of Maboneng. In this part we put forward the
Part III - Social cohesion

risks and limitations that could burden the creation of social capital in Maboneng as well as the development of social cohesion.

Rather than providing answers to an issue as sensitive as social cohesion or social fragmentation, we intend to ask the pertinent questions that can lead to better understand the main stakes. We make use of several analytic tools and examples to illustrate our reflections, however, the notions of social cohesion and community remain a fertile ground to explore through targeted actions.

1) How to approach social cohesion in South Africa?

In a society which used to be so deeply divided, the question of social cohesion is exacerbated, as this issue cannot only be understood in terms of equality among social backgrounds, but it is entangled with the question of social segregation. Apartheid lays in the past, but its scars remain strong and can easily be seen in the very map of the city: northern neighbourhoods are largely a wealthy preserver with predominantly white population, whereas the impoverished centre was, until recently, inhabited by poor and black people.

Maboneng is part of a dynamic which erodes this segregation, by introducing wealthier and cosmopolite populations within the city centre. However, as Propertuity focuses on the empty buildings, most of them formerly of industrial use, the poorest populations are not evicted, and even made part of the project. We will come back later on Propertuity’s motivation for this stake, but for now, few preliminary and theoretical
remarks are in order, for discovering the neighbourhood raised several questions on social cohesion.

1.1). What does social cohesion even mean?

At the neighbourhood scale

One must underline the specificity of the scale of the neighbourhood. In the violent and unequal society of Johannesburg, where differences of incomes are evident, public services provide the very necessity, wealthier inhabitants turn to private facilities and the educational system has flaws, facing social mixity is a specific stake, for it must deal with a peculiar national context. In other words: when addressing the question of social cohesion at a neighbourhood scale, there are many triggers one cannot pull because it relies on other actors (public actors mainly), at another scale (City, Region, State).

This means that if things are to change, it is impossible to hide behind conditional: in the neighbourhood, it is a necessity to find answers at the neighbourhood scale, without waiting for exogenous solutions. It is inescapable to compose with one recourse. At this scale, ambitious policy cannot be waited for. It is within the streets and the buildings, by making people meet, by creating employment, that social cohesion might ever be achieved.

In time

In France, a great trend is to actually consider social mixity as a state. It actually considers that a static cartography of a neighbourhood might show you what social mixity is about, even if you cannot catch its dynamics. A public policy addressing social cohesion will consider that closeness of different social backgrounds through habitation or education is a manifestation of social mixity. This kind of definition implies that one can achieve social cohesion, and let it be.

Yet, another way to consider it would be to think of social cohesion as dynamics:

- First dynamic, in daily life, social cohesion implies that people from different social backgrounds interact.
- Second dynamic, in the more or less long term, social cohesion means that people from different backgrounds find their places and even can evolve - the famous "social elevator" being efficient.

Those dynamics imply that serious attention needs to be provided to social cohesion. Looking closer, it seems that these dynamics are not only a question of time. They actually challenge the very conception of social cohesion, and invite to rethink and interrogate this notion, as in what is expected of social cohesion and how can it be achieved (if it can be)?

- Does it mean that the neighbourhood organisation should be able to help the poor to get as rich as the wealthy neighbours, thus leading to some kind of high/middle-class neighbourhood?
- Or does it mean that for housing as for work, people from different backgrounds should get a place in it, whatever their incomes might be?
Part III - Social cohesion

A plausible definition might be in-between, by allowing and encouraging both dynamics, so anyone could have a place, and might hope to make one’s place change.

**Between whom?**

Nevertheless, it raises another question: how far can mixity go? Is there some kind of “breaking point”, when people from very different backgrounds are close to each other, and the gap between the wealthiest and the poorest creates frustration, jealousy, or even fear and violence?

This report does not aim at answering those questions. Still, those questions seem absorbing when considering the South African context.

**1.2) Social cohesion: what for?**

As mentioned before, Maboneng is being redeveloped by a private actor. Its caring for social mixity might intrinsically surprise many. Propertuity’s staff appears to be sensitive to social cohesion, which is quite understandable at an individual scale in this post-apartheid city. Still, at a private company level, it hardly is a viable argument. This will of maintaining a social mixity and of favouring social cohesion cannot be seen by the only light of philanthropy, even if social investment remains a key-component in the popularity of a company. Therefore, a careful look is needed on the concept of social cohesion applied to Maboneng district.

As a real estate developer, Propertuity’s mission is not to strengthen social cohesion in the neighbourhood. As its 2013 growth report clearly recalls, the purpose of Propertuity is to create value, for its shareholders, customers and investors. Propertuity is clearly not...
a non-profit organization, but a private actor that aims to make money. Therefore, investing in social cohesion is actually a way to obtain two key factors of Maboneng’s development:
- A lifestyle
- Security.

**Promoting a lifestyle**

By its pioneering position of property developer in a previously marginalized area, Propertuity has no choice but enforcing the development of neighbourhood life and animation, on the standards of other urban fashionable districts, which is an essential condition of its attractiveness and development. Propertuity has an obligation to go beyond the tasks of a classical property developer. Thus, it defines itself as a “neighbourhood developer”, whose role in Maboneng is to develop not only real estate but a neighbourhood life based on the cultural and commercial entertainment, events and places. This “lifestyle” is a central sales argument and a necessary condition for the exercise of its core business: selling square meters of housing and offices.

The multi-ethnic and multi-cultural dimension is part of this argument, because Jonathan Liebmann understood that some customers want to “re-engage” with the city and a certain sense of urbanity abandoned by the South-African middle and upper classes (including the famous creative class). People who buy a flat in Maboneng and live in it are actually appealed by the idea of creating this “rainbow neighbourhood”, which provides a social and cultural diversity. Some of them even present their choice of living in the Precinct as a citizen commitment. It is an essential part of the lifestyle offered by the neighbourhood, and as a consequence, a component of the very brand of Maboneng. Therefore, mixing people from different backgrounds is important as a part of the marketing strategy.

**Ensuring security**

In addition, social cohesion is also a security strategy, knowing that the coexistence of different social classes without integration could lead to exclusion and violence. Ensuring the neighbourhood, especially in the CBD area with its high crime rate, implies avoiding a graft rejection which could be synonymous of attacks and muggings on the wealthy newcomers. Consequently, social cohesion is a way to ensure security of people and goods, obviously, but more coarsely, to avoid or at least diminish rejection movements of the neighbourhood by the surrounding areas.
Thus, contrary to gated developments, Maboneng is marked by the presence of social categories rather distant from the core targeted by Liebmann: the creative middle class. Recyclers, children from poor families living nearby or low-skilled workers are visible in the area and contribute to its animation and economic life.

Those people coming from distant townships or marginalized inner-city sectors, are generally excluded from places where the bourgeoisie usually lives, like the northern suburbs, and where social segregation, not based on skin colour but on economic differentiation, remains strong nowadays. In these areas, the strategy of withdrawal is accompanied by strong security measures (grids, security guards, cameras) which take a conspicuous character. The very presence of these security measures is double-edged, because while it deters aggression, it also indicates the presence of wealth and often causes the opposite effect by attracting the envy of criminals.

In Maboneng, which tries to attract customers coming from those northern suburbs, the security strategy is the opposite. With a safety system reduced to the bare minimum (unarmed officers on street corners and buildings entrances, no gates nor visible cameras) the main idea is to be discrete and not to attract attention of potential criminals. The other pillar of security is the insertion in the surrounding community. Thus, Propertuity encourages the participation of many people from the central districts and other poor areas (sellers, recyclers), develops places of interactions, like playing fields for the street children, and tries to create strong links between Maboneng and the nearby areas (like Mai-Mai market, where visitors are taken on organized city tours). By creating opportunities for the surrounding community, Propertuity aims to promote a good image of the area for the surrounding populations, and a shared interest for the maintenance and development of the neighbourhood.

Figure 27 - Street security agent in Fox Street.
Therefore, the issue of social cohesion arises as a marketing and a security issue, in addition to a philanthropic imperative. As we have been told by someone working for Propertuity and who grew up in the city centre, the area would not be threatened as long as it is identified as a chance and an opportunity for benefits to the local people (business opportunity, education for children, developing one’s skills and social capital, etc.). Only that way, Maboneng will become an integral part of the city centre and not a foreign body to be expelled.

2) Organic neighbourhood

Propertuity’s marketing emphasizes social cohesion as a sales argument. Jonathan Liebmann himself, interviewed by a journalist from the Mail & Guardian, described his project as a "counter-theory to the apartheid era segregation". According to him, Maboneng is a new model of urban development, which requires the creation of a "community", unlimitedly described by his merchandising as an "integrated" neighbourhood.

Another word of that lexical field, often cited by the staff of Maboneng drew our attention: the "organic neighbourhood". The idea highlighted through this term is related to that of close-knit community:
- First, the neighbourhood is associated with a human body, an indivisible organism with its proper energy.
- Second, it stresses the spontaneity of the development process, as opposed to classical urban planning based on a master plan.

We also realized that this word could have another meaning, borrowed from sociological field and in particular to one of the founders of the social sciences: Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist of the late nineteenth century.

2.1) The social cohesion mechanism: how does it work?

The use of the word "organic" in a sociological sense offers an interesting perspective, insofar as it allows to analyse Maboneng as a micro-society _per se_, as if this "community" could be analysed separately as an urban society independent from Johannesburg or South Africa in general, with its own logic and intern dynamic.

**Mechanical solidarity vs. organic solidarity**

As a witness of his time, Durkheim observed the transformation of society after the industrial revolution and analysed how, through the rise of the social division of labour, societies became more and more complex and organized. Then, he wondered how men could remain united in a society that individualized increasingly. In his 1893 book _The Division of Social Work_, Durkheim defines the evolution of solidarity: whereas traditional societies were based on **mechanical solidarity**, marked by consistent and poorly differentiated groups where solidarity between individuals was based on proximity, similarity and shared common history and values, modern solidarities are based on a different pattern.
Indeed, mechanical solidarities must give way to *organic solidarity*, which prevails in modern societies, where the social division of labour induced by the emergence of the industry, implies that individuals are less alike, exercise all very different work and have different values. Solidarity, based on similarities and common values, has no meaning anymore and is replaced by organic solidarity, based on interdependence and complementarities between talent and social and productive capacity. Ironically, societies that seemed threatened by the heterogeneity of social profiles and values, is saved by what endangers the diversity of the population.

Obviously, this "organic" solidarity is not spontaneous, and to be effective, it must be accompanied by numerous intermediate mechanisms that provide the link between individuals in a complex society: schools, unions, market and above all, the government, all of which are pillars of that new social link that gives to our massively heterogeneous societies its unitary character.

This definition of the word "organic" is quite far from the meaning Propertuity and urban scientists usually give to it. However, this theoretical notion seems to be a useful and appropriate enlightening angle for our analysis of Maboneng's social reality. Thus, those different definitions of solidarity lead us to ask which of these models Maboneng can be compared to:

- Given its small scale and homogeneous community, based on fairly similar profiles (artists, young, urban, working in fields related to fashion and leisure, members of the "creative class" in a wide acceptation), can we consider that Maboneng corresponds to a model governed by a mechanical solidarity primitive society?
- Or on the contrary, if we consider Maboneng as a transitional place, populated not only by wealthy residents and established artists, but also by workers and public space users from all social classes and all parts of Johannesburg, are we facing a neighbourhood that reflects the diversity of profiles of the South African society, providing cohesion through the complementarities and interdependence relations?

The importance of personal relationships and solidarities within Maboneng

The answer is probably somewhere in between both solutions: Maboneng is not an island and obviously belongs to a larger whole, the Johannesburg metropolis and its downtown, and as we have seen above, it would be dangerous to consider Maboneng as a homogeneous area separated from its immediate environment. Indeed, beyond the social homogeneity of its "hard core", the creative upper-middle class, a second circle is present and fully participates to the city's life, especially through its work.

However, social relationships across the area seem in many ways marked by the importance of interpersonal relationships, without intermediaries and without institutionalization of these interactions. Artists and creators who settled on the spot often had knowledge of the existence of Maboneng via word of mouth through their peer group. The same applies to the labour market: most employees in shops and restaurants, even the shops tenants themselves, were canvassed and recruited directly via Mafadi or Propertuity members, who already knew them personally before.
Also, actions with a social dimension (like the installation of playgrounds or musical expression classes for the street kids) were often born through the personal initiative of some area's actors and encouraged by Propertuity. The interviews we conducted confirm that fact: very often, personal relationships and interpersonal networks overlap with the economic logic, the labour market or the real estate market, usually disembodied and supported by institutional intermediate relays.

The relatively small scale of Maboneng explains why this "mechanical" kind of solidarity, which transcends the barriers of class and skin colour, is working so well. With the growth of Maboneng, and in a context where social heterogeneity will increase as the area will be open to social profiles more and more distant from the core of artists and other creative people, this kind of social link could no longer suffice. At this time, the introduction of intermediaries (institutions, NGO's, national or city's administrations, or even the same private initiative -as will be exemplified in the third subsection of this chapter-) will be necessary to structure social relations in what increasingly looks like an average sector of the metropolis city, and not any longer to a village, isolated from the common urban fabric. The implementation of these relays and intermediaries is a real challenge for Maboneng. The neighbourhood will need to become "organic" for real.

2.2) Integration as a process: which steps?

Which are the steps then, leading to this kind of organic solidarity? Again, we will try to use the word "organic" to draw an analogy between an urban sector and a human body.

In a 1943 article, the American psychologist Abraham Maslow defined a hierarchy of human needs, which was later resumed and declined by his followers as a pyramid scheme. If this model of human psychology has limitations to describe a complex reality, it summarises the central idea of a hierarchy of needs and a logical gradual process. Thus, each objective can only be achieved if the previous one is fulfilled, otherwise there is great risk of going too fast and undermining the whole edifice by a weak and only apparent social cohesion. The Maslow pyramid, adapted to an "integrated" neighbourhood, seemed an interesting tool, and we decided to use it, despite its limitations and the biases.
The above scheme is a representation of what, in our view, appears to be the progressive mechanism of social cohesion at work in Maboneng:

- The column on the left describes the concrete achievements made in the neighbourhood.
- The one on the right depicts the social effects of those achievements.
- The central one summarises the aim of each step.

Through various successive steps consisting of different degrees of social interaction and cooperation between individuals - more or less strong and of various kinds - social cohesion is achieved, as long as those dynamics remain active and sustainable.

In South Africa, still marked by the stigma of apartheid, in the very heart of one of the most segregated and dangerous metropolis in the world, the first brick of social cohesion is to create public space, where people are able to stay without feeling threatened. By creating housing for different kinds of people nearby, performing security and cleanliness in the streets, making it possible for all of them to occupy public spaces, ProPertuity was able to create a safe and clean neighbourhood. This is a basic step, which allows only the weakest interactions between individuals: living next to each other. This is an indispensable condition for achieving the upper steps of the pyramid, and it is already something quite rare in Johannesburg and even South Africa.

By creating those conditions and attraction for everybody, Maboneng offers a shared public space. The district is attractive to all people, not only the poor ones from JeppesTown who were already there before ProPertuity’s project started, but also the white suburbanians living in the north, visiting the Sunday market or settling in one of the lofts, or even the black middle class from Soweto. Through various events and activities for all kinds of public, workers and consumers, businessmen and artists, black and white,
Maboneng creates an open and **mixed-use neighbourhood**, where people are able to live next to each other, to **interact** and share common passions.

It is only after this interaction, when people begin to know each other, feel comfortable next to each other and create social capital in the precinct, that they can truly **collaborate** together. Business holders can hire waiters, sellers, cooks or security agents, creating **employment** or partners to **create new businesses**. At this stage, Maboneng becomes a real **collaborative neighbourhood**.

Finally, the top of the pyramid is reached when individuals who already live together, collaborate and share common interests such as **art, culture or lifestyle**, begin to develop a **collective sense of belonging** to the area. They start to define themselves through the neighbourhood, as “citizens” of Maboneng. Only then, after all those progressive stages of cohesion, the district becomes a real **integrated community**. We will foster on the last stages of the pyramid in the last section of this chapter.

### Building the pyramid by actions

Three concrete examples show how actions actually help to pass from one step to another or to reinforce its foundations:

1. **Public spaces**: we already wrote about public spaces and how they were a new idea in Johannesburg. One can easily see how by creating shared places which are more than just the street, the neighbourhood can go from being made of “safe and clean” streets, if well managed, to become a mixed neighbourhood where people will meet around a skate park or at the terrace of a restaurant installed on the pavement. The improvement made by those kinds of amenities are quite obvious when looking at seven-year old kids encountering young workers in order to play table tennis.

   **“I was shot in Joburg”:** this is an artistic initiative. The idea was to give a camera to kids of the neighbourhood in order to make them photograph the city, the places they
Part III - Social cohesion

live in and things they like in the neighbourhood. Different things were made from those photographs: some were framed, some printed on hard-covered notebooks, on small objects, etc. Kids were paid for it, and it became a way to promote the neighbourhood and its community. From “the mixed neighbourhood” where artists and kids can interact, this initiative gave birth to dynamics of “collaborative neighbourhood” where people actually gain something by interacting or working together, and of “integrated community” by making a sense of belonging and pride.

Social housing: this is actually only a project, for it had to take place once the neighbourhood style was well installed. Propertuity is now developing social housing for people working in the neighbourhood and other people who cannot afford a classical flat. This initiative has sense now that there is some kind of “integrated community”, and helps having “a safe and clean neighbourhood” with more different kinds of people “living next to each other”.

The pyramid is thus not only a upward phenomenon: the foundations constantly need care in order to avoid social homogeneity.

2.3) Financing social cohesion: how sustainable can it be?

A peculiar interest one could find when analysing social cohesion driven by a private actor is to see which are the rules that emancipate social actions from charity, in order to make them economically viable, and, thus, sustainable.

Therefore, there are actually three kinds of actions which have a social impact within Maboneng:
First, social developments which rely on a relevant financial set-up. They might imply large amounts of money (such as social housing) but have to be economically sustainable. This is the model of development of the social housing project: even if it is not as profitable as high-standard redevelopments, it is not to lose money. Those kinds of social actions are actually quite new within the Precinct.

Second, there are social initiatives which do not follow a financial logic, meaning, they will not bring back money. Nevertheless, those less costly initiatives will provide indirect profit, such as an atypical lifestyle and security. Those are the philanthropic actions which do not call for huge investment. Buying a cover in order to protect the street skate park offered by an association, or encouraging inhabitants to involve themselves in activities with poor kids of the neighbourhood are examples of this kind of actions.

Thirdly, many actions, which were not initially designed to be social, actually help directly or not to strengthen the social cohesion, for they were cleverly thought of. It is the case with the clauses Propertyity puts inside contracts with subcontractors in order to make them employ people from the neighbourhood and around.

A board, available in annexe, tries to clarify which actions contribute to social cohesion, by distinguishing their primary goals and their side effects.

3) From integration to social capital

Having explained the relevance of social cohesion, its link to the organic neighbourhood, and the potential of some initiatives happening in Maboneng to foster it, this section will explore one of its key elements: social capital.

On the one hand, social capital has the potential to increase economic activity, providing the non-market conditions of economic growth (Mayer, 2003 p.111). On the other hand, social capital enhances citizen engagement and associative life in the neighbourhood, creating a good sense of belonging. Therefore, if we go back to the Maslow’s Pyramid in the previous section, social capital is part of the most advanced stages of integration, projecting collaboration, identity and belonging.

Social capital is an asset based on trust and reciprocity among individuals, which produces stronger and more diverse social networks and, therefore, more opportunities for individual and collective development. A community in which trust is important will tend to have more social capital, being more resilient and self-managing as well as more prone to economic success.

Where trust is missing however, social networks tend to be weaker and therefore, there is a tendency towards dysfunctional cycles, expressed in problems such as unemployment, discrimination, crime, low-skilled and low-income population, poor housing and bad health conditions, as well as family disorders (Cochrane, 2007, p.53) and low solidarity. Therefore, social capital is at the outset of community well-being, a strong sense of belonging and economic progress, and it relies on networks, reciprocity and trust.

3.1) How to produce social capital in a place like Maboneng?
The example of Open.

Social capital has been hard to build in a society healing from apartheid, in which the lack of trust fostered major segregation and exclusion in social as well as spatial terms.
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As mentioned before, the Maboneng project has managed to foster social cohesion in the neighbourhood and by doing so, signs of production of social capital have appeared. One example can be highlighted; the activities at Open, a collaborative working space located in The Main Change building.

Open, like many other co-working spaces that have emerged throughout the world, provides what the new generation of young creative professionals need to work. Unlike a typical office environment, it is a shared space dedicated to professional activity for a diversity of small businesses, start-ups and other professionals, who benefit from agglomeration, proximity, ICTs and affordable fix-costs. It offers high speed internet access, shared boardrooms and printers and other innovative amenities such as an outside terrace, a lounge, a coffee bar and even a mini golf green to clear out the working minds for a while.

Although occasional usage of the facilities is possible with day vouchers, most users hold memberships of different modalities depending on their specific needs. However, the most valuable asset of any co-working space such as Open, is its ability to foster networking and provide a creative and innovative environment in which ideas can easily emerge and bounce with others’. This community of professionals creates social capital by adapting space to current economic needs and institutionalized networks around it. It has members from and outside of Maboneng, therefore, stretching the contact of the neighbourhood to other parts of the city at the economic and professional levels.

Interesting enough, Open also holds events that expand the social and professional networks to businesses and active citizen organizations; during our visit we attended the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory event that was held at Open and broadcasted live on national television. Representatives of many different civil society organizations, young leaders and members of the academia were present and able to discuss about the challenges faced by the South African society and the role of active citizenry to build social cohesion. After the conference, we stayed for the toast and as pastries and live music cheered the event, we witnessed how people met, exchanging contacts, opinions and smiles. We were glad to recognize some faces of people who work or live in the precinct but for most of them, it had been a long time since they last approached the city centre, and they were of course impressed to visit the facilities and witness the transformation of Maboneng.

This sort of events not only exposés the place to the media in a positive way, but it also reinforces the sense of belonging and ownership for the locals, leaving a mark in the imagery of outsiders. In this sense, Maboneng is providing a space to attract the third sector and active citizens, which is really important to create resilience and citizen engagement.

At this same event we met up with a young entrepreneur who told us that he did not live in Maboneng but he had attended 'The Hook-Up Dinner' at Open. This event, which started in 2012, gathers different entrepreneurs once a month and provides a platform for some of them to share their business ideas with the rest of the audience who bounce, nourish and encourage such ideas and at the same time, look for business partners and complementary projects. These events expand the social and professional network created on the basis of Open, but also maintain it active and dynamic. By addressing business as well as civic engagement activities, Open is a hub for social capital in Maboneng, having the capacity to attract and project such capital outside the boundaries of the precinct.
3.2) What are the limitations for the creation of social capital in Maboneng?

Although the spaces of creation and strengthening of social capital are by no means limited to the activities held at Open, there are certain common elements that can burden it. Most importantly, segregation and exclusion have been named as the most damaging behaviours to social capital, social cohesion and building a sense of community. The post-apartheid society has achieved much success to counter exclusion and segregation in Johannesburg, and spaces of social ‘cicatrisation’, like Maboneng, have increasingly emerged. However, strong evidence of physical, as well as social fragmentation still remain.

To a certain extent the Maboneng precinct has succeeded in reconciling people from different ethnicities, nationalities and backgrounds within its limits, weather to inhabit, work in or entertain. Maboneng stands out as a multicultural and multiethnic area in the city centre, overcoming many practices and prejudices that still haunt other parts of downtown and the city as a whole.

One of the limitations to social capital that remains evident is the marked ethnic difference in power relations. More often than not, owners, employers or administrators were white South Africans or of European origins, whilst in almost all of the cases, employees were coloured, weather from South Africa or neighbouring countries. This marked difference could be reduced in the following years if the creation and strengthening of social capital remains open to a diversity of social and ethnic backgrounds. Important to mention however, is that we did meet with a couple of black young men and women who were achieving their dreams at Maboneng. This, together with the aforementioned initiatives that reinforce social cohesion, foster the idea that Maboneng is indeed a place of opportunities for all, which is one if its strongest points of attractiveness and competitiveness of the whole project.

Another limitation for the precinct to foster the creation of social capital lies in its lack of ability to blend with its surroundings. Whilst it has been successful in attracting people from the outside of precinct and even the city centre, curious to visit the Market on Main on Sundays or to participate at the events at Open, or even to work there, the immediate surroundings highly contrast. People from outside the precinct are sometimes seen like strangers and there is little trust in them. We even met with groups of young men that are not quite part of the like-minded people attracted by the fresh feeling at Maboneng, but live in the surrounding areas, who were just hanging out or wandering outside of the Market, as if waiting to be noticed or taken into account. They too had dreams to enter the arts and creative arena, but they were just waiting for an opportunity to happen at Maboneng.

The inability of Maboneng to absorb the potential and talent that comes from the surrounding areas could threaten its process towards social cohesion and waste important social capital. At the same time, the inability of Maboneng to build trust within the surrounding areas can create sentiments of opposition or rejection in the neighbouring precincts. Therefore, the enhancement of social capital is a key to build social cohesion in Maboneng, through inclusive social and professional networks and building trust and reciprocity within and beyond the precinct.

As has been mentioned in this whole section, building and consolidating social cohesion to its highest level is an imperative for the success of Maboneng’s renewal project. Propertuity has a strong interest to lead this challenge, not only for security and marketing reasons, but also to motivate economic dynamism and create a genuine sense of belonging. At the same time other businesses, organizations and initiatives must follow
since it is only by expanding the efforts and sharing the responsibility that social cohesion and social capital will be produced.

One initiative can also illustrate this issue: Awethu is a company whose professional coaches help auto-entrepreneurs to realise their dreams. One coach thus helped two young men creating their car wash business with used water, while another coach was currently helping a former recycler to create Hero Waste, a company to build a network of recyclers in order to suppress intermediaries between them and retraining factories, and provide them sustainable jobs and better conditions of living. According to the same idea, Propertuity actually provided premises to a young hatter for free for few months - time for him to start his business and being able to pay a rent. These kind of actions are crucial to make out of the precinct, a resilient, self-improving spearhead of the opportunities brought about by the transformations that the whole country is undergoing in economic, social and physical terms.
CONCLUSION

At the end of this report, we wanted to recall the peculiarities of Maboneng that seemed the most specific to us. For this project is young, we will emphasize three dynamics which reveal the way this renewed neighbourhood is building itself. Those dynamics outline what could be a kind of model of urban regeneration, as Maboneng seems to be a transitional space within an urban context marked by strong insecurity and inequality.

Maboneng can be first defined by the dominance of one single private actor in the creation and rejuvenation development of the district. Propertuity is the only property developer in this area, but expanded its role to intervention in public spaces and even in promoting a new way a life within the City. Propertuity still defines itself as a “neighbourhood developer”, but Maboneng’s governance is changing with the creation of new institutional tools (CID, new partnerships with the municipality etc.) and new actors, allowing Propertuity to focus on its core business while maintaining control on the strategic decisions at the same time because of its central position.

Maboneng provides a context in which creative expression is encouraged. Indeed, creativity seems at the core of the neighbourhood’s recent success story, a pillar in its construction, branding and simply being. Three elements convey this context: an urban renewal project dedicated to art, an artistic community living in the district, an ostensible image of art on the public space to invite inhabitants to get involved into the process. Our shared experience of the precinct led us to identify creativity as a powerful motor of development and a broad innovation process with talented expression at the origin of the neighbourhood’s successful experience.

As many regenerated neighbourhoods, Maboneng hosts a quite homogenized urban community with a defined, branded identity of young, hipster, creative class. Nevertheless, Maboneng also displays a strong will of economic and entrepreneurial integration promoted by Propertuity and its partners within the district. Creating opportunities for locals, whether from surrounding neighbourhoods or individuals living in Johannesburg’s outskirts, to find jobs or to become emergent entrepreneurs, and create a thriving business environment, has been one of the strong goals set by Propertuity.

Based and defined by its urban rejuvenation development started and led through art and supported by the “creative community”, Maboneng concentrates the contradictions and ambiguities of urban development dynamics in South Africa, acting like an interface and being by itself a kind of transitional place between different dynamics, actors and social classes.

Indeed, attractive because it is appealing to different segments of the Johannesburg population for different reasons, whether originating from rich northern suburbs or townships, the district can be considered as an interface within the reviving city centre. Nevertheless, it appears too early as to properly state it for the project is maintaining a very high development rate which prevents us from affirming its model as stable. The project is maturing, and so is its governance and functioning model which still need further development to clarify their ambiguities and enable further precisions for the observer.
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