



18,286 People received CoCare vouchers across 8 areas.

184 Kitchens supported with funds to keep their kitchens running during Covid.

68 Gardens supported with CoCare Vouchers, new infrastructure, and training.

233 ECD's supported.

1002 Kitchen volunteers received CoCare Vouchers.

96 new VNET Wifi hotspots added across the 8 areas.

Partnering with communities

VPUU views a community as a key strategic partner. When working in a community, a research-based and highly participatory methodology is used. The approach requires a sufficient time investment in people and consistent development processes. As part of the methodology, a representative leadership group is formed and capacitated to act as an inclusive leadership group for the citizens and community organisations of the project area. This reflects international best practice of violence prevention organisations including UN Habitat Safer Cities Programme¹ and

the World Health Organisation's Life Cycle Approach. It combines these best practices with the concept of asset based community development informed by the context and community knowledge within South Africa.

The Towards Building a Community Circular Economy project builds on this legacy of partnering with community. Eight neighbourhoods (Manenberg, Hanover Park, Bonteheuwel, Kuyasa, Harare, Monwabisi Park, Nyanga and Gugulethu) in Cape Town in which the partnership between the City of Cape Town and VPUU has been operating are part of the project Towards Building a Community Circular Economy.

This project is a logical consequence of the up to fifteen-year relationship that VPUU has with these neighbourhoods and illustrates commitment to continuing these partnerships, to co-create safe and sustainable urban neighbourhoods. A key consideration in selecting the eight neighbourhoods for this project was the long-standing relationship that VPUU has with local communities through the representative committees and the existence of Community Action Plans (CAPs - a road map for implementing localised solutions to improve the Quality of Life). The selection for eligible facilities and local partner organisations was approved by the local representative groups in those neighbourhood.

Strengthening community organisations

The Towards Building a Community Circular Economy recognises the important safety net that community organisations provide for the most vulnerable. These include food kitchens, community gardens and early childhood development centres. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, resources are running low and volunteers having to return back to work. To maintain the important work that community organisations do, the Towards Building a Circular Economy project rewards voluntarism with Community Care vouchers and provides a variety of inputs – food staples for food kitchens, equipment for food kitchens and community gardens, and small infrastructural inputs for early childhood development centres and community gardens.

Engagement is done through sector forums – garden forums such as the Gugulethu Urban Farming Initiative (GUFI)² and the Hanover Park Agriculture and Greening Forum³; neighbourhood level ECD forums; antenatal support groups (e.g. Flourish in Hanover Park) and informal soup kitchen networks.

This is reflective of VPUU's broader commitment to having a long term positive impact, where partnering communities are empowered to make decisions which affect their own livelihoods.

Placing the community front and centre

The Towards Building a Community Circular Economy project provides a direct financial injection into local economies through the Community

Care vouchers, redeemed at spaza shops through Flash and Kazang networks. This injects a significant amount (R3 million per week) to stimulate the local economy, and is a deliberate choice to focus on the circular nature of local economies. The concept 'circular economy' is often understood in relation to ecological sustainability, highlighting the circularity of the production, consumption and waste cycle that defines our global economy. Adding 'community' to this concept shifts the focus, to emphasise the circularity of local communities and their economies. By providing inputs at various key nodes of the community circular economy, the project has a multiplier effect.