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21 The 2010 World Cup and its legacy in the Ellis Park Precinct: Perceptions of local residents

ALY KARAM AND MARGOT RUBIN

> It is certainly the case that the host cities talk of the 2010 'legacy', anticipating that the greater benefit of hosting 2010 matches will lie less in the event itself than in the long-term benefits of transport, sports and other infrastructure investment and the image created of the cities as a destination for tourists and investment.
>
> – Udesh Pillay quoted in Sindane, 2006

The 2010 FIFA World Cup was hailed by the South African government as an event that would leave a multitude of social and economic legacies. Sibongile Mazibuko, the executive director of the 2010 office, explained, 'For many years to come we want to look back with pride at this great event. But even more, we want to use the experience of putting it together as a springboard to leap into the future' (CoJ 2009: 328).

The South African government wanted to 'also use this opportunity to speed up the delivery of services and infrastructure. The investment related to the World Cup encompasses a large range of projects. These projects will leave a lasting legacy for the people of South Africa' (GCIS n.d.: 3). However, the jury is still out on the effect of mega events, such as the Summer Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup, on local economic activity (Sterken 2006). Barclay observes that the Summer Olympic Games can stimulate GDP but the FIFA World Cup cannot. He raises doubt as to the effectiveness of such events and goes on to say that reports 'overestimate the gains and underestimate the costs involved' (Barclay 2009: 62). A number of other authors have expressed concern about the potentially negative impacts of mega events, such as the possible conflicts of interest that arise (Herzenberg 2011), the capture of huge sums of money for what is essentially an elitist event (Ngonyama 2010), and the relocations that can occur (COHRE 2007).

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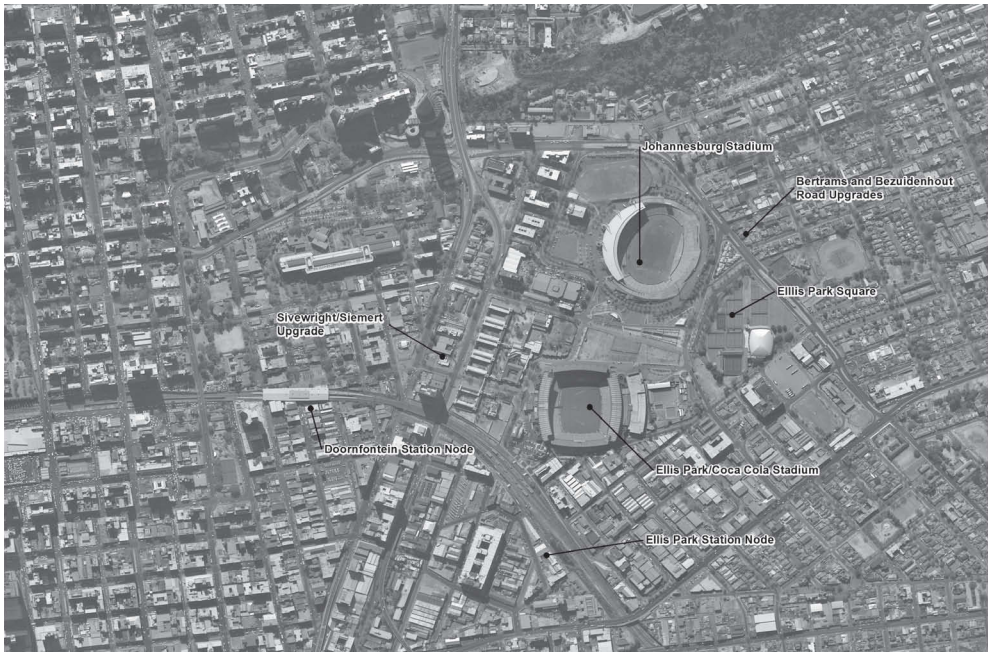

FIGURE 21.1: Ellis Park soccer precinct, 2010
Data source: NGI (2010). Cartography by Chris Wray

The question for South Africa is: has a legacy (positive or negative) materialised? And what are the perceptions of the residents of the various precincts who were supposed to have benefited from the World Cup? In attempting to answer these questions, we focus in this chapter on the Ellis Park Precinct (Figure 21.1) and on its residents' perceptions of the legacy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup for them and their families.

The findings from a survey[1] conducted in August 2010 indicate that, although significant investment was made in the Ellis Park Precinct, the legacy of this investment is perceived as having made only a moderate change in people's lives across a range of indicators. Overall, many of the respondents felt that the Greater Ellis Park Precinct had become a better place in which to live as a result of the World Cup. However, when asked, 'What do you think has been the biggest change in your life as a result of the World Cup?' 58 per cent of respondents replied 'nothing'. Similarly, the intangibles of nation building and social cohesiveness which were touted as further legacies of the event do not seem to have made a significant impression on the precinct. In this chapter we explore these findings in more detail, and argue that the substantial investments in the precinct were perceived quite positively by the residents, who felt that the changes improved some aspects of their lives.

The Ellis Park Precinct

The Ellis Park Precinct consists of the area surrounding the Johannesburg Stadium and the Standard Bank Arena, east of the Johannesburg inner city, and includes Doornfontein, New

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Doornfontein, Bertrams, Bezuidenhout Valley, Troyeville, Judith's Paarl and Lorentzville. Since the mid 1990s, and similar to other inner-city neighbourhoods, the precinct had been faced with infrastructural decline. In 2006 one journalist described it as follows: 'Yet while it's no longer the garbage dump it once was, the precinct still has its problems, given its location in the heart of Hillbrow's slums and Doornfontein's run-down buildings' (Craig 2006).

In 2005 the Johannesburg Development Agency reported that 'the profile of the area is now predominately low-income with a large unemployed population' and most people earning between R801–R3 200 per month (CoJ 2005: 8). To the south and east of the stadium light industry as well as medium-density two- to three-storey walk-ups and free-standing residential units are prevalent. The City of Johannesburg has reported that many old factories have been informally converted into residential spaces and 'doss houses'. Recycling activities, second-hand shops, scrap-metal dealers, motor mechanics, tuck shops and illegal liquor outlets all typify the area (CoJ 2011).

World Cup investments: promises and delivery

The City of Johannesburg claimed that it would achieve not only what was required of it by the FIFA regulations, but would go beyond these expectations to 'leverage the things we must do to make this the best fan experience ever', one that 'leave[s] a positive legacy for the citizens' (CoJ 2009: 330).

The initial plans for the Ellis Park Precinct were ambitious, with a host of sub-precinct developments across the neighbourhoods, including mixed-use high streets, international sports training facilities and the development of a cultural centre around the Alhambra Theatre, all of which would have cost R2 billion (CoJ 2006). The plans were soon modified to more modest proportions at a final cost of R423 million for the entire Ellis Park Precinct (CoJ 2011).

Aside from the upgrading of the Coca Cola Stadium, which was completed by the end of 2008, the precinct upgrade included enhancing community sport facilities and heritage houses located near the stadium, improving street lighting, updating fundamental infrastructure such as electrical generators and water supply, and implementing the Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transport system (CoJ 2009). Doornfontein and New Doornfontein received public environment improvements that included public art and the redevelopment of the End Street Park. These were completed to integrate and extend the Ellis Park Precinct to serve a wider community (CoJ 2011). The main access roads into and out of the precinct, some of the local parks and the Doornfontein station were all improved as part of the redevelopment. The regeneration and upgrade were completed with a host of private and public funds, including the Johannesburg Development Agency, the Affordable Housing Company and the City of Johannesburg. The perception of the city is that:

> The neighbourhood has experienced change and serious degradation due to a transition in occupants from those with low or no income to absent landlords, illegal sub-letting and overcrowding. Residential buildings are illegally occupied at high occupancy rates

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> and this accelerates their decline. The rental and property values are declining and historical and cultural heritage is being destroyed. The safety and security and other illegal activities in these neighbourhoods are deteriorating to levels where law enforcement becomes a serious challenge. (CoJ 2010: 106)

Thus despite the massive investment in the area, the City of Johannesburg feels that the area still needs significant improvements. In the following section we contrast this view with the residents' perceptions of the FIFA World Cup legacy and report on a survey conducted directly after the World Cup in August 2010.[2]

Perceptions of change by local residents

The survey included 357 respondents, all of whom lived within a 1 km radius of the stadium. The majority of respondents (60 per cent) were Africans from South Africa, with smaller subsets of Africans not from South Africa (63 respondents, approximately 18 per cent), and white respondents (27 in total, 7.6 per cent). There were 6 per cent more male than female respondents, and the demographic was young (63.3 per cent were under the age of 40). Most lived in households of three or more people, with a surprisingly high percentage (20.7 per cent) living with five to six people. In terms of housing, equal numbers of respondents lived in free-standing units and flats (125 respondents or 35 per cent), with a significant proportion (almost 17 per cent) living in backyard rooms. More than three-quarters of respondents rented their homes and only 17 per cent reported that they owned the home in which they lived. Most respondents were long-term residents and 23 per cent of the sample had lived in the area for more than ten years. A similar percentage (22.7 per cent) had lived in the area for five to ten years and 31 per cent for between two and five years. Respondents were not well off; over a third (34.5 per cent) reported a monthly household expenditure of between R1 501 and R3 000 and 26 per cent of less than R1 500 a month. This was matched by the employment figures: most respondents were in elementary jobs (28.3 per cent), unemployed (15.7 per cent) or engaged in technical or trade work (10.9 per cent).

Some of the most striking findings were that 36 per cent said that they had not experienced any changes as a result of the World Cup. A further 23.8 per cent of the sample said that although they had seen changes in their physical environment, they did not feel that the changes had benefited anyone in their household. In response to the question, 'What do you think has been the biggest change in your life as a result of the World Cup?' 206 out of the 357 respondents (almost 58 per cent) said 'nothing'.

Infrastructure constituted one of the main areas of focus and investment by the city and improvements were made to water and electricity supply, streets, the physical environment (pavements, street lighting) and public transport. Respondents were asked if they thought there was any change in the various infrastructure indicators and to rate these.[3] Respondents felt that there had been improvements in a number of realms: almost 40 per cent said the roads were now better; 36 per cent said pavements had improved and a further 11 per cent said roads were 'much better'. Responses to changes in street lighting

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were also positive – 40 per cent of respondents saw some improvement and just under 10 per cent saw improvements that made their daily life better. In relation to water supply, electricity and sewerage, the results were less positive and in all cases the majority (up to 60 per cent in the case of water and 62 per cent in the case of sewerage) saw no changes. These results need to be considered in light of the fact that, unless rather radical changes occur, differences in road quality, street lighting and pavements are probably easier to discern than changes in water supply, sanitation and electricity.

Respondents were asked about public transport, an area of massive investment, and 63.6 per cent said that they perceived some form of improvement. Over 40 per cent stated that public transport was 'better' in their areas. It is interesting to note that almost 68 per cent of the respondents who said transport was 'better' or 'much better' earned less than R3 000 a month. This indicates that some of the poorer members of the community have benefited from investment in transportation. Interestingly, over a third of respondents felt that security had improved in their areas, and 40 per cent thought that there was a greater police presence as a result of and since the World Cup.

Almost 40 per cent of respondents felt that there had been a positive change in refuse collection, but nearly 60 per cent perceived no change in the provision of amenities such as libraries, parks or community centres. In all aspects, however, a small minority, generally below 15 per cent, stated that they thought that things had worsened as a result of the World Cup.

The survey also aimed to test some of the less tangible legacies, such social cohesion and nation building. Some positive responses were received in relation to statements such as: the World Cup created a good atmosphere (22.9 per cent), created a sense of community cohesion (16.3 per cent), made me proud to be a South African (18.7 per cent) and made me proud to be an African (18.2 per cent). Very few respondents said that they were unaffected (4.7 per cent), inconvenienced (2.3 per cent) or felt excluded (1.7 per cent). Notably, some 65 per cent reported that they had experienced no change in their relationship with their neighbours.

Conclusion

The World Cup provided an opportunity for investment in the physical environment of the Greater Ellis Park Precinct. Significant improvements and upgrades were made to the infrastructure and public space in the precinct, and it is clear from the survey that the majority of respondents perceive a change in certain aspects of their quality of life as a result. Overall, many of the respondents felt that the Precinct had become a better place to live as a result of the World Cup and the associated investment. Some of the poorest residents benefited directly from the improved public transport system. Thus, in this particular location, the World Cup had the desired effect of leveraging investment to better the lives of people living there.

Nevertheless, the survey findings indicate that not all investments had perceived benefits, even though significant investment occurred. The sewage system is one example,

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as are the stadia and sports facilities that do not seem to be used by residents. Legacies related to social cohesion and nation building were also less prominent than the organisers may have hoped, with few people seeing a change in relations with their neighbours, fellow Africans and people of different genders. These findings were drawn from a survey conducted immediately after the World Cup, and it remains to be seen how residents will perceive the legacies of the World Cup in further two or three years into the future.

Notes

1 The authors would like to acknowledge the GCRO for its generous contribution towards this project and thank the postgraduate students from ARPL 4025 of 2010 at the School of Architecture and Planning, who conducted the surveys.
2 The survey was part of a three-year longitudinal study of the impact of the World Cup in the Greater Ellis Park Precinct. The project ran from 2010–2012.
3 Each stage was defined, so that 'much better' meant an improvement to the respondent's life on a daily basis, 'better' meant a general improvement on a weekly or monthly basis, and the same measure was used for 'worse' and 'much worse'.

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