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Ke ya rona (it is ours): a review of the levels of community engagement towards the sustainable development of community arts centers in South Africa focusing on shared ownership.

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Abstract

This research report assesses the extent of community engagement practiced at Sibikwa Arts Centre in Benoni and Funda Community College in Soweto. This is done to ascertain the effectiveness of community engagement in terms of shared ownership of the community and the community art centre managers; it also determines its contribution to the sustainable development of the community and the arts. This is necessary because South African community art centres are recognized as dysfunctional as they have been utilized for purposes other than the arts and are noted as experiencing managerial problems, leadership problems, as well as that of insufficient funding. Therefore, the factors of community engagement that are examined in this research are the method/s used, the objective of the method/s, the effectiveness of the method/s according to Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation and the effectiveness in terms of community and sustainable art development.

The report concentrates on measuring the centres engagement with their surrounding communities, and how this has directly contributed to the operations of the centres. Based on the case studies and drawing parallels from international case studies, the report proposes a developed model of community engagement that could be implemented broadly in South African art centres in an effort towards the progressive functioning of community art centres.