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The emergence and development of 'Beautiful Things' craft project in the inner city of Johannesburg

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Objectives of the Study:

The objective of this research is to record and document the emergence and development of *Beautiful Things* craft project at the Cultural Precinct of Johannesburg in Newtown. This documentation of the emergence and development of *Beautiful Things* engages critical debates on development of cultural tourism initiatives in relationship to the processes of i*nner city regeneration.* This research provides an interpretation of *Beautiful Things'* emergence and development in the inner city of Johannesburg as a heritage and cultural tourism enterprise. The research provides a historical and international perspective regarding the development of heritage and cultural tourism industries in cities. This is followed by an insight into the nature of Johannesburg City's tourism policies and development strategies and their influence on the emergence and development of *Beautiful Things* in Newtown. This research is guided by theories of local economic development, precinct-based development approaches, economic neo-liberalism and de-industrialization, all which are appropriate in defining *Beautiful Things* within the parameters of inner city regeneration. The last level of analysis is an empirical study that focuses on recording the history and the internal composition of the project as well as its performance as a stand-alone organization. Of particular interest is a record of the project's contents such as craft products on exhibition and sale, the nature of the participants and the measurable impacts of the project on the physical, social and economic regeneration of the Johannesburg inner city. *Beautiful Things* exists within the Newtown Cultural Precinct, and its role within this *locale* is inseparably intertwined with the role of the precinct as whole. In this way, the emergence

and development of *Beautiful Things* at Johannesburg inner city provides a manageable study that mirrors the role of Newtown Cultural Precinct within the inner city of Johannesburg. In a nutshell, this research is a study of theories, policies and practices that influence the emergence and development of heritage and cultural industries in inner cities hence *Beautiful Things* has been identified as a case study.

Motivation for the study:

Beautiful Things has, on its own, contributed to the regeneration of the inner city of Johannesburg. The project has a measurable impact on rejuvenating the decaying and declining parts of inner city and as such, this project provides a significant case study on the role of heritage and cultural industries in inner cities. This research is useful as a valuable addition to scarce academic resources on the development of urban heritage and cultural tourism in the South.

Methodology:

This research is a product of a qualitative research methodology. A number of theoretical issues were identified from extensive literature review. The first chapter is informed by literature review on historical and international experiences on how and why heritage and cultural tourism industries were developed in the cities of Western countries. This pool of literature became vital in tracing international trends on the emergence and development of urban heritage and cultural tourism industries and the location of *Beautiful Things* within Newtown Cultural Precinct is indirectly influenced by these international practices. All this academic literature on international experiences is available at the University of Witwatersrand's libraries. The second chapter is a review of relevant tourism policy and strategy documents of the City of Johannesburg. These policy and strategy documents are of great significance in explaining why the Newtown Cultural Precinct came to be an ideal location for *Beautiful Things*. The policy documents of the Johannesburg tourism were accessed from the City of Johannesburg's library. The third chapter was compiled through an empirical study of the project and this was achieved through observation, targeted interviews and project's pamphlets. A total of five interviewees participated in the process to show the project's impact on socio-economic regeneration. Pamphlets were accessed from the project's archive and provided information on craft products on sale and exhibition.

Chapter One:

The Historical and International Context on the Emergence and Development of Urban Heritage and Cultural tourism

This chapter focuses on theories that have been developed to explain the emergence and development of urban tourism in general. Urban tourism is an umbrella term for all tourism activities being initiated in inner cities in order to attract tourism. It is in this context that the emergence and development of heritage and cultural tourism industries become inseparable from the development of urban tourism in general. The major theories that have dominated the debate on the growth of urban tourism include theories of local economic development, economic decentralization, neo-liberalization, and of - global economic restructuring and de-industrialization of traditional manufacturing industries. In many instances these concepts are interlinked to one another. This chapter will interrogate these theories bearing in mind that they are the same concepts that shape the nature of Johannesburg tourism policies and in turn, influence the emergence and development of *Beautiful Things* at Newtown Cultural Precinct in the inner city.

The emergence and development of urban heritage and cultural tourism began in the cities of the North. While a number of cities in the states of the South have of late seized the opportunity to utilize historic resources in urban areas in order to attract tourism to the inner city, the roots of urban heritage and cultural tourism development are profoundly Western. It is quite difficult to trace the exact period when the cities of the North adopted the idea of urban

heritage and cultural tourism but it is clear that the development of urban tourism in countries of Western Europe and North America rose into prominence in the early 1980s. According to Law (1992: p599) the severe recession of 1980-82 and the distress it caused in inner cities caused an upsurge of interest in the development of urban tourism. Law indicates that this upsurge of interest in British cities was also influenced by examples of such places like Baltimore and Boston that revealed positive experiences of developing urban tourism. This indicates that the development of inner city tourism in the United States began much earlier than the 1980s.

Among a number of explanations for the rise of urban tourism, the advent of the concept of local economic development is at the forefront. This theory states that it is tourism's perfect relevance to the ideas of local economic development that leads to its utilization by many cities throughout the world. Scott (2004: p463) states that the increasing awareness of a connection between aspects of urban cultural environment and local economic development began to make its appearance some time in the early 1980s. In the cities of the North, the 1980s saw a number of significant developments in the inner cities, which provided the impetus of developing such concepts as tourism-led local economic development strategies (LED).

Local economic development is a concept that emerged at a time when central governments began to relegate economic responsibilities to provincial, local and municipal governments. In other words, the concept is a byproduct of economic decentralization, an ideology that emphasized minimal

interference of national governments in the economic affairs of localities. The sudden withdrawal of the national government left a gap, which cities had to fill not only through managing their economic affairs but also by developing innovative ways of generating their income. Local economic development therefore became a term that came to define innovative strategies for the economic survival of localities after the withdrawal of the national state, hence the tourism industry fitted with strategic concerns of localities.

During the same period when issues of economic development became the domain of various localities in developed states, the withdrawal of the national state signaled global economic restructuring that manifested itself through the deregulation of national boundaries, thereby leading to the development of *laissez faire* neo-liberal systems of trade and an open flow of capital, people, goods and services across borders. As global economic competition between nation-states declined, there was a surge of economic competition between cities. During these important processes of globalization and localization, the tourism industries emerged as a more appropriate mechanism for coping with the negative impacts of the processes (Law: 1992). This is reiterated by Chang *etal* (1996: p284) who state that the emergence of urban tourism can be understood at two contrasting but interlinked scales of analysis, that is the global-local nexus, where the effects of widespread economic restructuring became an issue to be dealt with at a local level. This underscores the impact of global economic restructuring and the relevance of tourism industries in both circumventing negative impacts and utilizing the benefits of the system from a local level.

While the 1980s in the developed states was a decade of global economic restructuring and localization of economic development for such entities as cities, provinces, rural districts and villages, another important development was concurrently taking place, affecting mostly cities and compelling them to adopt tourism initiatives. During this period, de-industrialization of traditional manufacturing industries took place in many cities of the North, leading to the abundance of derelict sites, economic decline, and unemployment and general urban decay (Law: 1992). It was coincidental that during the same period when traditional manufacturing industries were becoming redundant, tourism was beginning to be seen as a growth industry that could address urban issues. As a consequence of de-industrialization of the traditional manufacturing industries, which had been sources of employment for the urban population, tourism became widely adopted as a last resort alternative and a new activity for the economic growth of declining inner cities and creation of employment. Law (1992: p1) provides a perfect summary of the historical rationale for the growth of urban tourism in the developed states: 'the decline of longstanding economic activities, the need to introduce new ones or face decline and high unemployment, the perception of tourism as a growth industry and the hope that the development of the industry would result in physical regeneration and revitalization of the city center', all combined to propel cities to adopt urban tourism. In addition to the reasons already summarized above by Law, Swarbrooke (2000: p270) argues that tourism was viewed as an industry that would make use of derelict sites, create employment and leads to the lessening of pollution. It was also a

glamorous industry that could help to re-image the city. Heritage and cultural industries play an important role in renewing derelict buildings and creating an attractive image of the city. A positive and attractive image of a place is a vital component of place marketing. This is an important tool of attracting inward investment as will be seen in the case of Glasgow.

Apart from the theories advanced in explaining the emergence and development of urban tourism in general, there are many other factors influencing the rise of urban heritage and cultural tourism. It is clear from the literature on international experiences that the availability of ready resources propelled the development of heritage and cultural tourism in the cities of the developed states. Many of the European states had vast resources for revival and as such, it became easy as well as cheap to revamp sites and activities for urban heritage and cultural tourism. According to Jansen-Verbeke and Lievois (1999: p87) the success in attracting tourists to urban destinations is strongly related to a 'cultural revival'. In European cities, programmes of cultural awareness such as "Art Cities in Europe" boomed, and cultural events became widespread evidence of expressions of cultural revival throughout cities of the continent. The unlimited potential of reviving cultural resource is an opportunity available to every city. Thus every city had a unique history that could be utilized to develop urban heritage and cultural tourism. In other words, the potential of developing heritage and cultural tourism is available to every city hence all depend on the creativity of the tourism planners.

Moreover, a number of cultural resources exist in the form of public goods and this eliminates issues of ownership transfer that might cause delay in the utilization of heritage and cultural resources for tourism. According to Jansen-Verbeke and Lievois (1999: p88), heritage and cultural resources are usually a public good and a common pool where every creative tourism developer can fish. All this underlies the cost-effectiveness and an unlimited potential that can be found in the development of urban heritage and cultural tourism.

Heritage and cultural tourism can boost the local economic base of declining inner cities. According to Harvey (1989) cities that once sold themselves to investors as places of production are increasingly selling themselves as places of consumption. Cultural and heritage industries are increasingly becoming the major objects of consumption in cities and thereby generating income from visitor expenditure. This is not only happening in the cities of developed states but also the developing states. Scott (2004: p464) gives us an example of Kinmen, in Taiwan where the long-standing arts and crafts tradition has been turned into a magnet for tourists. In Europe, many cities were able to turn their local cultural peculiarities and resources into heritage and cultural tourism consumption bases that attracted income and investment for local economic development. In Liverpool, arts and cultural products have been used for tourism development and have been the foundation for inner city's economic regeneration initiative (Couch and Farr: 2000). Bristol is one of the recent English cities that successfully utilized cultural resources for urban economic regeneration (Griffiths: 1995). This indicates how far heritage and cultural tourism has been relevant for economic regeneration of cities.

Heritage and cultural tourism played an important role in enhancing the image profile of the city. A number of scholars concur that one of the most fascinating aspects associated with the emergence and development of heritage and cultural industries was their ability to enhance the image and prestige of a place. Re-imaging of the city's aesthetic profile has a number of economic advantages for cities. A good image is able to draw upscale investors and skilled high wageworkers. In outlining the tourism-led initiatives of re-imaging the city, Rogerson (2002: p170) states that cities are able undertake large-scale sports or cultural mega-events and develop heritage precincts, art galleries, theatres and museums as part of the re-imaging process. This is in agreement with the assertion of Scott (2004: p262) that cultural industries are in one way or another concerned with the creation of aesthetic content. The physical appearance of a city can be used for the marketing and selling of a positive image that attracts industrial and commercial activities. In a neo-liberal economy, where cities compete with one another for the free flowing economic opportunities, it is the most prestigious cities such as New York, London and Madrid, just to name a few that are able to attract visitors from far away places.

Heritage and cultural industries can be used by cities as symbols of newly acquired elegance, sophistication and cosmopolitanism. Bianchini and Parkinson (1993: p15) assert that arts and cultural industries were used as symbols of new birth, renewed confidence and dynamism in declining cities like Sheffield and Bilbao while in cities like Montpellier, Nimes, Grenoble,

Rennes, Hamburg, Cologne, Barcelona and Bologna, cultural policies were used to emblematize modernity and innovation. Paris carried out a series of prestigious cultural projects to enhance its credentials as the future 'economic and cultural capital of Europe'. Netherlands' second city, Rotterdam, through cultural initiatives such as the creation of a new Museum of Architecture and the organization of new jazz and film festivals, managed to improve its dull image. Glasgow's image, which was associated with razor-gang street violence and urban decay, was able to gain substantial benefits from a cultural upgrading strategy leading to environmental improvements. This proves that heritage and cultural industries are useful for changing the images of declining inner cities.

Since one of the major outcomes of de-industrialization in the cities of the developed states in the 1980s was the flight of middle-class citizens from the inner city to urban outskirts and low-density suburbs, the re-imaging of the inner city became vital to attract them back to the inner city. These middle-class citizens are important for the economic vitality of the inner city, as they are high spending local investors in cities. However, the same affluent and free spending citizens were forced out of the city because of the abundance of derelict sites, squalid conditions, overcrowding, unemployment and crime that threatens their property. Law (1992: p601) states that with the new image it became much easier for European cities to bring middle-class residents back to the inner city. Glasgow is one of the prominent cities that successfully developed cultural and heritage tourism to enhance an image that attracted affluent citizens to the inner city. According to Law (1993: p105) Glasgow was

faced with economic decline since World War 1 but became the “European City of Culture” in 1990, a prestigious title that brought substantial economic returns. This image or profile has been regarded as one of the vital pre-conditions for the recovery of Glasgow today. This shows that the utilization of heritage and cultural industries such as museums, art galleries, performing arts, craft, and music for tourism, as in the case of Glasgow cannot only attract tourists from abroad but also middle-class citizens with the ability to invest money and property in the inner city.

As de-industrialization of traditional manufacturing industries took place in most of the cities of the developed states during the 1980s, later on spreading to the cities of developing nations, the availability of derelict buildings and unused spaces became a major issue in creating wasteland and unpleasant images of the inner cities. Heritage and cultural tourism in cities became an industry that could occupy the unused spaces and abandoned buildings thereby contributing to an attractive aesthetic physical appearance. According to Bianchini and Parkinson (1993: p171), cultural industries can play an important role in exploiting unused physical assets within the inner city. These unused or unoccupied physical assets are a waste opportunity.

The physical refurbishment of places is an important tool for marketing cities as destinations for visitors as well as attracting inward investment. With regard to the role of arts and cultural industries, Bianchini and Parkinson (1993: p163) argue that a lively arts scene would boost the city’s attraction to tourists and help stimulate private sector investment. Evidence suggests that

heritage and cultural industries have been widely used to refurbish decaying inner cities and marketing them as best places to visit. According to Holcomb (1999: p65) heritage tourism has been used for image creation and place marketing in many cities of the United States and United Kingdom and there is probably no city that did not include reference to its glorious past in its tourist brochures. Place marketing is a popular phenomenon used to define place-specific projects aimed at attracting visitors to the area. According to Shaw and Williams (1994: p217) heritage and cultural industries became a potent marketing force for Glasgow and Bradford after de-industrialization in Britain. Bianchini and Parkinson (1993 p18) are of the view that place marketing through arts and culture is one of the most recent ways in which cultural policies have become an established and legitimate part of urban regeneration in Western Europe.

Apart from urban heritage and cultural tourism industries occupying unused spaces, and physically rejuvenating decaying areas, they also enhance environmental awareness of the citizens. In addition to the obvious fact that the development of urban tourism is less polluting than many traditional manufacturing industries, the industry can enhance civic pride. Law (1992: p201) suggests that local residents who have civic pride will take much greater care of the environment. Among a number of tourism resources within urban areas that can enhance the pride of citizens, heritage and cultural industries are likely to play a major role since they also reveal the glorious history of the residents, an aspect that can make citizens proud of themselves and their environment.

The role of heritage and cultural tourism industries in socio-economic regeneration in cities is currently a major subject of debate within the academic field of tourism studies. Despite the consensus that exists among tourism planners and academics on the industry's contributions to economic development, major disputes exist as to whether tourism in general as well heritage and cultural industries in particular address the plight of the poor in cities. While many academics argue about the potential of the tourism industry in employment and income generation for local communities, Law (1992: p606) addresses an important issue on the difficulties of researching job creation by the tourism industry. He describes the difficulty of assessing the job creation potential of the industry since tourism jobs are spread across many industries ranging from hotels and catering, to transport and retailing to many other industries that benefit from visitor expenditure to the city. This means that even though tourism industries in cities can indirectly and substantially contribute to the creation jobs, it is difficult to directly link such jobs to the primary attractions.

While it is undisputable that inner city tourism initiatives create direct and indirect employment opportunities for the local communities, a number of tourism scholars have questioned the nature of the jobs created for local residents within the tourism sector. Law (1992: p607) describes how the tourism industry in cities often creates part-time and seasonal jobs instead of full time and sustainable jobs for local residents. Bianchini and Parkinson (1993: p168) argue that experience from cities of the United States and

western Europe suggests that cultural policy-led regeneration strategies - particularly those focused on city center-based ‘prestige’ projects - bring few benefits to disadvantaged social groups. This proves that there is a discontent over the role of tourism in socio-economic regeneration of the inner city.

On the other hand, some academics argue that the emergence and development of urban heritage and cultural tourism industry has a considerable role on socio-economic regeneration. Scott (2004: p466) argues that arts and cultural industries contribute substantially in creating direct employment, with London accounting for 26.9% of employment in British cultural-products industries. In the United States, he claims, more than three million jobs were directly initiated from cultural industries by 1992; while the Swedish cultural economy accounts for 9% of the country’s total employment. Apart from Scott, many authors such as Basset (1993), Bianchini (1993), Hudson (1995), Whitt (1987) and Landry (2000) have all agreed on the potentialities of the cultural tourism industry in job creation. This suggests that the rise of urban heritage and cultural tourism is linked to the industry’s role in socio-economic development in the inner city.

Apart from creating job opportunities, the development of heritage and cultural industries within the inner cities highlights the artistic potential of local communities. These communities include people with limited ability to get employed in high technology industries within cities especially those groups such as women and blacks from previously disadvantaged communities. According to Bianchini and Parkinson (1993: p163), arts and cultural

industries could release artistic potential within the community and in particular reinvigorate many of those alienated by technological advancemen, This means that the development of heritage and cultural industries can empower marginalized groups in the inner city.

It is important to note that in addition to theories that explain the emergence and development of urban heritage and cultural tourism, there are also theories focused on the development of cultural precincts in the inner city. Cultural precincts are an outcome of clustering tourism activities and attractions within a specific geographical space in order to create a specialized industrial district. The clustering of cultural and artistic industries is well described by Scott (2004: p469) and he describes clusters as mutual center of gravity.

There are a number of advantages in creating clusters or cultural districts. According to Scott (2004: p468) clusters of cultural-products industries or “locational agglomerations” acquire place specific competitive advantages and enables the sharing of information, opinions, and cultural sensibilities that lead to innovation and economic efficiency. He also adds that cultural-products “agglomerations” are irresistible to talented individuals who flock in from every distant corner in pursuit of professional fulfillment. In other words the clustering of heritage and cultural industries also leads to a cluster of a creative class of people. In this way, the development of heritage and cultural industries in cities was somehow influenced by the ideas of industrial districts because of the advantages that they pose for the inner city.

A number of cultural products are brought in to the inner city so as to strengthen cultural bases. Jansen-Verbeke and Lievois (1999: p94) in their analysis of the attraction impact of heritage industrial clusters, state that a spatial concentration of heritage buildings and places in the historic city form a more significant tourist attraction compared to isolated heritage objects spread out all over the city. This means that clustering enhances the attraction impact hence it is an idea motivating the creation of cultural precincts. The main advantage to the tourists is that clusters offer a holistic experience. In this way, clustering is an effective industrial strategy that leads to the creation of heritage and cultural districts in many cities throughout the world.

In conclusion, this chapter has explained theoretical issues and international examples of the development of urban tourism in general and heritage and cultural industries in cities. The international experiences that were considered are those of the cities of the developed world and this choice was influenced by the lack of similar documented experiences in the cities of the South. In fact, the international experience on the emergence and development of heritage and cultural industries as well as their role in the cities, even though based on the examples of Western Europe and North America is quite relevant to the development of heritage and cultural tourism in the inner city of Johannesburg. The emergence and development of heritage and cultural tourism industries in the inner city of Johannesburg is more or less motivated by circumstances that affected the cities of the North.

Chapter Two:

Johannesburg Regeneration Strategy and the Development of *Beautiful Things* in the Newtown Precinct

By and large, South African cities have experienced many of the conditions that led metropolitan centres in the developed world to undertake tourism development initiatives in the inner city. The demise of a highly centralized apartheid state exacerbated the diminishing conditions in the South African inner city as the country was immediately re-integrated with the international community. This resulted in the exposure of South African cities to both negative and positive global economic realities. Indeed, the return of post-apartheid South Africa into the international community occurred during the same period when the tightly centralized national government began to devolve much of its economic responsibilities to provincial and local authorities. This meant that cities were left with the burden of dealing with a number of socio-economic issues in their respective areas of jurisdiction. The emergence of this neo-liberal agenda during this period in South Africa implied that the country's cities like those of the developed states had to brace themselves to tap-in to global economic opportunities. By and large, newly appropriate industries, initiatives and strategies had to be identified so as to enhance the appeal of South African cities to a restructured global economy.

South African cities, like their counterparts in the 1980s, were faced with de-industrialization of the traditional manufacturing industries. The city of Johannesburg like the cities of the developed nations faced a sharp economic

downturn as a result of de-industrialization in the period prior to 1994. Dirsuweit (1999: p185) states that Johannesburg's traditional economic stalwart, the mining industry had been in steady decline long before independence and as such the city found it ideal to adopt tourism-led development initiative to deal with rampant unemployment, crime and economic decline. The presence of derelict sites and the unpleasant image of the inner city compelled the city of Johannesburg to look for glamorous industry like tourism to help upgrade its competitiveness. This may help to explain the emergence of *Beautiful Things* in the Newtown Cultural Precinct as well as the nature of the Johannesburg Tourism Policy.

Indeed, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development of August 2002, popularly referred to as the Johannesburg Summit, *Beautiful Things* emerged as a project with the prime objective of showcasing South African craft skills. It did this by displaying local names to local and international delegates and non-delegates attending the Summit, in a huge tent stationed at Wanders Precinct. The primary aim of the project was to establish market links for South African craftspeople, particularly those in rural areas who could not tap-into the global economic opportunities. The project was a wild success motivating the need to continue exhibition after the Summit. As the Summit dispersed after the historic meeting, a strategic future for *Beautiful Things* had to be imagined.

First and foremost, a new location had to be found for the permanent exhibition. One of the most important factors that needed careful

consideration was that the new location for the project had to ensure crafts people's access to the market would not be compromised. Secondly, the project's location had to be strategic enough to ensure that project would play a meaningful role in the enhancement of social and economic development in immediate area, in this case -the inner city of Johannesburg. Amongst a number of options, Newtown emerged as the ideal place for the location of the project hence it took occupancy of the area in December 2002.

They are many reasons why Newtown emerged as an ideal place for *Beautiful Things.* A number of development initiatives in Newtown seemed quite complementary to the objectives of *Beautiful Things.* One of the main considerations was that the coming of the project to the inner city would enhance the Johannesburg development initiatives aimed at economic, social and physical regeneration of the inner city through the development of tourism attractions.

As arts and cultural industries became one of the drivers for regeneration, a Newtown Cultural Precinct was created in the western part of the city. The Newtown Cultural Precinct comprises the Market Theatre with two art galleries, a photographic school and a drama school, the National Arts Council office, the Foundation for Creative Arts, the French Institute, Kippies Jazz International, Museum Africa, Mega Music, the Dance Factory, the Electric Workshop, the Generator Space, the Workers Library, the Drama, Africa Cultural Center and the Saturday Flea Market. All these have created a mass of creative industries within a concentrated geographical space.

The precinct-based approach to the inner city development is not only applied to the creative and artistic industries but also to sports industries, which are clustered within a specific geographical space. The sports industries dominate the Southern part of the city at Ellis Park under the umbrella of Greater Johannesburg Sports Precinct. The Greater Johannesburg Sports Precinct consist of the Johannesburg Athletics Stadium, Ellis Park Rugby Stadium, Ellis Park swimming pool, Ellis Park tennis courts, the Standard Bank Arena, the Johannesburg and the Ellis Park Soccer Stadiums. These sporting facilities result in an enhanced attraction impact not only to the consumers of sports but also to the sponsors of sports activities and organizations.

The precinct-based approach for inner city revitalization advocated by the Growth Strategy for Tourism in Johannesburg's Inner City (2001) has a number of advantages. The most important is that the approach leads to the creation of a critical mass of attractions and facilities, thereby providing a holistic experience rather than just a series of individual products. In this way, it was vital for *Beautiful Things* to join a family of related projects to make an enhanced attraction impact compared to what the project can achieve on its own. Masses of attractions have much greater visibility compared to isolated and individual attractions. In other words, it is much easier to identify the Cultural Precinct of Johannesburg as a whole than to look for *Beautiful Things* amongst for instance, the shoe manufacturing companies or the low-density residential areas. In this way, it became vital for the project to join related activities in the cultural precinct.

It was also necessary for *Beautiful Things* to bring in diversity to the cultural offerings at the Cultural Precinct and arrival of craft objects brought essential products to add to the experiences in the Cultural Precinct. Diversity of attractions enhances visitor experience and broadens the cultural base of tourism. Apart from enhancing visitor experience though diversifying the cultural base of Newtown Cultural Precinct, a craft project became vital for widening the sharing knowledge and skills within the cluster. Helmsing (2001: p14) in his study of the role clusters in local economic development, states that they create agglomeration economies since the geographical concentration of similar activities results in knowledge spill-over÷, a pool of specialized labor and active 'collective efficiency.' This means that opportunities for innovation are also enhanced in these types of circumstances.

In the Newtown Cultural Precinct, the opportunity for the sharing of knowledge on arts and culture is made possible by CreateSA, a skills development training program funded by the Department of Labor's National Skills Fund to bring together new entrants, existing freelance workers and Small Micro Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) in the creative industries. According to *Newtown Programme: Celebrating Arts and Culture in Newtown* (2004: p50*)*, since its inception in 2002, CreateSA has delivered training with Newtown-based organizations in areas of photography, music business, cultural entrepreneurship, arts marketing, craft production and enterprise as well as technical production for live events. This means that knowledge spillover can

be better facilitated in concentrated clusters where there is sharing of knowledge between people of different skills levels and background.

The other advantages that precinct-based approaches could offer are that they allow the use of shared infrastructure, public transport and access roads. This means that different projects share the costs of infrastructure development and those with less capacity can benefit from those with better facilities. *Beautiful Things* could not have managed to build its own access roads and other infrastructure needs if it had chosen to locate itself in an isolated place.

Furthermore, the proximity of a number of tourism products provides visitors with an opportunity to engage in multiple activities in a short time and this makes traveling around very cost-effective. According to the Johannesburg Inner City Tourism Strategy Business Plan (2004: p9) the physical proximity of a number of tourism products enables visitors to engage in multiple activities within a short space of time. In other words, the precinct-based approaches to tourism development by the city of Johannesburg are quite conducive to busy tourists visiting the inner city especially those who are also business people with limited time of traveling between isolated attractions.

Apart from a desire to strengthen the Cultural Precinct in Newtown, the choice of location could have been motivated by the wish to balance urban-rural development within the craft industry. The location of *Beautiful Things* in the inner city of Johannesburg enables a linkage between urban and rural

development to happen. Indeed, in South Africa, it is vital that any form of a development initiative at least try to balance urban and rural development. Rural areas are increasingly lagging behind cities in the global economy and as such, it is worthy considering that *Beautiful Things* uses the city to balance urban-rural development within the craft industry. The inner city is envisaged to be in a position to help crafts people from all over South Africa irregardless of their rural and urban backgrounds. In Newtown, craftspeople from rural areas, like their urban counterparts, enjoy the same advantages such as unlimited access to transport, information and communications networks as well as specialized labour that assist in sales and marketing of craft products. Thus for instance, the overall project is being coordinated and marketed by the Craft Council of South Africa, a professional non-profit organization with specialized human resources to initiate effective marketing tools for *Beautiful Things.* The Craft Council of South Africa produces informative brochures about the location and the kind of craft products sold and showcased at the site. This makes the project known to potential tourists, an achievement that is important for rural people who had limited opportunities to advertise themselves.

The decision to locate *Beautiful Things* in Newtown was influenced by the idea that the addition of a craft project in the inner would help inner city's cultural tourism in attracting inward investment thereby leading to the economic regeneration of the rundown inner city. The role of tourism in the economic regeneration of the inner city has been intensively and extensively tackled in major policy documents regarding the development of tourism in

Johannesburg. According to Rogerson (2003: p130), during the period 2001-2002 the city issued its first ever tourism development strategy and identified tourism as one of the critical strategic sectors for future targeted planned economic development as a whole. It is interesting to see that this was the same period when *Beautiful Things* was relocated in December 2002 to occupy a space in the Newtown Cultural Precinct. *Beautiful Things* had shown its potential at the Summit and as such, its relocation to Newtown will enhance the image that will attract investors to the inner city.

Major tourism policy documents such as *Joburg 2030* (2001) place emphasis on the need to develop a strong, externally- focused economy, specializing in the service sector. The addition of *Beautiful Things* to the cultural tourism base of the city, demonstrates the seriousness of the Johannesburg city in turning itself into a “center of consumption” of leisure activities. The *Johannesburg 2030* document was issued by the city’s Corporate Planning Unit in 2001 as a visionary document with core goals of elevating Johannesburg into the ranks of ‘world cities’ with strongly outward oriented economy, with an emphasis on the service sector, and exhibiting strong economic growth which delivers increasing standards of living and quality of life to the inhabitants of the city. According to the document, tourism is a sector that can become an important player in the city’s economy hence initiatives of creating a tourism base such as the development and reinforcement of a cultural precinct are undertaken.

The other important policy document to the development of *Beautiful Things* is the "Johannesburg Tourism Strategy" (2001, which examines how to increase the flow of tourists to the city through marketing and promotions. The Cultural Precinct is an addition to the city's tourism products and *Beautiful Things* has added value to the marketing of cultural tourism of the inner city. The Johannesburg Tourism Strategy was developed by the city in 2001 and identified two major growth areas as drivers for Johannesburg's future tourism economy. The first of these is business tourism with special focus on the MICE sector: meetings, incentive, conference and exhibitions. The second sectoral driver for Johannesburg tourism is to build upon city's existing advantage as a preferred destination for African tourists and cross-border shoppers. While the second sectoral driver is largely irrelevant to the decision about the location of *Beautiful Things,* the first sectoral driver is quite applicable in that *Beautiful Things* occasionally organizes exhibitions and workshops for craftspeople and people with interest in craft (Sellschop: 25 November 2004). This is one way of increasing spending in the inner city as these kinds of visitors make use of the transport and facilities or buy goods and services during the occasions.

The Johannesburg Inner City Regeneration Strategy Business Plan (2004) adopts a five-pillar strategy aimed at raising and sustaining private investment in the inner city and tourism is one of the major industries that boost confidence for further investment in the adjacent areas. Examples of the so-called "ripple pond investments" or major development projects identified by the paper are the Braamfontein Regeneration project, Constitution Hill and the

Newtown Cultural Precinct. The Johannesburg Inner City Regeneration Strategy Business Plan for 2004-2007 was published by the City of Johannesburg in March 2004 and highlights the problem of "properties that are slummed, abandoned, overcrowded, poorly maintained or used for illegal or unsuitable purposes" (City of Johannesburg 2004: p10). This is a relevant document in articulating the emergence and development of *Beautiful Things* in Newtown because the project occupied an "abandoned" Bus Factor. Land in the inner city is scarce and is vital for the development initiatives hence it cannot lie unused.

The Gauteng Tourism Authority's Tourism Marketing Plan 2001-2006 reiterates the idea of adding value to the overall experience by motivating the consumption of diverse products. As has been seen, craft is one of the products that can add diversity to consumables within the inner city. The Gauteng Tourism Authority's Marketing Plan of 2001-2006 focuses on strategies and initiatives aimed at extending length of visitor stay, motivating consumption of diverse products and influencing perceptions (KPMG 2001: p6). Overall the idea is to attract more visitors and increase their stay thereby increasing their spending and benefiting the local economy.

According Holcomb (1999: p55) the role of marketing is to identify, anticipate, and satisfy the consumers' requirements profitably whereas selling is persuading the customer to buy the available product. For the City of Johannesburg, it was not enough to sell the Cultural Precinct but necessary to bring in a craft project to satisfy the anticipated tourists' demands.

As the decline of traditional manufacturing industries in Johannesburg resulted in widespread unemployment, poverty, physical decay and derelict buildings, the coming of *Beautiful Things* to Newtown became part of an effort to make use of abandoned spaces within the inner city. According to the City of Johannesburg Heritage Policy Framework (2004: p8) development often depends on reinventing existing structures, adapting them to new uses and extending their life expectancy beyond the function for which they were created. As has been seen, the *Beautiful Things* craft project occupies the Bus Factory building that was abandoned as a bus depot since early 1990s. The City of Johannesburg Heritage Policy Frame work describes this as a process of adaptive re-use that is a key to urban renewal in general and downtown revitalization in particular. This reiterates the assertion of Dirsuweit (1999: p183) that cultural industries revitalize dead spaces and dead time. The abandoning of the Bus Factory since the beginning of the 1990s means the space was a wasteland in the inner city and did not generate any economic or social returns for the city for a period close to a decade.

The refurbishment or renovation of the buildings carried out by the Johannesburg Development Agency in Newtown is perceived to re-image the inner city by enabling a new physical outlook to the area. Thus according to the City of Johannesburg Heritage Policy Frame work (2004: p9) the inner city has seen widespread decay, with buildings coming under stress and being associated with economic decline, poverty, slumlords and squatters. One major commitment to the idea of physical regeneration of Newtown has been

manifested through the building of the multimillion rand Nelson Mandela Bridge to enhance both accessibility to the area and add to the aesthetic appearance. Indeed, the building of the Mandela Bridge is linked to enabling an easy flow of tourists to the cultural resources of the city and as such it is an integral part for the development of Newtown cultural tourism base. There are projected economic returns to all these efforts. According to Karski (1990: p15), tourism-led physical and environmental improvements tend to be significantly better placed to attract new businesses and industries as well as an appropriate workforce.

However, the re-imaging process does not only entail physical renovation and development of new infrastructure, but it is a process that changes the profile of an area altogether. According to Rogerson (2002: p170), components of re-imaging include hosting of large-scale sports or cultural 'mega events', undertaking dockland redevelopment projects, making heritage precincts, establishing art galleries, theatres and museums. This means that by bringing *Beautiful Things* to the cultural precinct, the process of re-imaging was being executed. By and large, arts and cultural industries in Johannesburg have given the city an opportunity to change its prestige profile both within the country and on the continent. According to Rogerson (2003: p133), the redevelopment of Newtown (through arts and cultural industries) is being proclaimed as a vibrant emblem of the African renaissance and the historic area containing museums, theatres and heritage sites is to be transformed into a creative capital for South Africa. This indicates that re-imaging of the city's profile is part of place marketing through giving the city prestige.

As many wealthy and middle class citizens have fled the inner city to low density suburbs as a result of crime, overcrowding and prevalence of squalid spaces after de-industrialization, it is imagined that a new profile for the inner city can lure them back to the inner city both for dwelling and investing. In Johannesburg, many middle-class and wealthy citizens abandoned the inner city residential areas to low density suburbs such as Sandton, Brynston and Fourways just to name a few and this has left the inner city residential areas a habitat for the poor and unemployed. Overcrowding, crime, informal business and unpleasant physical appearance characterize the residential areas of Hillbrow, Berea, Joubert Park, Braamfontein and Johannesburg central. In this way, it is envisaged in the policies on tourism development that arts and cultural industries will attract back middle-class and wealthy citizens to the inner city by refurbishing Newtown's decrepit appearance, making the inner city vibrant and enabling opportunities for profitable investment.

Apart from attracting back wealthy and middle-class citizens to the inner city, the process of re-imaging attracts skilled labour that is vital to any strategy of economic development. Dirsuweit (1999: p185) reiterates this assertion as she states that as urban professionals emigrate from the inner city due to crime and poor image-; however, business and government are increasingly realizing the role of culture and information-based sectors in attracting both tourists and professionals from foreign countries and other regions in South Africa. This means that cultural developments, such as the Newtown Cultural Precinct and the Greater Johannesburg Sports Precinct, contribute to a new

image and profile of the city, which attracts skills. For the city inundated by high crime rate the arts and cultural industries, with the inclusion of craft industries like *Beautiful Things* provide employment and recreation activities to young people thereby giving the place a sense of safety.

One of the main important roles that arts and cultural industries can play in the inner city is social regeneration. Since the inner city had suffered de-industrialization, rocketing unemployment and poverty are the main concerns to city planners. Both local and international literature on tourism is very critical of industry's role in the regeneration of jobs and in improving the quality of life for the local community. Like in any other part of the world, tourism in South Africa is criticized for creating more seasonal and short-term employment than sustainable and long-term jobs. There is also a problem of the industry being dominated by capitalists and foreign-owned corporations whose interests are against pro-poor principles and harbor exploitative tendencies. This particularly concerns the accommodation, hotel, transport and tour guiding industries that serve the tourism industries. Though this is not necessarily applicable to the study of development of *Beautiful Things*, it is quite significant to the study of tourism as a whole and its potential for social regeneration.

While exploitation is seen as a major problem within the tourism industry, there is an operational constraint in assessing the social effects of tourism initiatives in the inner city. Most of the jobs that are created by tourism are spread across a number of other industries such as transport and

accommodation, making it difficult to establish their direct linkage with a specific tourism initiative. Again even if tourism industries contribute indirect job creation within the aforesaid industries, there is still a criticism as to who owns those industries and what is the nature of the jobs for the local people? This operational problem in assessing social contributions of tourism affects the study of the social impact of *Beautiful Things* in that it is very difficult to study the socio-economic spill-overs of the project to supportive secondary industries in Newtown such as transport and accommodation.

In many instances, the already rich sections of the population are the very people who own the transportation and accommodation sectors, hence the poor are always marginalized. In South Africa, the tourism industry has been described as lily white and the transformation of the industry is quite a major issue as identified by the White Paper on Tourism and Development (1996). Apart from the industry's failure to accommodate the poorest of the poor, especially women and the black communities, the development of tourism attractions also raises the prices of basic commodities within the vicinities where tourism development is occurring. In this way in the inner city it makes life even more difficult for the poor and unemployed. Within the premises of *Beautiful Things*, at the coffee shop, it is not therefore surprising that food is more expensive compared to places outside the Cultural Precinct.

Despite the difficulty in assessing the tourism industry's contribution to job creation in Johannesburg, a number of studies have indicated that there is significant job creation directly linked to tourism initiatives within the inner city.

According to the study conducted by Rogerson (2002: p171), the tourism economy in the inner city of Johannesburg in 2001 was responsible for an estimated 75 000 to 85 000 jobs, which represented about 9 per cent of formal sector job opportunities. This shows that tourism contributes to a significant number of jobs within the inner city. Also important are the business opportunities opened by tourism initiatives within the inner city. In analyzing the social impact of tourism initiatives within the inner city of Johannesburg, Dirsuweit (1999: p189) states that the craft industry is well situated to provide a stable economic sector for women-based small, medium and micro enterprises. *Beautiful Things* is an SMME project in the inner city and lessens that burden of unemployment in the city. It is an example of how tourism initiatives, with the inclusion of craft industries, can help in the social regeneration of the inner city.

To conclude, it has been seen that the emergence and development of *Beautiful Things* in the inner city of Johannesburg reflect a number of international experiences pertaining the development of tourism in cities. This is firstly because the City of Johannesburg's tourism policies, which inform the emergence and development of *Beautiful Things* in the inner city, are modeled on the experience of the cities of the developed states. Secondly, the conditions that propelled the adoption of tourism by the City of Johannesburg as well as the development of *Beautiful Things* in the inner city are similar to those that led to the adoption of urban tourism in the developed states since the beginning of the 1980s. Indeed, the end result is that *Beautiful Things* like any other inner city tourism initiative found in the

international literature has similar roles such as social, economic and physical regeneration of the inner city.

Chapter Three:

The Beautiful Things exhibition:

This chapter focuses on the history, internal make-up and general performance of the object of study as a stand-alone organization. It is my objective to assess the contribution of *Beautiful Things* to the regeneration of inner city of Johannesburg as the project has, on its own, made some significant social, physical and economic impacts. Prior to its relocation to Newtown, the potential of *Beautiful Things* was determined at the WSSD, and it is vital for this research to begin by describing the background and internal composition of the project. By and large, the emergence of *Beautiful Things* at the Summit had to do with a quest to test the performance of South African craft on an international stage.

Beautiful Things was initiated and started at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in August 2002. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, popularly referred to as the Johannesburg Summit, took place at the Sandton Convention Centre in August 2002 as one of the landmark conferences on issues of environment and development after the Earth Summit of 1992 and the United Nations conference of 1972 in Stockholm. Like its preceding sister meetings, the Johannesburg Summit became one of the crowd pullers with more than 22000 participants that included at least 10 000 delegates, 8 000 Non Governmental Organizations and representatives of civil society as well as 4 000 members of the press (United Nations: 2002: p2). The existence of a crowd of this magnitude, in terms of the number of the

attendants and their profiles gave the initiators of *Beautiful Things* more than enough justifications to begin and test the project at this period.

The presence of high- profile attendants, international delegates and non-delegates as well as the members of the press meant that craft would be showcased on an international stage, would attract considerable publicity and would be visible to personalities with the potential to influence the business direction of the South African craft industry. Again, as the Summit was dominated by affluent and free spending members, there was an opportunity for miscellaneous selling to those members who wished to buy craft to take as souvenirs back to their countries after the Summit. Above all, the establishment of market links ensured that the craftspeople of South Africa could diversify their livelihoods through selling craft especially those people in rural areas who are constantly vulnerable to a number of shocks such as droughts and floods that frequently strike the agricultural sector.

The main objective of *Beautiful Things* at the World Summit on Sustainable Development was to showcase South African craft skills. Apart from the obvious reason that the impoverished exhibitors would generate income in the process of exhibition, which was accompanied by some form of selling at the shop, the Summit was an opportunity to link the South African craft industry to the world market. The attractiveness of craft products to the high profile personalities would bring the craft industry of the country to a new level of prominence as never before. According to the *Craft Council of South Africa (2003*) pamphlet, the then minister of Arts and Culture, Science and

Technology, Dr Ben Ngubane even commented that the Summit was a perfect platform to catapult the South African craft sector to a new level of prominence that would enable it to claim its due share within the global market. This indicates that the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) saw the Summit as an opportunity to break free from marginalization within the increasingly globalization economy and that the industry needed to be tested through an exhibition on an international level.

The history of the South African craft industries indicates a number of weaknesses within the sector. The Craft Council of South Africa, a section 21 Company was formed in the early 1990s to address a fragile and immature craft sector and up until 2000, the craft industry of South Africa lacked effective co ordination as well as exposure to international markets *(Craft Council of South Africa: 2003).* According to the Craft Council of South Africa, lack of skills and finance for production and entrepreneurship were among major obstacles to the development of the craft industry. The Summit was an opportunity to expose and improve the long-hidden craft skills especially those in deep rural areas as well as to test the competence of products so as to address the skills needed to raise the profile of the industry. The *Craft Council of South Africa* (2002) pamphlet states that the craft objects for the exhibition were sourced from every part of the country with a number of them originating from rural areas. The idea of exposing hidden traditional talents was seen through the preferential treatment of hand made products, especially those reflecting unique South African traditional cultures, rather than craft objects manufactured through technological means reflecting contemporary lifestyles.

Further more, the establishment of market links was seen as an opportunity that would pave a way for turning the under-utilized traditional craft meant for daily use into products that would generate income for the poor communities.

A substantial crowd is of course an essential element to any successful program of showcasing (Gardner and Heller: 1960: p5). Before the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the South African craft skills did not have an opportunity to be exposed to significant crowd, not only in terms of their magnitude but also in terms of the very themes that made the exhibition of craft products relevant. The World Summit on Sustainable Development of 2002 was one of the rare environmental gatherings with international personalities interested not only in the conservation of the environment but also in the interdependence between the environment and social as well as economic developments. It was the first time that poverty eradication was tackled as an issue central to the preservation and conservation of the environment. In this way, this kind of a crowd was quite appropriate to showcase a tourist product that exhibits inter-dependence with the environment. The South African craft industry's exposure to a meeting of this nature was an opportunity both to display the skills of the local craftspeople as well to establish markets. But more importantly, it was an opportunity to showcase the South African approach to the eradication of poverty of an extreme nature while at the same time by so doing, promoting the preservation of the environment.

Indeed, apart from the motivation provided by the existence of a big crowd during the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the uniqueness of the themes that were tackled during the gathering gave the initiators of the exhibition an opportunity to trumpet the cause of South African craft. The themes of the Summit dovetailed well with the underlying messages of the *Beautiful Things* exhibition. Unlike its predecessor meetings, the Johannesburg Summit had shifted the focus on environment degradation and pollution to a more people-centered approach with major discussions based on issues of poverty and inequality as central to sustainable development. According to the Report on the World Summit on Sustainable Development of 2002, one of the main objectives of the Summit was to ensure that programmes concerning women's empowerment, emancipation and gender equity were implemented (United Nations: 2002: p11) *Beautiful Things*, through the composition of its exhibitions, showcased a theme that dovetailed well with the Summit's themes of gender equality and women empowerment as craft objects that were displayed were mainly made by women. According to Sellschop (15 December 2004), more than 70 per cent of the exhibitors were women who could not find employment in the mainstream economy. In other words, *Beautiful Things* gave the Summit delegates an eye-catching practical idea of how simple objects like craft can bridge the gaps of inequalities between men and women. This enhanced the exhibition's visibility to delegates as a model of women empowerment and they bought a number of craft objects at the shop that was stationed at the side of the exhibition.

The Summit also provided a reinforcing context for the *Beautiful Things* exhibition, in that many craft objects portrayed important messages similar to those underpinning major discussions within the Summit proceedings. Thus according to Sellschop (15 December 2004) the HIV/AIDS dolls showcased at the exhibition were deliberately tailored to coincide with the Summit theme of tackling the pandemic and chronic disease. The Report on the World Summit on Sustainable Development stated that chronic diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis were worldwide threats to the sustainable development of people (United Nations 2002: p3). By portraying parallel themes in its products on exhibition, *Beautiful Things* made itself a relevant project during this conference. Hence it became a popular centre of attraction.

Beautiful Things was located at Ubuntu Village during the Summit. Ubuntu is a Nguni term referring to a considerate and human behaviour. The reason why the term was chosen is not clear but is likely to have been selected to emphasize South Africa's commitment to the values of human respect and environmental sustainability. Ubuntu Village was located at Wanderers precinct and was established as a service and recreational hub of the Summit, where the delegates and other participants converged on an informal basis after cessation of the major discussions of the day. The village was established from the 17th of August and functioned until the 7th of September 2002. The existence of the *Beautiful Things* exhibition in this space was well timed because the project's objective was to utilize the centrality of the place to all other convention centers of the Summit such as NASREC and Northgate hence all the attendants had to pass through the exhibition during their spare

time. At the Wanderers precinct, there were many recreational and refreshment facilities and these attracted members of the Summit after official proceedings. The village operated on a 24-hour basis giving the project enough opportunity to be reached both at night and during the day. Again, *Beautiful Things* benefited from the village's accessibility through road transport, an element that enabled maximum visitors to the exhibition.

At the Wanderers precinct, the idea of clustering artistic and creative industries was manifested by the presence of a number of arts and cultural projects within the area. Thus *Beautiful Things* resided along side the FNBVITA exhibition, Imbizo craft shows and the Association of Potters exhibition to name a few. This allowed the sharing of infrastructure and a much more prominent visibility that increased the attraction impact of the arts and craft exhibition space. As a recreational and refreshment hub for customers exhausted by lengthy discussions, the cluster of artistic and creative projects made the navigation around exhibition easier and shorter. It was time saving for people engaged in busy schedules of the Summit thereby making the location of *Beautiful Things* at Ubuntu Village strategic.

A nexus of partnerships underpins the emergence and development of *Beautiful Things*. At the Summit the project was initiated by the Department of Arts and Culture but the Craft Council of South Africa executed the sourcing of the craft objects. The Design Center dealt with the aesthetic display and spatial layout of the exhibition. To a large extent, this kind of a partnership led to the success of the exhibition. Thus it allowed the sharing of duties while at

the same time confining a specific organization to its area of specialization. The Craft Council of South Africa with its credible history of dealing with the craftspeople of South Africa since early 1990s concentrated on accessing uniquely South African made craft objects that were able to stand on the stage of this magnitude. The Design Center on the other hand drew on its experience in issues of interior design to create a display that persuaded audiences to view the exhibition.

The role of public-private partnership could also be seen in the development of *Beautiful Things* in Newtown. The project, which exists in the form of an exhibition and a shop, is managed and coordinated by the Craft Council of South Africa. The Bus factory building, occupied by the project, is managed by the Johannesburg Development Agency, an organization that refurbishes and renews the Cultural Precinct as a whole. The Johannesburg Development Agency is an area-based development agency for the City of Johannesburg that works in support of *Jo'burg 2030* with one of its main objectives being to regenerate decaying areas of the inner city so as to enhance their ability to contribute to the economic development of the city as well as the improvement of residents' quality of life. The Johannesburg Development Agency is subcontracted to the Blue IQ Company that functions as the development arm of the Gauteng legislature. The Department of Arts and Culture oversees the development of arts and cultural industries in the city and as such it regulates the development of *Beautiful Things* and other artistic projects within its areas of jurisdiction. The Design Center was involved in the

development of *Beautiful Things* in Newtown, as it is the organization that worked on the layout of the exhibition.

The crucial role of design in exhibitions was evidenced in *Beautiful Things.* According to the *Investing in Culture* (2002) pamphlet, through the professionalism of the Design Center the exhibition of *Beautiful Things* derived its success from the aesthetic and spatial layout of the craft objects, which gave the attendants a magnificent view of even the smallest objects that could have been passed over unnoticed. In describing the importance of display, Gardner and Heller (1960: p8) state that it creates a way of persuading the audience to look at familiar objects with fresh interest and awareness while in certain instances it can create an occasion or environment where objects are seen properly for the first time. This means that while the existence of the crowd is one of the elements for a successful exhibition, certain design technicalities are also vital and the Design Center played this role with great success.

Established in 1987, the Design Center is an educational member of the International Federation of Interior Architects, an organization representing the professional interests of designers in 38 countries. The Design Center is also a member of the International Council of Graphic Design, which represents the professional interest of designers in 41 countries (Design Center pamphlet: 2003). The Design Center is of interest in the analysis of the development of *Beautiful Things* because the organization has participated in the exhibition project since its outset, by taking responsibility for the spatial

presentation and aesthetic components of the exhibition's layout. At Newtown, the Design Center still plays a pivotal role in setting up the layout of the exhibition. The organization is currently located in the Greenside office area of Johannesburg and trains prospective designers on its campus.

Beautiful Things was moved to the Bus factory building in Newtown Cultural Precinct in December 2002. The Bus factory building was constructed in the late 1930s and operated as a bus depot and a repair shop from the 1940s until early 1990s. Blue IQ and the Gauteng Department of Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture (SRAC) jointly funded the revamping of the Bus Factory in April 2001 until November 2002 at an estimated cost of R9.5 million. Today, the Bus Factory is home to a number of Non-Governmental Organizations with interest in craft, including the Craft Council of South Africa (with a Craft Council Office), Visual Arts & Craft Academy (VACA), Artist Proof Studio, Imbali, Drum Café, The Café at the Bus Factory, Siyavuka Studio, *Beautiful Things*, the Shop for *Beautiful Things* and the Black Taxi Design. At this site, *Beautiful Things* continues with the exhibition and sale of craft objects at a shop by the side of the exhibition. Many individuals and crafts organizations with urban and rural backgrounds exhibit craft objects.

The craft objects at *Beautiful Things* exhibition are made from both contemporary and traditional materials with the latter being the dominant. The *Newtown Program: Celebrating arts and culture* (*July-October* 2004*:* p7) states that craft objects made for daily use from local materials are placed side by side with those made of contemporary materials to suit the expanding

local and international markets. Examples of craft objects being displayed and sold at the Bus factory range from beaded eggs, wooden drums carved from tree trunks, wire baobab trees, windmills made of wire and metal, clay pots, grass baskets and wooden vessels. Traditional craft skills are encouraged through emphasizing hand made craft objects over those manufactured through technological means.

Beautiful Things is not only a craft project for the city of Johannesburg but is also a national enterprise. Organizations, individuals and craft products showcased at the exhibition as well as sold at the Shop are from every part of the country. Examples of craft objects, craft communities and individuals exhibiting and selling at *Beautiful Things* range from beaded eggs made by Mdukatshani Community Organization from KwaZulu-Natal, wooden drums by Simon Mukwevho and Nelson Rasithini from Limpopo, wire baobab trees by street vendors of Gauteng, windmills made of wire and metal from Eastern Cape, grass baskets from Free State, clay pots from Western Cape and wooden vessels from Mpumalanga. This also indicates the project's role in bridging urban-rural development as exhibitors are from both rural and urban backgrounds. As the project considers only South African made craft, the project is national heritage asset owned by local people, reflective of the diversity of South African cultures.

The Beautiful Things exhibition is characterized by a layout of flat squares with each square containing an installation of handcrafted objects. The network of large flat squares filled with contrasting materials ranging from

sand, coal, broken glass, stone and other natural materials, that form the fabric of the exhibition, represent the tapestry that make up the people of South Africa (*Newtown Programme: Celebrating arts and culture in Newtown July-October 2004: p7)*. The Shop for *Beautiful Things* sells products showcased at the exhibition as well as an extensive range of craft from many projects around the country.

Women and Black exhibitors dominate the *Beautiful Things exhibition* and these sections of the society have historically been disadvantaged in South Africa. Women dominated organizations represented at *Beautiful Things* are the Monkeybiz Association from Cape Town, which was started in 2000 by Mataphelo Ngaka, Barbara Jackson, and Shirley Flitz consisting of a workforce of about 250 women specializing in beaded dolls and ceramics. The Mchunu Family consists of Manakoti, a single mother, and her seven daughters and the family specializes in beaded animals and birds. The Ndwandwe Association of Potters from KwaZulu- Natal that showcases clay pots has only one male potter out of 30 women. All this indicates the socio-economic contribution of the project especially with regard to women empowerment and gender equality. According to Sellschop (25 November 2005) community organizations represented at *Beautiful Things* are dominated by black craftspeople and women and in this way the projects play a role in bridging the socio-economic gap between racial categories in South Africa.

The main social contribution of the project comprises the improvement of the quality of life to its participants through income generation. In an interview session organized with selected interviewees from impoverished communities, which took place between 7th and 9th of January 2005, it was established that the project has raised their income level, reduced their vulnerability and improved their general standard of living since the emergence of the project during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and through its development in Newtown. A total number of five interviewees were accessed for this research and they were very helpful in their responses. Three of the interviewees are from an urban background and the rest come from rural areas. All urban participants are from Johannesburg and the other two are from Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. This distribution of participants from different backgrounds was achieved through a random selection of the participants. Open-ended and semi-structured question were used in order for the interviewees to speak at length about their experience. For ethical reasons, and as agreed with the interviewees, the real names of the participants will remain confidential.

Miss A, the first interviewee, is an independent exhibitor who resides within the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Area and has been in this area since the beginning of the 1960s**. Miss A** stated that she lost her job in the cloth manufacturing industry in 1999 and since her unemployment, she engaged herself in craft production, making animals, dolls and toys from contemporary materials such as cloth, cotton and wire. Before she joined *Beautiful Things* at Newtown in February 2003, she used to sell her craft object along William

Nicol Drive in Bryanston as a vendor. As a result of poor marketing and lack of visibility, her business failed to flourish hence she joined the *Beautiful Things* in 2003. She recalls that she used to make an approximate monthly income of about R1500 and this has since doubled to more than R3000 at *Beautiful Things.* As a single mother of five dependents, her quality of life has improved greatly as she can rent a much larger house and feed her family. She attributes the increase in income to both her improved skills of production obtained through various training and workshop programs at *Beautiful Things* as well as the marketing expertise of the Craft Council of South Africa.

The second interviewee, **Mr. X,** is an established craftsman from Rosebank, also in Johannesburg. **Mr. X** has been involved with craft production since early 1990s. He exhibited at Rosebank African Craft Market at the Mall but he left to join *Beautiful Things* in mid-August 2003. He stated that at Rosebank, he suffered competition with craftspeople from all over Africa, something that shadowed his creative work. For reasons related to his business operation, he could not confirm the actual figures of income he managed during his exhibition at Rosebank's African Craft Market and at *Beautiful Things.* However, he confirmed that the income has improved greatly, allowing him to buy a car. When asked why he did not opt for a formal job, **Mr. X** stated his lack of education and skills as the reason for failing to get a job. Having only a junior certificate, that is a grade 10 certificate, he found it difficult to get the job as early as the beginning of the 1990s. **Mr. X** is from a disadvantaged background and his life depends on craft production.

The third candidate is a woman from rural areas in Limpopo province and will be known in this research exercise as **Mrs. B.** She joined the project at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. **Mrs. B** is a married woman with six dependents. Her husband couldn't manage to support the family with a salary that he gets from a farm job. She joined *Beautiful Things* through the call of the Craft Council of South Africa. She did not start as a craft manufacturer but collected various craft objects that were traditionally used for utilitarian purposes. It was after she could no longer get traditional craft objects she used to collect that she started to produce for herself. She contends that as a result of *Beautiful Things* she can manage to pay the school fees for her two children who are still at school and can support the remaining others that are not employed. She states the major problem in her province is the lack of enough rains, which make dependence on agriculture to be highly risky.

The fourth interviewee from Kabuli-Natal is a leader of a community-based organization from a rural background. She leads a women's organization made of rural craftspeople from KwaNongoma rural district and these women are, according to the interviewee, **Mrs. Y,** brought together by their quest for financial dependence. **Mrs. Y,** states that they are a group of women whose membership is drawn from divorcees, widows and single mothers who could not make an income from capital-intensive agriculture. They joined *Beautiful Things* in December 2002 when they heard of the project through the Craft Council of South Africa. Though some members of the organization have long been involved in craft business, **Mrs. Y,** says the general feeling is that

Beautiful Things has made everyone more comfortable with their incomes. Apart from the group's advantage of manufacturing craft from the cost-effective and cheap natural resources such as tree bark and leaves, the group has its own transport to deliver craft products to *Beautiful Things.*

The last interviewee on the theme of the socio-economic dynamics of the project is **Susan Sellschop**. She is the coordinator of the whole *Beautiful Things project* and she gave an account of the number of direct jobs generated by the project at Newtown. According to **Sellschop**, the project currently employs eight security guards, ten cleaning staff and six administrative staff. In total, the project has generated about 24 jobs and she believes that there are many other indirect job opportunities created by the project within the inner city. With the premises of *Beautiful Things* the coffee shop has five employees. The transport industry ferrying craft products from different regions is believed to have gained substantial job creation from the project. What is more interesting is that amongst all the staff employed at *Beautiful Things* only the security section has a majority of male employees All other employees are female. **Sellschop** stated that all employees are black except for herself and one of her assistants.

Findings:

The research found that *Beautiful Things,* in its development has attracted participants from the most marginalized communities. The first picture that

can be drawn is that most of the participants have a low level of education and as such they cannot get into the formal job sector. By organizing this stratum of the community into a formidable craft business, *Beautiful Things* has enabled impoverished community a viable livelihood. It is again evident that the main exhibitors at the project are women organizations and individuals. This means the project is committed to gender equality, a major component of social regeneration in South Africa where inequalities between men and women are rife. In the tourism sector of South Africa women are yet to feature in leadership and management positions and it is a great social regeneration progress for *Beautiful Things* to be led by a woman (Susan Sellschop) and to employ such a large number of women compared to men. Issues of ownership by women are also addressed as community organizations and crafts people themselves directly own craft objects.

The dominance of exhibitors from black communities is another important outcome of the project's social regeneration. The industry of tourism in South Africa needs transformation in terms of its racial composition and as this has been identified by White Paper on Tourism and Development (1996), *Beautiful Things* has made substantial progress in this regard through its employment policy that has favored black and through its sourcing criterion, which accessed poor black crafts people. Black people are also empowered through the skills development program and workshops that have sought to diffuse the skills of new entrants with those of the much-experienced craftspeople. The engagement of CreateSA by *Beautiful Things* has been a major step forward with regard to the enhancement of skills.

The national coverage of the project in relation to the composition of its exhibitors is a clear indication that the project is national enterprise and seeks to bridge the gap between rural and urban craftspeople. As has been seen through the interviews, regions do not bind poverty as both rural and urban dwellers are affected. While unemployment affects the rural people most because of the lack of industrialization, lack of education has subjected urban dwellers to similar problems, as all the residents could not find employment.

General conclusion:

The emergence and development of *Beautiful Things* craft project fits well within the policies, strategies and approaches that are developed for the growth of heritage and cultural tourism in both local and international contexts. Though craft is often not recognized as an important asset in the development tourism and the creative industry, various approaches to inner city

regeneration in South Africa and abroad have included craft production and selling as an ingredient to precinct-based developmental processes. For the inner city of Johannesburg, *Beautiful Things* forms part of the Newtown Cultural Precinct, an approach aimed regenerating the rundown inner city in Newtown. In Western Europe and North America, where tourism-oriented urban regeneration is presumed to have originated in the early 1990s before it spread to other countries, the idea of clustering artistic activities and creative industries falling under the broad category of heritage and cultural tourism, was developed as a strategy to enhance the industry's impact in the social and economic revitalization of the inner city. In South Africa, the idea was borrowed and the tourism policies of specific localities such as Johannesburg city have been developed around the model.

The concepts of local economic development, which South Africa copied from the developed world, and has been part of the factors leading to the emergence and development of the concept of urban heritage and cultural tourism, has seen the city of Johannesburg developing local economic strategies that have sought to utilize cultural industries to deal with the aftermath of declining mining and manufacturing industries. The de-industrialization of the manufacturing industries in Europe and North America in the early 1980s together with global economic restructuring as well as the retreat of the national state from the issues affecting development in provincial and local authorities resulted in conditions that favored the development of tourism in cities.

In South Africa, the re-integration of the country to the international community after 1994 exposed it to severe global circumstances and opportunities that in turn promoted the adoption of local economic development concepts and tourism initiatives became its vehicle. In Johannesburg, the decline of the manufacturing industry led to rampant unemployment, urban decay, economic slow down and the flight of investors and this is comparative to what happened in cities such as Glasgow, Leeds, Baltimore and many in the developing states. It is these comparative conditions that made the city policy response on development issues to draw much on international experience hence heritage and cultural tourism became one area of focus within the Johannesburg policy approaches to issues of social, physical and economic regeneration of run down inner city.

The advantages of the urban tourism and precinct-based approaches that are identified by academics of international literature on tourism such as Scott (2004) and Law (1992; 1993) are similar to those identified by the local scholars on the development of tourism in Johannesburg. Rogerson (2003) and Dirsuweit's (1999) findings on the development of heritage and cultural industries in Johannesburg reiterates the same advantages identified by international literature such tourism's ability to draw inward investment, to refurbish unpleasant physical appearance of the city and to generate jobs to just to name a few. Even the tourism policy documents of the city of Johannesburg reflects the same motivations for precinct-based approaches to tourism development as has been identified in the states of the developed world and is not surprising that proximity and greater visibility in clustering

artistic activities are mentioned in tourism literature both in the United Kingdom and in South Africa.

On the whole, *Beautiful Things* can be studied at variety levels of analysis. Thus *Beautiful Things* can be studied as a stand-alone project, within the precinct-based approaches to urban development in Johannesburg, within the urban tourism policy framework of the city and within the international experiences of tourism development. In this way, this research have highlighted how far craft projects are part and parcel of urban heritage and cultural tourism development.