

CHAPTER 4:
THEME 1: TEACHERS USING AN ASSET-BASED APPROACH FOR
PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, I explained and elaborated on the research methodology and strategies used in the current study. In the next three chapters, I report on the findings of the current study. In each of these chapters, I aim to address a secondary research question. I present each of the three main themes that emerged during the thematic analysis and interpretation phase in a separate chapter. The main themes are as follows:

- Teachers using an asset-based approach for psychosocial support (Chapter 4)
- Teachers addressing barriers resourcefully (Chapter 5)
- Teachers' demonstrated asset-based competencies (Chapter 6).

In each of these chapters, I provide inclusion and exclusion indicators (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Sandelowski & Barroso, 2003) for subthemes and categories (Charmaz, 2000; Merriam, 1998). I authenticate and enrich the findings of the current study through participants' verbatim quotations, visual data and extracts from my research journal. I also reflect on the emerged themes in terms of the literature, to present findings in line with my research purpose. I expand on congruent findings, contradictory findings as well as silences between the current study and existing literature. Finally, I present insight related to each of the identified themes. Figure 4.1 illustrates this meaning-making process.

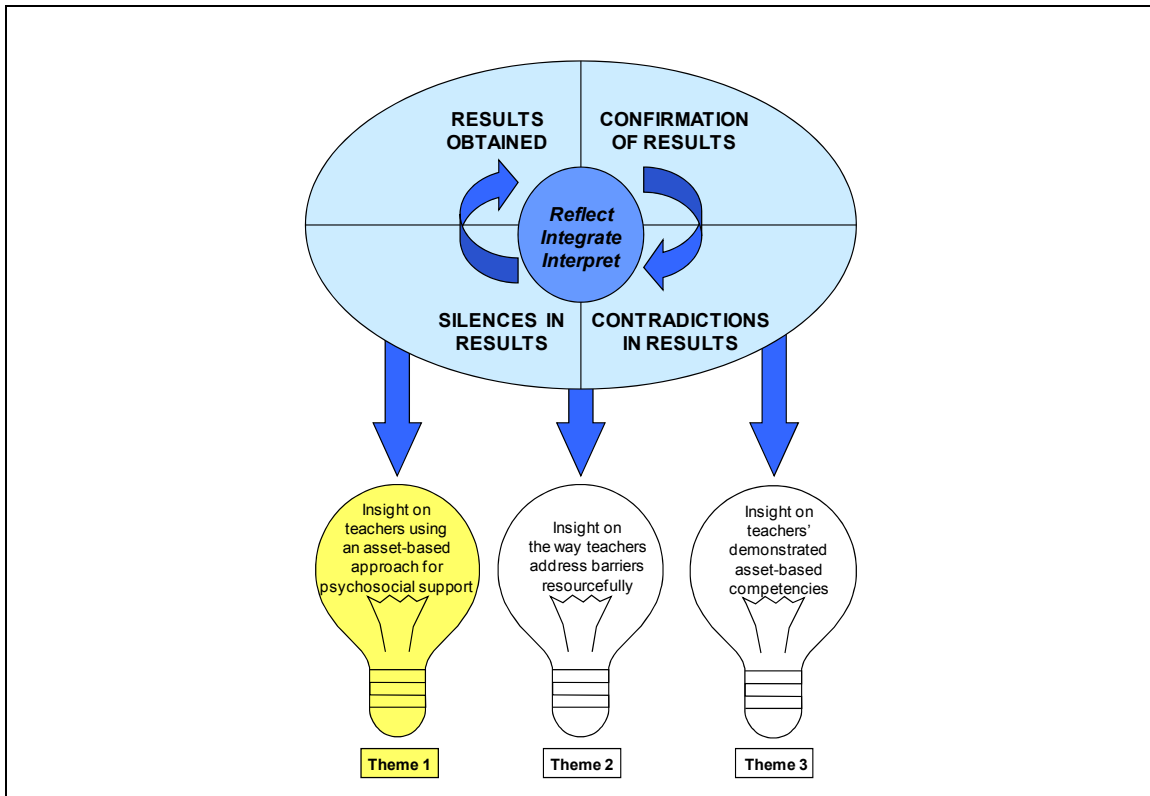


Figure 4.1: A schematic presentation of the process that was followed in order to generate insight in the way teachers use an asset-based approach for psychosocial support.

The first theme focuses on addressing my secondary question: *How do teachers implement the underlying processes of the asset-based approach for psychosocial support?* Data in this theme reflects teachers' implementation of the asset-based process (Beaulieu, 2002; Ebersöhn, 2006c; Eloff, 2006a; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Saidi *et al.*, 2003). I identified similarities and compared the dissimilar ways in which the teachers in the four different schools implemented the asset-based approach to enhance school-based psychosocial support. The subthemes that support this theme are in line with the three underlying processes of the asset-based approach: 1.1) teachers identifying assets; 1.2) teachers mobilising assets; and 1.3) teachers managing the asset-based process. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the related subthemes and categories, together with the inclusion and exclusion indicators.

Table 4.1: Summary of Theme 1’s subthemes, categories, inclusion indicators and exclusion indicators.

<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 1: Teachers using an asset-based approach for psychosocial support <i>Our “kraal” is filled with “cows” that are living on a daily basis and we are feeding them</i> (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 370-374).</p>		
Subthemes and categories	Inclusion indicators	Exclusion indicators
Subtheme 1.1: Teachers identifying assets	This subtheme focuses on the participating teachers’ belief in the presence of assets, by identifying assets in individuals, families, schools and communities.	
<i>Category 1:</i> Identifying individual assets	This category includes data related to the participating teachers’ observed ability to identify positive characteristics, skills and abilities of individual members within their a) classroom; b) school context; and c) community.	This category excludes data that only refers to individuals, without indicating some strength within that individual.
	a) <i>Classroom:</i> This subcategory includes any individual within the classroom contexts, namely children and teachers.	This subcategory excludes data that refers to any individual outside the classroom contexts.
	b) <i>School-context:</i> This subcategory includes any individual within the immediate school contexts, namely other staff members at their schools.	This subcategory excludes data that refers to any individual outside the immediate school contexts.
	c) <i>Community:</i> This subcategory includes any individual within the immediate community contexts of the specific participating schools, namely parents, community members or any individual from a specific organisation or institution.	This subcategory excludes data that refers to any individual outside the immediate community contexts.

<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 1: Teachers using an asset-based approach for psychosocial support <i>Our “kraal” is filled with “cows” that are living on a daily basis and we are feeding them</i> (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 370-374).</p>		
Subthemes and categories	Inclusion indicators	Exclusion indicators
<p><i>Category 2:</i> Identifying community resources</p>	<p>This category includes data related to the participating teachers’ ability to identify resources within their immediate community context, with the potential of being mobilised for optimal use. The subcategories include: a) physical resources; b) natural and environmental resources; c) community organisations and institutions; and d) local businesses and government organisations.</p>	<p>This category excludes data that refers to resources outside the participating teachers’ broader community contexts. It also excludes data that identifies resources without the potential of being utilised within their school-community contexts.</p>
	<p>a) <i>Physical resources:</i> This subcategory includes the identification of any physical resource within the immediate school-community contexts, namely buildings, apparatus and equipment.</p>	<p>This subcategory excludes data that refers to any physical resource outside the school-community contexts.</p>
	<p>b) <i>Natural and environmental resources:</i> This subcategory includes the identification of any natural or environmental resource within the immediate school-community contexts.</p>	<p>This subcategory excludes data that refers to any natural or environmental resource outside the school-community contexts.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 1: Teachers using an asset-based approach for psychosocial support <i>Our “kraal” is filled with “cows” that are living on a daily basis and we are feeding them</i> (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 370-374).</p>		
Subthemes and categories	Inclusion indicators	Exclusion indicators
	<p>c) <i>Community organisations and institutions:</i> This subcategory includes the identification of any community organisation or institution within the immediate school-community contexts, namely NGOs, faith-based organisations, community organisations, educational institutions and health-related organisations.</p>	<p>This subcategory excludes data that refers to any organisation or institution outside the broader community contexts, which is not accessible.</p>
	<p>d) <i>Local businesses and government organisations:</i> This subcategory includes the identification of any local business or government organisation within the immediate school-community contexts.</p>	<p>This subcategory excludes data that refers to any business or government organisation outside the broader community contexts, which is not accessible.</p>
<p>Subtheme 1.2: Teachers mobilising assets</p>	<p>This subtheme includes data reflecting the process where participating teachers seemingly mobilised the identified assets (not fully utilised in a system) with the goal of being of optimal use within their school-community contexts. The process of asset mobilisation includes the building of networks and partnerships.</p>	
<p>Category 1: Mobilising individuals’ assets</p>	<p>This category includes data related to participating teachers’ observed ability to mobilise skills and capabilities of a) teachers; b) children; and c) community members and parents, with the aim of directly or indirectly enhancing psychosocial support within their school-community contexts.</p>	<p>This category excludes data that refers to individual assets outside the school-community contexts. It also excludes data that refers to individual assets without utilising or mobilising these within the school-community contexts.</p>

Theme 1: Teachers using an asset-based approach for psychosocial support <i>Our “kraal” is filled with “cows” that are living on a daily basis</i> <i>and we are feeding them</i> (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 370-374).		
Subthemes and categories	Inclusion indicators	Exclusion indicators
	a) <i>Teachers:</i> This subcategory includes themselves as participating teachers as well as their teacher colleagues.	This subcategory excludes data that refers to any other individual that is not in the teaching profession.
	b) <i>Children:</i> This subcategory includes children within the school-community contexts.	This subcategory excludes data that refers to children outside their immediate school-community contexts.
	c) <i>Community members and parents:</i> This subcategory includes any community member or parent within the school-community contexts.	This subcategory excludes data that refers to parents and community members outside their school-community contexts.
Category 2: Mobilising natural and environmental resources	This category includes data related to the participating teachers’ ability to mobilise any under-utilised natural and environmental resources with the goal of resulting in direct or indirect enhanced psychosocial support within their school-community contexts.	This category excludes data that refers to resources outside the participating teachers’ immediate community contexts. It also excludes data that refers to resources without utilising or mobilising these within the school-community contexts.
Category 3: Mobilising physical resources	This category includes data related to participating teachers’ ability to mobilise any under-utilised physical resource (including buildings, apparatus and equipment) with the goal of resulting in direct or indirect enhanced psychosocial support within the school-community contexts.	This category excludes data that refers to physical resources outside the school-community contexts. It also excludes data that refers to physical resources without utilising or mobilising these within the school-community contexts.

<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 1: Teachers using an asset-based approach for psychosocial support <i>Our “kraal” is filled with “cows” that are living on a daily basis and we are feeding them</i> (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 370-374).</p>		
Subthemes and categories	Inclusion indicators	Exclusion indicators
<p>Category 4: Mobilising networks and partnerships</p>	<p>This category refers to the process of asset mobilisation, in the form of building networks and partnerships. This category includes data related to the participating teachers’ ability to establish networks and/or partnerships with: a) organisations and institutions; b) neighboring schools; and c) international assets. These networks and partnerships can be a once-off event or an ongoing partnership with the goal of resulting in direct or indirect psychosocial support within the specific school-community context.</p>	<p>This category excludes data that refers to potential networks or partnerships, without actively establishing a partnership or network. It also excludes data that refers to networks without the possibility of direct or indirect psychosocial support as outcome.</p>
	<p>a) <i>Organisations and institutions:</i> This subcategory refers to any individual or group related to faith-based organisations, educational institutions, health-related organisations, local businesses, NGOs and government organisations within the immediate or broader community contexts.</p>	<p>This subcategory excludes data that refers to any business or government organisation to which the participating teachers do not have access to or cannot effectively communicate with.</p>
	<p>b) <i>Neighbouring schools:</i> This subcategory refers to any school that is within the specific school’s broader community context. The neighbouring school must be easily accessible with regard to distance.</p>	<p>This subcategory excludes data that refers to any school that the participating teachers do not have access to or cannot effectively communicate with.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Theme 1: Teachers using an asset-based approach for psychosocial support <i>Our “kraal” is filled with “cows” that are living on a daily basis and we are feeding them</i> (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 370-374).</p>		
Subthemes and categories	Inclusion indicators	Exclusion indicators
	<p>c) <i>International resources:</i> This subcategory refers to any individual or organisation outside the South African borders that is regarded as a resource.</p>	<p>This subcategory excludes data that refers to any resource inside South African borders.</p>
<p>Subtheme 1.3: Teachers managing the asset-based process</p>	<p>This subtheme entails data indicating a flexible and dynamic process of reflecting, revisiting and revising the effectiveness of current strategies and practices. By envisioning the future, processes can be revised to meet future goals (Eloff, 2006a).</p>	
<p>Category 1: Teachers identifying additional assets</p>	<p>This category includes data related to the participating teachers’ reported ability to identify additional or new assets within their school-community contexts that were not previously recognised or optimally utilised.</p>	<p>This category excludes data that refers to assets already optimally utilised in the school-community contexts.</p>
<p>Category 2: Revising existing strategies and planning new strategies</p>	<p>This category includes data related to participating teachers’ flexibility in revising their existing strategies and planning new strategies with regard to the effectiveness of their asset-based initiatives with the goal of enhancing psychosocial support.</p>	<p>This category excludes data that does not refer to reflecting on previous strategies and projects, revising strategies or generating new strategies.</p>
<p>Category 3: Envisioning new possibilities and outcomes</p>	<p>This category includes data related to the participating teachers’ reported ability to envision future possibilities and potential new outcomes regarding their asset-based initiatives.</p>	<p>This category excludes data that does not refer to future possibilities and related potential outcomes.</p>

4.2 SUBTHEME 1.1: TEACHERS IDENTIFYING ASSETS

Teachers seemed to believe in the presence of assets, by identifying assets in individuals, families, schools and communities. I discuss this theme in two categories: 4.2.1) identifying individual assets and 4.2.2) identifying community assets.

4.2.1 Category 1: Identifying individual assets

Teachers demonstrated a general positive approach in identifying and believing in individuals' assets and potential, as evident in the following verbatim extract of one of the teachers in School 2:

What drove me in all this is love and the thought of seeing somebody going up and up irrespective of who you are, irrespective of your status and your level of education and everything, just the thought that everybody has potential, if somebody out there can reach out, the person can move to the next level and become better. It's the drive inside – most of the time I would like to see people better than what they were yesterday and better than what I am – that is what was driving me (School 2, Participant 11, Line 281-288).

In all four schools, it was apparent that teachers were able to identify assets in individuals. Teachers demonstrated the ability to identify positive characteristics, skills and abilities of individual members within the a) classroom, b) school context and c) community.

a) Subcategory 1.1: Identifying individual assets within the classroom

Teachers demonstrated the ability to identify positive characteristics, skills and abilities of individual members within their classrooms, as evident by the following verbatim extracts:

Because that child has that knowledge, he can even transfer that knowledge (School 1, Participant 4, Line 678-679).

... even our learners ... practically they are sound (School 2, Participant 11, Line 463).

... but we have started, the learners are helpful, they are taking water from main to the garden (School 3, Participant 12, Line 21-22).

The kids in this school they are so talented, even in classes... (School 3, Participant 13, Line 525 - 526).

... the progress learners are making (School 4, Participant 16, Line 11).

... and you know what like the peer groups are also there as an asset because they are working together in the classroom. And the classroom as well, because that is also an asset (School 4, Participant 16, Line 80-83).

... just like the teacher in the classroom ... is an asset ... (School 4, Participant 16, Line 217-218).

It seems that teachers realised the potential of children in their classrooms. They identified children's assets in assisting with asset-based initiatives and acting as potential peer educators in schools.

b) Subcategory 1.2: Identifying individual assets within the broader school context

As evident by the following verbatim extracts, teachers demonstrated the ability to identify positive characteristics, skills and abilities of individual members within the broader school context:

The caretaker was a hard worker, he grew everything because the land is so rich. So we are going to get a lot from that land (School 1, Participant 1, Line 801-803).

There are 26 members of the staff with one principal, one deputy principal and four HOD's and 22 educators (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 1, Line 34-36).

One other thing I've learnt is that as educators is that it is possible that we can go an extra mile helping other people out there as long as we have ideas and as long as we communicate and as long as we form groups, working as individuals (School 2, Participant 11, Line 123-127).



You know I will start with myself as a link, as a coordinator of the whole project here at school (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 481-483).

He was an agricultural science teacher. So we were so fortunate because he would understand how to work the soil (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 746-749).

I should think there is a lot of potential within the group itself, like maybe some of us through this project, others are so outspoken, they can represent others who can just be doing things that are practical, they can go out in the field and work out there, but somebody who can just give the report back, it means that we are talented differently to can augment or complement each other (School 3, Participant 13, Line 438-443).

We have a staff of 42 in our school, one principal and two deputy principals and five HOD's (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 360-361).

We've appointed, with school funds' rent a teacher. It would have been nice to just record how she is working with the learners, the progress learners are making, the different apparatus she is using (School 4, Participant 16, Line 9-12).

Our principal is a driving force to us. He motivates (School 4, Participant 16, Line 198).

It seems that teachers were able to identify individual assets in their broader school contexts, which include their principal, head of departments, colleagues, caretakers and part-time teachers. They also identified assets of individual members in their asset-based groups.

c) Subcategory 1.3: Identifying individual assets within the community context

Teachers in all four schools seemingly identified positive characteristics, skills and abilities of individual members within their immediate community contexts, as reflected in the following verbatim quotations:

It's the old cases that we have, parents gave transport (School 1, Participant 5, Line 501).

... the people in our area they love the soil, they love working with the soil ... (School 2,

Participant 11, Line 462-463).

We can start inviting the community – we wanted initially just to involve them in the process, especially during the weekends, there is no one who can water the gardens but if we can involve the neighbouring communities they will definitely assist (School 3, Participant 12, Line 142-146).

He is a pastor in the community (School 3, Participant 13, Line 72).

Sometimes we don't know about the assets that we have in our communities ... but we're making use of people in our community, so she's an asset to us, she's in the community, an ex-teacher, she did the remedial course at University in the Western Cape. She is at home so she's an asset to us and she is in the community (School 4, Participant 16, Line 215-225).

It seems that teachers identified assets of individuals in their community contexts, which included parents who assist in asset-based initiatives, religious leaders and community members such as previous teachers.

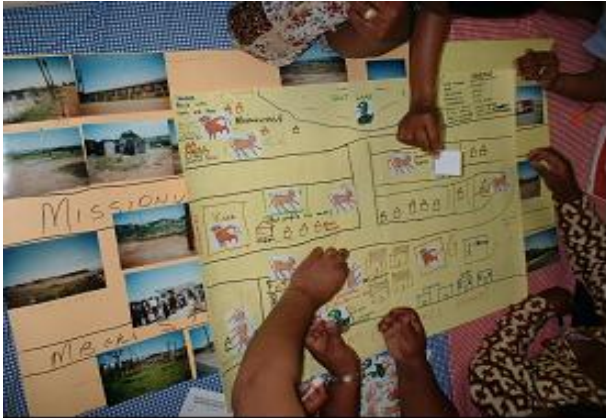
In summary of this category, teachers in all four schools demonstrated the ability to identify assets of individuals. They identified the characteristics, skills and abilities of individuals in their classrooms, the broader school context and individuals in their communities.

4.2.2 Category 2: Identifying community assets

Besides individual assets identified by teachers, they also demonstrated the ability to identify assets within their immediate community context, with the potential of being mobilised. During the first and second session of the intervention phase (see 3.3.3), teachers visually (in the form of photographs) presented community assets on their community asset maps. They identified existing assets as well as potential assets in their community. Teachers made use of pictures of *cows* (assets currently utilised in their

community) and *calves* (potential assets not yet fully utilised) to illustrate the status of the identified assets in their communities.

The visual data in photographs 4.1-4.4 shows teachers' asset maps and serves as illustration of their apparent ability to identify assets within their community.



Photograph 4.1: School 1



Photograph 4.2: School 2



Photograph 4.3: School 3



Photograph 4.4: School 4

In this regard, the following extracts from my research journal reflect my observation of teachers' apparent ability to identify community resources during the intervention phase of the study:

My week was filled with a first visit to X (School 2) yesterday and to X (School 3) today. I was quite impressed with their ability to identify the assets in their community (Research journal, 23 April 2005).

Wow, what a nice bunch of photos, they really put effort in exploring their community's assets. One of the educators, who does not stay in the same community than she is teaching, reflected back that she never knew what are actually available in the community (Research journal, 18 May 2005).

Furthermore, teachers demonstrated the ability to identify community assets during focus group discussions. The identified community assets can be grouped in terms of a) physical resources; b) natural and environmental resources; c) community organisations and institutions; as well as d) local businesses and government organisations.

a) Subcategory 2.1: Identifying physical resources

Teachers in all four schools reported on *physical resources* (including buildings, apparatus and equipment) in their communities, as evident in the following remarks during focus groups:

We are going to choose one of our classrooms, it's either A5, D4, my classroom and D3 or D3, Mrs X's class ... (School 1, Participant 7, Line 312-313).

Our school is big, it has a lot of classrooms, it's about 20 classes excluding the other centres, the labs and the library that we have (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 725-726).

He went there and asked for the tractor (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 757).

... the learners are using the buckets ... (School 3, Participant 12, Line 18).

... just waiting for the connections to the garden and after receiving the taps (School 3,

Participant 12, Line 131-132).

We just focused more on what we have and what we can use on our premise ... (School 4, Participant 16, Line 218-219).

b) Subcategory 2.2: Identifying natural and environmental resources

Teachers in all four schools demonstrated the ability to identify *natural and environmental resources* within their school-community contexts, which is supported by the following verbatim quotations:

... there is water there, ... there is a dam ... (School 1, Participant 1, Line 12-13).

... because the land is so rich. So we are going to get a lot from that land (School 1, Participant 1, Line 802-803).

... in our area the soil is fertile (School 2, Participant 11, Line 462).

We got our space at the back there behind the classes (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 753).

... water from main to the garden ... (School 3, Participant 12, Line 22).

Our community has very rich soil (School 4, Participant 17, Line 121).

c) Subcategory 2.3: Identifying community institutions and organisations

Teachers in Schools 1, 3 and 4 identified *community institutions and organisations* in their immediate and broader community contexts, with the potential of being mobilised for optimal use. They referred to NGOs, faith-based organisations, community organisations, educational institutions and health-related organisations as potential resources in their communities, as is evident in the following extracts:

... but also tomorrow we are going to visit ACVV, because we want them to help us where to go (School 1, Participant 1, Line 16-17).

Even also make use of the council of this community (School 1, Participant 3, Line 122).



... in their churches, different churches on Sundays, ... social clubs because we blacks believe in social clubs (School 3, Participant 13, Line 196-197).

So the school as such is also an asset in the child because it is on the school premises that we're doing that as well ... (School 4, Participant 16, Line 78-79).

Sometimes we don't know about the assets that we have in our communities, or at school (School 4, Participant 16, Line 216).

Circle of Life is an NGO, it's an asset, it's a local institution in our community, so we make use of all those assets (School 4, Participant 16, Line 215-226).

... we have a library in our community, it's not that we don't use the library but we don't go with the children to the library as such (School 4, Participant 16, Line 231-233).

The principal is also part of the Community Forum ... they meet once a month with the police (School 4, Participant 16, Line 436-439).

d) Subcategory 2.4: Identifying local businesses and government-related organisations

The following verbatim quotations illustrate the teachers' reported ability to identify *local businesses and government-related organisations* in their community, with the potential of being mobilised to the benefit of the school and local community:

We want to approach our municipality to help us with the irrigation (School 1, Participant 6, Line 979-978).

So when I'm looking at that area at Elukwatini, two years ago, we did not have a Spar, but now we have a Spar and this year we will have Pick n Pay and Score has moved away, so we have another market and there are a lot (School 2, Participant 10, Line 485-489).

We hope to catch the attention of those developing businesses out there, because the bigger shops are getting into our areas, shops like Pick n Pay, Spar, we understand that sooner or later Checkers will also be there ... (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 934-937).

The book seller, the publishers, he owns a hardware shop (School 3, Participant 13, Line 307-312).

... the police were there, social services were there (School 4, Participant 17, Line 426).

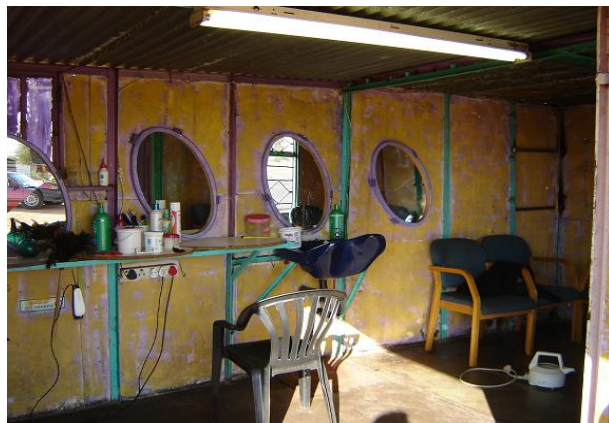
The visual data in photographs 4.5-4.8 substantiates teachers' comments on the identification of local business in their communities:



*Photograph 4.5: School 1
A local spaza shop.*



*Photograph 4.6: School 4
A local barbershop.*



*Photograph 4.7: School 3
A local unisex hairdresser.*



*Photograph 4.8: School 4
Various local businesses.*

In summary of this category, it seems that teachers in all four schools demonstrated the ability to identify assets within their community contexts. Teachers in different schools showed similarities in the identification of physical resources, natural and environmental

resources, community organisations and institutions as well as local businesses and government-related organisations. Although School 2 did not identify community organisations or institutions that they intended to mobilise, they did focus on the identification of local businesses that could be mobilised to enhance psychosocial support.

4.3 SUBTHEME 1.2: TEACHERS MOBILISING ASSETS

Teachers in all four schools displayed the ability to mobilise identified assets in their school-community contexts. In the following verbatim extract, one of the teachers in School 3 symbolically refers to the process of mobilising under-utilised assets (symbolised as *calves*) in order for assets to be optimally utilised (symbolised as *cows*):

For instance if you can see in our poster, we have cows, small cows. They said we should work towards making the cows bigger – today we have many cows. Our kraal is filled with cows that are living on a daily basis and we are feeding them (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 370-374).

I next discuss the categories related to this subtheme: 4.3.1) mobilising individuals' assets; 4.3.2) mobilising natural and environmental resources; 4.3.3) mobilising physical resources; and 4.3.4) mobilising assets by building networks and partnerships.

4.3.1 Category 1: Mobilising individuals' assets

Teachers in all four schools seemed able to mobilise individuals' assets, with the goal of contributing to psychosocial support within their unique school community contexts. I next refer to subcategories related to teachers' ability to mobilise the skills and capabilities of a) teachers, b) children, and c) community members and parents.

a) Subcategory 1.1: Mobilising teachers' assets

Teachers demonstrated the ability to mobilise their own skills, capabilities and assets to initiate, implement and manage asset-based initiatives to the benefit of school-community contexts. In this manner, they reportedly contributed to potential psychosocial support within their school community contexts. Teachers shared their knowledge and resources and also seemingly provided psychosocial support.

i) Sharing knowledge and resources

Teachers reported on their acquired knowledge and resources to equip parents, colleagues and learners with information and relevant resources to be able to address psychosocial issues. The following verbatim transcripts illustrate the teachers' demonstrated ability to share their knowledge and resources:

... share the information with the colleagues first, parents and learners (School 1, Participant 3, Line 82-83).

... here at school we are sharing, like I have said, my colleague came to me and asked for information that I have, that I share the information and the other lady this morning (School 1, Participant 3, Line 641-643).

... to give relevant sources, how to keep the relevant sources, sometimes when you came to the house, they are very sick, to tell them that "okay I'm going to phone so and so ... " (School 1, Participant 7, Line 844-846).

Then we are here to encourage clinics ... they must go to the clinic because this is where they are going to get help. Then to get medication, then to organise care givers ... to organise someone to take care of her ... to organise somebody when we are not there to visit these people (School 1, Participant 7, Line 866-875).

I will encourage the teachers who are here to make use of those books, we've got them in all the levels ... (School 1, Participant 3, Line 936-937).

... even to explain some of the things and trying to make them understand why do we have to have projects in around the community (School 2, Participant 9, Line 181-183).

... just to empower them with a skill so that they will be able to take care of themselves (School 2, Participant 10, Line 428-429).

Yes we do have the awareness and the HIV and AIDS awareness Day (School 3, Participant 13, Line 169-170).

... question of empowerment and being made aware of what is happening around the community ... we became skilled on how to help our communities ... (School 3, Participant 13, Line 383-387).

Another thing that is assisting us is consultation, if I have something that I don't know, I know who to go to, I know where to get assistance – it has made us to be outspoken to one another, we no longer keep things to ourselves (School 3, Participant 14, Line 452-457).

And we give ideas to remedy the problem (School 4, Participant 16, Line 78).

... guest speakers to inform the children again about HIV/AIDS and stuff ... also the teachers, ... a workshop where the teachers went and they received certificates also about HIV/AIDS (School 4, Participant 16, Line 188-193).

It appears that teachers in all four schools shared their knowledge, used their acquired skills and mobilised information resources to empower children, colleagues, parents and community members with information on various psychosocially related matters. Teachers also made referrals to relevant human resources.

ii) Support on a psychosocial level

Teachers reported on mobilising their positive characteristics and willingness to support others on a psychosocial level, which is evident in the following verbatim transcripts:

... to give them hope, to give them courage, pray for them ... when you pray and give courage and you give them hope, then they know that I've got somebody to help (School 1, Participant 6, Line 578-581).

... to give support as you have seen we are a support group, to pray, to give them hope, to give them courage so that they must know that there are some people who care for them

(School 1, Participant 7, Line 841-844).

We want them to think that there's a future for them. Then to form support groups for parents that are affected (School 1, Participant 7, Line 860-862).

... when we started this project we wanted to give help to them – we wanted to at least get involved and have an input in the schools ... , we wanted to sort of support them (School 2, Participant 9, Line 44-46).

One other thing I've learnt is that as educators is that it is possible that we can go an extra mile helping other people out there as long as we have ideas and as long as we communicate and as long as we form groups, working as individuals (School 2, Participant 11, Line 123-127).

...just to go out and find out what you can do for these people, so that maybe at the end they can also benefit from whatever (School 2, Participant 10, Line 249-250).

What drove me in all this is love and the thought of seeing somebody going up and up irrespective of who you are ... It's the drive inside – most of the time I would like to see people better than what they were yesterday and better than what I am – that is what was driving me (School 2, Participant 11, Line 282-289).

... we felt we must stand up and do something for these kids so that (School 3, Participant 12, Line 319-320).

... passion of helping especially the poverty stricken families that we are working with here in this community (School 3, Participant 12, Line 344-346).

Ja, we supported them so much (School 3, Participant 15, Line 417).

I made other teachers aware of the situation. And then everybody supported the child. So she is like well now (School 3, Participant 13, Line 467-469).

So we're all the time busy doing all these things, like we have children that we put in foster care, we give support (School 4, Participant 19, Line 418-419).

In summary, the teachers demonstrated dedication and commitment in supporting children, parents, colleagues and community members on a spiritual and psychosocial

level (see Chapter 6 for a more detailed account of teachers' demonstrated asset-based competencies).

b) Subcategory 1.2: Mobilising children's assets

Teachers reported on their ability to mobilise children's skills to assist in the implementation and maintenance of their vegetable garden initiatives on school premises. In turn, the children seemed to gain additional skills and knowledge from this practical experience (for example the process of establishing and maintaining a vegetable garden, practical gardening skills, and practical application of agricultural theory). The following verbatim quotations illustrate the teachers' reported ability to mobilise children's assets:

We're trying to engage our learners ... (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 268).

The learners inside the school also, during subject related period, they will also join because to them doing other subjects like agricultural science they could be serving in this project, and they will be able to go there and make observations of whatever that they will be doing, in terms of applying the knowledge that they need, so also they will be involved (School 2, Participant 11, Line 505-510).

I think we are succeeding, we've got a beautiful garden there at the back, we've planted various vegetables, carrots, spinach and so on ... the learners are using the buckets ... the learners are helpful, they are taking water from main to the garden (School 3, Participant 12, Line 15-22).

X maintains the garden especially the natural science group, they maintain the garden, look after the garden, keep it clean and so on, they're in charge of the garden (School 4, Participant 18, Line 160-162).

The visual data in photographs 4.10 and 4.11 illustrates School 2's vegetable garden initiative, steered by the agricultural teacher and a group of children in the agricultural class.



Photograph 4.10: School 2

The group leader of the children who assist with the maintenance of the vegetable garden, the research assistant and the agricultural teacher.



Photograph 4.11: School 2

The vegetable garden that is steered by the children in the agricultural class.

Teachers in School 2 seemed to focus more on involving children in their vegetable garden initiative and to make it an integral part of the agricultural class's practical learning experience. Focus group contributions and visual data are further supported by comments in my research journal, referring to the children in School 2, who assisted in their vegetable garden initiative:

Together with the M Ed students, we went to X High School. We were so impressed with the progress made on their vegetable garden. X mobilised some learners in his agricultural science class to assist in the garden ... (Research journal, 25 May 2006).

On the other hand, teachers in School 1 reflected on their initiative to equip children with the necessary skills and knowledge on HIV/AIDS, with the aim of transferring their acquired knowledge to their peers. It seemed as if teachers in School 1 managed to mobilise children as peer educators on HIV/AIDS and related topics:



Because that child has that knowledge, he can even transfer that knowledge (School 1, Participant 4, Line 678-679).

Ja, that is the part of information, even for the learners ... according to their development (School 1, Participant 3, Line 681-682).

These teachers are trained by X they come, they give lectures to our learners, they are trained in various aspects, conflict management, mediation, conflict resolution and HIV/AIDS – those are the aspects that they are trained in. We're trying to engage our learners also ... So there are students there who we call them Soul Buddies (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 264-272).

Teachers in School 2 reported on their vision to teach practical skills to high-school children, in order to address future unemployment of school-leavers:

... the learners that need to do practical work, so I thought that., I am not saying we should chase them away from the school, just to empower them with a skill so that they will be able to take care of themselves, like maybe introducing other projects like maybe building bricks for building houses (someone is screaming at the back) we teaching them how to build bricks and even this one of welding, the welding project (School 2, Participant 10, 426-432).

The practical skills maybe, I think that one can be done after school, or after hours, we identify those learners, teaching things like tiling, practical work for the learners, maybe you can find that some of the people in the community they can also come, so that after school we know there's a second group of people who are coming after school to teach them the practical skills so that at the end they have something to survive with, it doesn't have to be now (School 2, Participant 9, 436-442).

In summary, the teachers seemed to demonstrate the ability to mobilise children's assets to assist with asset-based initiatives. Teachers in all four schools reportedly utilised children to assist in vegetable garden projects. The teachers in School 1 seemed to focus on equipping learners with knowledge and skills to deal more effectively with HIV/AIDS and related topics, while those in School 2 raised their vision of a future project to equip school-leavers with practical skills.

c) Subcategory 1.3: Mobilising community members' and parents' assets

Teachers in Schools 1 and 2 reported on mobilising parents and community members to get involved in their asset-based initiatives. Teachers in School 1 reported on parents' and community members' involvement in their vegetable garden initiative, which is reflected by the following verbatim quotations:

We as the vegetable garden group, we asked the community to help us and we gave them they learnt to peel ... (School 1, Participant 2, Line 703-704).

What is happening with the vegetable garden, what I've seen so far, it helps a lot with the community because what is happening now, the parents are taking care of the school, they don't want the gate to remain open, they don't want any animals to come in because they are keen, they are looking out for the vegetable garden (School 1, Participant 2, Line 712-716).

... because the parents are involved, before they go there they start at the classroom and then go to the garden (School 1, Participant 5, Line 816-818).

Teachers in School 1's ability to mobilise parents and community members as partners in their vegetable garden initiative, is visible in the visual data in photographs 4.12 and 4.13:



Photograph 4.12: School 1

Unemployed community members and parents work in the vegetable garden.



Photograph 4.13: School 1

I stand with teachers and parents next to their vegetable garden.

This contribution is further supported by an extract from my research journal, which reflects my observation during one of the field visits to School 1:

I flew alone to PE for the day ... I was curious to see what they did and whether their projects progressed ... ? I was utterly impressed – I saw a huge vegetable field in front of me. I was so proud ... There were a lot of community members working in the gardens, each with a small plot allocated to them. They really took ownership for their piece of vegetable garden. When I left at about 17:00, they were still busy ... (Research journal, 19 August 2004).

Teachers in School 2 reported on parents' and community members' involvement in their beadwork initiative, reflected by the following verbatim quotations:

We requested our learners to tell their parents that we've got this project that they should come so that they get more information. They (parents) all came, positively and it means that they were interested in doing the work (School 2, Participant 10, Line 156-158; 223-224).

...their willingness, their positive attitude towards the project, they responded positively and they indicated and they showed that they were really interested in the project (School 2, Participant 10, Line 240-242).

So now the parents now were in, we started with the projects, one of them was the bead project. So more parents were more interested in the bead projects (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 707-710).

Teachers in School 2's ability to facilitate the process of mobilising parents' and community members' skills to assist in their beadwork initiative is illustrated by means of the visual data in photographs 4.14 and 4.15.



Photograph 4.14: School 2

Unemployed community members and parents are busy with their beadworking in one of the school's classrooms.



Photograph 4.15: School 2

Unemployed community members and parents together with the teacher who coordinated the beadwork initiative. The teacher holds the HIV/AIDS ribbon brooches.

The following extracts of my research journal reflect my observation during one of the field visits to School 2. These extracts support teachers in School 2's ability to mobilise parents' and community members' active involvement in their beadwork initiative:

Parents came in their numbers – we could not believe our eyes ... Maria assisted them with great patience to master the basic skills of beading ... I left the school with a warm feeling in my heart (Research journal, 12 October 2005).

We met the parents participating in the beadwork project. They took initiative in making their own HIV/AIDS ribbon brooches. X said they asked someone from another community to show them how to make the design. We all supported them and wore our HIV/AIDS ribbons with pride (Research journal, 9 May 2007).

The following extract from my co-researcher's journal also indicate the ability of participating teachers to mobilise parents' and community members' to take part in the beading-group initiative:

Today was such a rewarding day for me personally. At last we saw some results of one of our projects at school X. We went with our colleague Maria to assist the teachers and parents with beading lessons – something that the school identified as a possible project (to keep community members busy and earn them some money) and organised. I was surprised at the large number of parents that wanted to learn and there was even a father as well. I could not do beading myself but Maria was an excellent teacher. It was wonderful to see the completed work at the end of the session and we all felt like beading experts. We had lots of fun doing this activity. The parents and teachers committed to continue on their own and I am looking forward to our next visit to see the products (Co-researcher’s journal, 12 October 2005).

On the other hand, teachers in School 3 seemed to mobilise parents by paying them to clean classrooms, thus generating some income for parents. The following verbatim quotation explains the process followed of employing parents:

We managed to go to some houses and then took some parents, I think we’ve got three parents per week that are coming to our school to clean our classes and then each teacher every day must give R5-00 on top of his/her table if he/she wants her class to be swept by the parents. We take that money and then at the end of the week we buy food, we’re not giving them the money, we are buying food for them so that they can put on the table for their kids (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 22, Line 324-330).

As part of School 3’s parent involvement initiative, they mobilised parents to start informal food kiosks on the school grounds, with the goal of providing children the opportunity to buy healthy and nutritious food during school breaks. According to the teachers, this initiative had several positive outcomes, namely addressing unemployment amongst parents; enhancing parent involvement and school-parent relationships; and preventing children to leave the school terrain during break time, thereby reducing the risk of being abused or being in an accident outside the school premises.

The visual data in photographs 4.16 and 4.17 shows some of these food kiosks on School 3's premises:



Photograph 4.16: School 3

Parents preparing their food kiosk for break-time.



Photograph 4.17: School 3

One of the parents at her food-kiosk.

Additionally, the teachers in School 3 reportedly invited parents to information sessions to equip them with knowledge on various psychosocially related topics, with the goal that these parents would transfer their knowledge to the wider community context. One of the teachers explained the transference of information to parents as follows:

Parent involvement happens normally when there are like the one that we have organised already, the one whereby the police coming over. We invite them to the school to come and listen, especially those who are not working, we invite them so that they can hear and maybe try and spread the gospel to other members of the community. Like during the HIV and AIDS thing, the specialists who are invited to the school, we invite even the parents to come and listen so that maybe in their churches, different churches on Sundays, they can discuss those or in their social clubs because we blacks believe in social clubs. So those are the kinds of topics they discuss in the social clubs (School 3, Participant 13, Line 189-199).

Teachers in School 4 reported that although they managed to involve some parents, they could not sustain parent involvement. They experienced frustration, as reflected in the following verbatim extracts:

And even with Circle of Life, you identify learners, all the parents are very eager because the learners have problems, their children have problems and then after a month or so they don't go anymore (School 4, Participant 17, Line 370-373).

This is also a frustrating process ... because really the parents are a barrier to us (School 4, Participant 18, Line 382-386).

Similarly, teachers in School 2 experienced that parent involvement was not sustainable. They experienced that parents expected financial benefits out of their beadwork project and therefore did not stay committed to the initiative as the project progressed, despite their initial willingness to be involved. The following verbatim quotation of one of the teachers explains their frustration in this regard:

Then the bead project went on and on, now you know, I've said we are rural, the parents were mainly ..., they thought that when they put in work something will come out of it immediately, but nothing came out because it was not immediate that you will get something out of the whole thing, we were still building up. So now the number started to decrease (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 718-723).

To conclude, it seems that teachers in all four schools managed to mobilise parents' and community members' practical skills, their time and their willingness to assist in asset-based initiatives. Teachers in Schools 1 and 2 mobilised parents and community members to assist with their vegetable gardens. Teachers in School 2 reportedly also mobilised parents to assist with their beadwork project. Teachers in School 3 allegedly mobilised parents' competencies in the daily cleaning of classrooms, starting food kiosks on their school premises and equipping them with knowledge on various psychosocially related topics. However, both Schools 2 and 4 reported difficulties regarding the sustainability of parent involvement (see Chapter 5, subtheme 2.2, category 2 for a detailed account of this barrier). Teachers reported the following outcomes as a result of active parent involvement: improving skills development of parents and community members; addressing unemployment; mobilising supportive school-based community relationships;

equipping parents with knowledge on various psychosocially related topics, with the goal that parents transfer knowledge to the wider community context and prevent children from being exposed to risk factors during school time.

4.3.2 Category 2: Mobilising natural and environmental resources

Teachers demonstrated the ability to mobilise under-utilised natural and environmental resources, with the goal of being of optimal use to people within their school-community contexts. As alluded to in earlier categories, schools established a vegetable garden by mobilising natural resources, namely under-utilised land on their school grounds.

One of the teachers in School 2 refers to the piece of land that they mobilised to become their vegetable garden:

We got our space at the back there behind the classes, it was just a place which seemed as if it cannot grow anything ... (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 753-755).

The visual data in photographs 4.18-4.21 illustrates the vegetable garden initiatives in each of the schools:



Photograph 4.18: School 1



Photograph 4.19: School 2



Photograph 4.20: School 3



Photograph 4.21: School 4

Teachers in the four schools seemingly had various goals that they wanted to reach with their vegetable garden initiatives. One of the main goals of Schools 1, 2 and 3 was to address HIV/AIDS, by providing nutritious vegetables to infected children and community members:

We want this garden to help HIV/AIDS learners ... that is the aim (School 1, Participant 1, Line 74).

Ja, what we know as a group, as a vegetable garden group that at the end the people that must benefit are HIV and AIDS (School 1, Participant 1, Line 775-776).

I think that one of the vegetable garden, because we understand that we need to eat vegetables, like for an example we have got people who are infected and affected by the epidemic virus, we thought that maybe if we could just have a small garden where we could just plant vegetables so that the people around the community will not go and buy the green stuff from the market, they can just plant and come and have the vegetables in the garden (School 2, Participant 9, Line 57-63).

I must indicate the main aim was to address HIV and AIDS, create more awareness to that and to reduce teenage pregnancies (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 683-686).

We have a number of orphans, we are intending to ... after everything is okay when we harvest we will give the vegetables to the orphans, we have so many (School 3, Participant 12, Line 28-30).

On the other hand, teachers in School 4 aimed to support vulnerable households in their school-community context:

That was our goal to support the many needy families (School 4, Participant 18, Line 105).

Another goal of School 2's vegetable garden initiative was to address unemployment and to create income generation opportunities in their community:

... one other thing, as indicated, most people are unemployed in this area, we were saying that with the gardening project it will be easier for these people to get something into their pockets in a long run because they will be selling the vegetables to the outside world, especially in developed areas – that at the end of the day those people would come down here to get vegetables and in that way it was going to put little cash into their pockets (School 2, Participant 10, Line 66-73).

Ja, it was to address unemployment maybe to a limited or greater extent (School 2, Participant 11, Line 78-79).

... introducing the projects we were saying that we were going to address also the rate of unemployment – because we know poverty, the present research is associating poverty more and more with HIV and AIDS because more people are unemployed (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 687-691).

Although the four schools' initial objectives regarding the purpose of their vegetable garden initiatives did not always match their outcomes, each school-community context benefited from their initiative in a different way. Schools 1 and 3 reported that their vegetable garden initiatives benefited HIV/AIDS-affected children and households in their school-community contexts, and were therefore congruent with their initial goals. The following verbatim quotations provide supporting evidence of outcomes achieved in Schools 1 and 3:

... you will see more people they will come to school and disclose their status so that they can get food, help you see, from the school is whereby the support group, support will get people from them (School 1, Participant 3, Line 132-134).

What I want to say is what I like most about the vegetable garden, what we did, we didn't stigmatise the garden, we didn't paint them dark by saying we are doing it for HIV and

AIDS, that they don't know, what we are doing, we know at the back of our minds that they are doing it voluntarily, at the end we know who is going to benefit ... We know as teachers that what we are doing, we are achieving, we know our achievements (School 1, Participant 1, Line 760-768).

Ja, they (orphans) *take the vegetables home, we share it amongst them and the people who are helping* (School 3, Participant 12, Line 38-39).

The visual data in photograph 4.22) shows the harvest from School 1's vegetable garden that was used to provide support to vulnerable families, child-headed homes and HIV/AIDS infected and affected community members:

Harvest from School 1's vegetable garden utilised in their HIV/AIDS school-community-based support initiative.



Photograph 4.22: School 1

In School 1, unemployed parents and community members reportedly became part of the vegetable garden initiative. Their involvement resulted in apparent heightened parent-

and community involvement. In addition, unemployment was addressed to a certain extent and crime was reduced in the school-community context. It therefore seems that teachers in School 1 managed to meet their initial goals to a great extent, as evident by the following verbatim transcripts:

We as the vegetable garden group, we asked the community to help us ... they learnt to peel and they did that (School 1, Participant 1, Line 702-703).

What is happening with the vegetable garden, what I've seen so far, it helps a lot with the community because what is happening now, the parents are taking care of the school, they don't want the gate to remain open, they don't want any animals to come in because they are keen, they are looking out for the vegetable garden. And what happened to those vegetable gardens, they've got plots, each and everyone when she's from home, he/she knows that they have to go and see to it, my plot is moving, they are very responsible (School 1, Participant 2, Line 712-719).

...there are lots of parents and we find out that they are so interested in working here and because of the high rate of unemployment, at least for a day they are having something to do, because each and everyday they must come and have a look at their garden. A person comes with a spade, a fork and rake of their own and cut whatever site of land he wants (School 1, Participant 1, Line 733-738).

To add more on that. I can see that in the future there will be a less crime because most of the young men who are not working they just come here and do something there in the garden and you know when I see them they are very willing, they are willing to work. I can say there will be less crime ... (School 1, Participant 2, Line 747-751).

...because the parents are involved, before they go there they start at the classroom and then go to the garden (School 1, Participant 5, Line 817-818).

On the other hand, the parents who participated in School 2's vegetable garden initiative gradually became less interested, because they did not receive immediate financial benefits, as they initially expected. However, teachers displayed the ability to revise their initial goal, by subsequently involving children in their project that benefited the school's agricultural department and also raised some funds for the school, as evident in the following verbatim quotations:

Ja, as my colleagues have indicated, people thought that by coming here something will



immediately get into their pockets, that was maybe what was at the back of their minds, but then seeing that nothing is getting into their pockets, they lost interest and became demotivated. But then in a way even though J was involved in that, he ended up doing it for his internal projects for related projects (School 2, Participant 11, Line 83-88).

...the garden has already started, maybe let's involve our learners more, even though it would be subject related but in the end we raised some funds for the school in the process, focusing on what we have started (School 2, Participant 11, Line 94-96).

...we focused on the community and forgot that even our learners are part of the community. So what would have made it better was to involve our learners more ... seeing that the garden was prospering (School 2, Participant 11, Line 100-106).

So he had his own garden for practicals, that's where we did our practicals on environmental studies, so he had his own small garden. Now he opened up, when X opened up, the school provided us with a very big space (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 749-753).

Similarly, teachers in Schools 1, 3 and 4 involved children to assist in mobilising this natural resource by participating in the daily maintenance of their vegetable gardens:

We're trying to engage our learners ... (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 268).

I think we are succeeding, we've got a beautiful garden there at the back, we've planted various vegetables, carrots, spinach and so on ... the learners are using the buckets ... the learners are helpful, they are taking water from main to the garden (School 3, Participant 12, Line 15-22).

X maintains the garden especially the natural science group, they maintain the garden, look after the garden, keep it clean and so on, they're in charge of the garden (School 4, Participant 18, Line 160-162).

Teachers in School 4 used the vegetable garden at school to motivate learners to implement similar projects at their homes:

And the children are actually encouraged to have their own vegetable gardens at home (School 4, Participant 17, Line 120-121).

Furthermore, teachers in School 4 seemed to utilise the vegetable garden to maintain a feeding scheme at the school. They distributed the harvest amongst vulnerable children and households in their school-community context. It therefore seems as if teachers managed to meet their initial goal of starting a vegetable garden to support vulnerable children and households, as supported by the following verbatim quotations:

The greens from the garden, we use to prepare food for our needy learners, we've got a feeding scheme at school, the spinach, the cabbage and tomatoes we get from the garden and we cook it for them (School 4, Participant 18, Line 95-98).

And anyone from the community can feel free if they need any vegetables ... we monitor that, because they don't just come in, they come to the office and they ask and if there's any we will provide them with whatever is available ... You don't just come in and pick here, you come, you ask, you first see the principal, we like to follow procedures (School 4, Participant 18, Line 104-117).

And we provide it to their parents, we give the children vegetables to go home for the needy (School 4, Participant 17, Line 137-138).

We have a feeding scheme and we use that to also feed them because the department don't provide us with vegetables, only with maize, soya and all that stuff, and we do the extra, we go the extra mile (School 4, Participant 16, Line 140-142).

I'm proud of the fact that the community drives past, they always complement us on the garden and the fact that the children ... , most of the children doesn't get ... , the needy children don't get food at home and each day we can give them a meal (School 4, Participant 19, Line 285-288).

Both Schools 1 and 4 received awards for their vegetable garden initiatives. It seems as if the usefulness and value of vegetable gardens in communities are acknowledged, encouraged and awarded by authorities. Teachers explain their achievements as follows:

...our garden is very productive and as a result we managed to get an award. We were called, the Education Department went around all schools and it discovered that there are 52 schools that are active in doing gardening, we were among those 52 schools and then there was a short listing, fortunately we received an award (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 256-261).

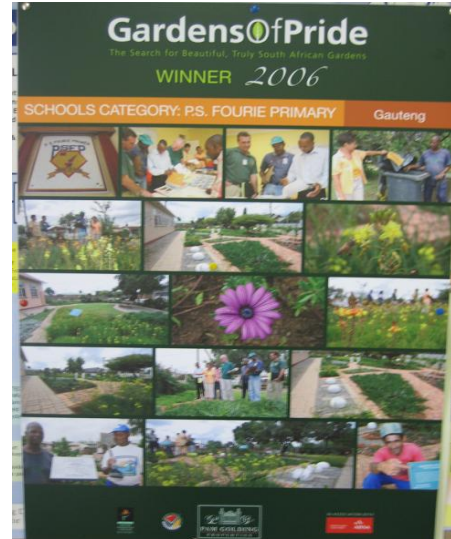
Just something I want to add, we won a competition, schools category, there's our garden, we won it (School 4, Participant 16, Line 290-291).

The visual data in photographs 4.23 and 4.24 provides supportive evidence of Schools 1 and 4's recognition of their vegetable-gardens:



Photograph 4.23: School 1

Teachers proudly show the article that was published in their local newspaper with the heading: “*Mama Garden*” *plants a field of hope* (see Addendum D1 to view the full article).



Photograph 4.24: School 4

A poster to indicate their achievement as the winner of the schools category *Gardens of Pride* award in 2006.

To summarise, all four schools displayed the ability to mobilise under-utilised land to establish a vegetable garden on their school premises. Teachers in Schools 1 and 2 managed to meet their initial goal of using their vegetable garden initiatives to support HIV/AIDS-affected children and households. Additionally, teachers in School 1 managed to address unemployment and crime. Similarly, teachers in School 4 managed to meet their initial goal of supporting vulnerable children and households. On the other hand, teachers in School 2 reported that their initial goal to support HIV/AIDS-affected children and households as well as to address unemployment did not materialise. They indicated that unemployed parents were initially eager to get involved, but gradually became less interested as they did not receive the expected financial benefits. As a result,

teachers in School 2 revised their initial goal by involving children and the agricultural class to maintain the vegetable garden and raise additional funds for the school.

The abundant presence of vegetable gardens as initiative seems to foreground nutritional support as essential in teachers' approach to address needs in their varied vulnerable school-community contexts. Some of the outcomes of the vegetable garden initiatives included fresh vegetables for vulnerable children and households, enhanced parent, learner and community involvement, and income generation for vulnerable community households.

4.3.3 Category 3: Mobilising physical resources

This category concerns under-utilised physical resources (in the form of buildings, apparatus and equipment) within the school-community contexts that were mobilised to address areas of need.

Teachers in School 1 reportedly mobilised under-utilised buildings and office space to establish an HIV/AIDS support initiative as well as an information and resource centre on their school grounds. The HIV/AIDS support initiative included home visits to community members infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, as well as a counselling room on the school premises. The information and resource centre was established to assist learners and community members with information and resources on HIV/AIDS (see Addendum D2 for an article on School 1's HIV/AIDS Support and Information Centre in their local newspaper, titled: "Teachers build together against AIDS"). The following is a verbatim transcript of School 1's group leader during the Port Elizabeth Seminar. She explained how they decided to mobilise (in conjunction with a mobilised partnership with Absa Bank) their "sick room" in order to make their resource and support centre more successful:

Fortunately Absa helped us ... sponsor you with R50 000, what are you going to do with R50 000 and then we said we will use it to make our centre successful and effective. We are going to break one of our classrooms, our school is not so big, and make the centre bigger and work. We called the staff and we decided on the room ... let's look for a place where everyone, whether in the administration block wonders whether they have come to the office or where ever, therefore we said let's look for a place in the admin block. We therefore decided on the room, it was our sick room then we split it because it was two rooms and then we fit in a sliding door so that it can be used (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 160-175).

The visual data in photographs 4.25-4.28 illustrates School 1's HIV/AIDS support, information and resource initiative:



Photograph 4.25: School 1

HIV/AIDS Support and Resource Centre sponsored by Absa.



Photograph 4.26: School 1

An outside view of their HIV/AIDS Information Centre.



Photograph 4.27: School

An outside view of their HIV/AIDS counselling room with their mission statement on the wall.



Photograph 4.28: School 1

An inside view of the counselling room.

Teachers in School 2 reportedly mobilised an under-utilised classroom to teach unemployed community members beadwork and provide them with a central workstation to perform beadwork during the week. The visual data in photographs 4.29 and 4.30 show unemployed community members performing beadwork in one of the under-utilised classrooms in the school:



Photograph 4.29 School 2



Photograph 4.30: School 2

Unemployed parents and community members are busy with beadwork in one of the school's previously under-utilised classrooms.

The following verbatim quotations refer to community members that came in on a regular basis to School 2 to participate in the beadwork project:

They all came, positively and it means that they were interested in doing the work ... the whole day they were here, they brought their own food, they ate during break time, they only went home at four in the afternoon. So it shows really that they were interested (School 2, Participant 18, Line 266-267).

...our school is big, it has a lot of classrooms, it's about 20 classes excluding the other centres ... So we allocated a class to the beading group, they started working ... (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 725-727).

Teachers in School 3 mobilised their assembly hall to make up for a shortage of classrooms in their school. The Grade 7 learners attended class in the hall while an open space on the school grounds was used for building additional classrooms from corrugated iron. Teachers also built additional corrugated iron classrooms to address the shortage of classrooms in their school. The visual data in photographs 4.31 and 4.32 serve as illustration of teachers' ability to mobilise physical resources in schools to address the shortage of classrooms:



Photograph 4.32: School 3

Additional corrugated iron classrooms were built to address the shortage of classrooms.



Photograph 4.31: School 3

Grade 7 learners were taught in the school hall, due to a lack of classrooms.

Teachers in School 4 rebuilt an existing kitchen to form the basis for their feeding scheme for vulnerable children and households within the school-community context. Photograph 4.33 shows the school's kitchen during renovation and the teachers who managed this initiative:



Photograph 4.33: School 4

Teachers in front of their school's kitchen, which forms the basis for their feeding scheme.

In the following verbatim quotation, one of the teachers in School 4 refers to their kitchen and vegetable garden as main resources for their feeding scheme:

...with the kitchen for the needy children, and using the vegetable garden for that ...
(School 4, Participant 18, Line 266-267).

Furthermore, teachers in School 4 mobilised one of the under-utilised classrooms, renovating it for a learning support initiative at their school. The visual data in photographs 4.34 and 4.35 shows the classroom being renovated as well as the teachers involved in this project.



Photograph 4.34: School 4



Photograph 4.35: School 4

The reconstruction of an existing classroom to accommodate the learning support initiative.

The following verbatim quotations of teachers in School 4 act as supportive evidence of their reported ability to mobilise an under-utilised classroom:

The remedial programme is at school, from the second period up until the fifth period, first session, Mrs. W works for the foundation phase, middle session with the intermediate and the senior phase (School 4, Participant 16, Line 17-19).

... it is on the school premises that we're doing that as well ... and the classroom as well, because that is also an asset (School 4, Participant 16, Line 78-83).

To conclude, teachers mobilised physical resources within their school-community contexts to support their asset-based initiatives and to address barriers that they experienced in their school-community contexts. School 1 renovated their sick room to establish an HIV/AIDS support and resource centre. School 2 made use of an under-utilised classroom to provide parents and community members with a communal workstation for their beadwork project. School 3 used their hall to meet the challenge of a shortage of classrooms and took the initiative of building additional classes to address this barrier on the longer term. School 4 renovated their existing kitchen to act as the basis for their feeding scheme for needy children and households in their school-community context.

4.3.4 Category 4: Mobilising assets by building networks and partnerships

This category refers to teachers' reported ability to establish networks and/or partnerships with a) organisations and institutions; b) neighbouring schools; and c) international assets. Although these networks/partnerships were in some instances a once-off event and in other cases an ongoing partnership, their goal was throughout to directly or indirectly address vulnerability by establishing psychosocial support.

a) Subcategory 4.1: Mobilising assets by building networks with organisations and institutions

Teachers demonstrated the ability to establish networks with various organisations and institutions by i) mobilising knowledge and developing skills through networks; ii) mobilising material support through networks; iii) mobilising emotional, spiritual and social support through networks; iv) mobilising safety support through networks; and v) mobilising health support through networks.

i) Mobilising knowledge and developing skills through networks

Teachers seemed able to network with various organisations and institutions in order for children, teachers and parents to acquire knowledge and to develop the skills that could equip them to deal with daily psychosocial challenges. The following verbatim quotations serve as supporting evidence of the teachers' ability to mobilise knowledge and developing skills through networks:

So we want to go to the ACVV, so that they can advise us (School 1, Participant 1, Line 19).

... those parents were trained in various aspects, to put a few, they were trained on HIV/AIDS and counselling ... were sponsored by Attic ... Again they were trained in parenting empowerment, to know how to deal with kids, or to bring up their kids ... They were also trained in trauma ... also trained us as educators because we also have our own anxieties and depression. So we were trained because we're dealing with these kids ... we were given lessons by X who is a clinical psychologist, she was sponsored



therefore by Absa ... These 22 parents also were trained conducted by X from the Department of Health, can you see we are working with different people, all those workshops were catered for by different NGO's (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 184-212).

She is there everyday, she reports to school every day, she records everything ... There are children who are dealing with drugs, they come to the office and given advice because we are working hand and glove with Child Line. And then we have the teachers, as she has already said that, who are training two schools (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 245-251).

I then asked at the university here which section can I approach to get help so that they come down and help us ... Then the whole process started ... The project was presented to the staff and then we never selected people, people volunteered because we opened it up to volunteers (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 520-524; 530-546).

So she went out, got somebody, the lady is so advanced because the Mpumalanga Province, the economic sector gave that lady funds to go overseas to further her skills on working with cultural souvenirs and all that. So the lady came and she offered to help the group on how to do more with the beads and stuff ... (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 734-739).

Every Friday when the kids leave the place where they are staying, they first go to the social workers, and then there they discuss different programs. They have different programs and topics that they talk about (School 3, Participant 13, Line 119-121).

Yes we do have the awareness and the HIV and AIDS awareness Day ... we will be calling people in to come and highlight or give us more knowledge about HIV and AIDS and the police will be coming soon, they've been invited to the school to come and address the learners about safety, how to take care of themselves during school hours and after schools now that there's a lot of bullying in schools (School 3, Participant 16, Line 167-175).

They come four days a week, Monday to Thursday, they have a place where they can do homework, they see the learners and they have a computer programme for the learners (School 4, Participant 16, Line 57-59).

Teachers in all four schools built networks with various organisations in their community with the aim of equipping children, teachers and parents with knowledge and skills to deal more effectively with psychosocial challenges. It seems that the psychosocial challenges that were reportedly dealt with included HIV/AIDS, parenting, trauma, depression, substance abuse, safety and bullying. On a practical level, individuals were equipped with beadwork skills and computer skills.

ii) Mobilising material support through networks

Teachers demonstrated the ability to network with various organisations and institutions in order to obtain material support in the form of equipment, apparatus, food and financial donations, as supported by the following verbatim quotations:

We asked the lady from ACVV to supply us with the seeds and she did that. So they did the ploughing. We asked the guy from the Municipality to give us tools or equipment. He said that we came very late, if we had come earlier, he would have given us a tractor. So we told him that it's not late, we are going to wait until they harvest, when they finish harvesting, we are going to ask him to come with the tracker so that the land must be cultivated properly (School 1, Participant 1, Line 703-709).

At that moment we had various stakeholders, they managed to give us support and food parcels. Our learners were getting food parcels, they were receiving clothes, school shoes and uniform from other people (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 144-146).

Fortunately Absa helped us ... sponsor you with R50 000, what are you going to do with R50 000 and then we said we will use it to make our centre successful and effective. We are going to break one of our classrooms, our school is not so big, and make the centre bigger and work. We called the staff and we decided on the room ... let's look for a place where everyone, whether in the administration block wonders whether they have come to the office or where ever, therefore we said let's look for a place in the admin block. We therefore decided on the room, it was our sick room then we split it because it was two rooms and then we fit in a sliding door so that it can be used (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 160 -175).

Then we received sponsors from Attic, from AC Livi and even other parents, you know there are parents who are working as domestics where their madams will give them



clothes and then those clothes are brought to the school. We received some food parcels, you cannot imagine the food parcels, it was a hoop sack, 85 kids were given those hoop sacks ... We have other social partners like Social Security Agents who comes (SASA) who comes every Monday (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 213-222).

So it was the g-string all the way, then now, because we had our team here which was helping us, so they took them to the University and on that year it was sold out. Then it was being sold at around R50. So it came back, we got the money, it was a R1000 so at least now the group has money to kick off other things (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 711-716).

The book seller, the publishers, then we got some donations from them and even raising funds ... and then we go and buy bricks and the people that we are supporting, buying bricks from, the lady who was an ex-teacher here at the school, so the husband gave us a discount, he owns a hardware, so they donated to us (School 3, Participant 13, Line 307-312).

Also the Shebeen (see photograph 4.37) which is closer to our school is starting to open his business at 3 in the afternoon, he also donated paint to our school, so we're communicating with him so that there mustn't be noise because our learners were starting to go to the shebeen or doing something there ... so that has stopped. We called our Councillor Mr. X, we talked to him, he is the one who approached Mr. X. So we managed so much (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 312-319).

And then we've got X, which provide the grades 1 and grades 2 and those needy learners in our schools, full uniform from shoe, underwear, the skirt for the girls, the top for the girls, the boys: the trouser, and even the jerseys, everything is provided to them on a yearly basis (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 388-392).

And then we've got X who is running a Pick 'n Pay ... every month end he sends parcels to the school so that they can take home to go and eat. We have a vegetable garden, every Friday they get spinach and tomatoes from our garden because it only started two months ago ... and then during winter time Checkers brings a lorry to our school with soup and bread. During breaks they eat bread and soup, they never get cold, our kids never cold in winter (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 398-405).

The ground that you see here, it wasn't in a good state but we won a sponsor from Lotto, they gave us lots and lots of money, about R500 000 and then if you can come to our school you will be shocked and amazed ... Again I would like to thank the team, Liesel, I

didn't know you but I heard Liesel had sponsored something. She sent us some toiletry bags, which they carried when they went to Korea (see picture 4.36) (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 443-451).

The visual data in photographs 4.36 and 4.37 relates to teachers in School 3's demonstrated ability to mobilise partnerships and networks:



Photograph 4.36: School 3

A photograph of the soccer team who obtained a sponsorship to go to Korea.



Photograph 4.37: School 3

The tavern that donated paint to School 3.

It appears that teachers in Schools 1, 2 and 3 built networks with various organisations and institutions in order to obtain material support to assist asset-based initiatives. The material support included seed for vegetable gardens, food parcels, financial donations, clothes, school uniforms and paint. The mobilisation of material support through networks reportedly assisted the community to deal more effectively with psychosocial matters.

iii) Mobilising emotional, spiritual and social support through networks

Teachers reported the ability to network with various organisations and institutions in order to establish resources for the provision of emotional, spiritual and social support, as evident in the following verbatim quotations:

We managed to support families, socially, emotionally and as well as the support group. All of them they used to go to visit homes, to give a prayer, to give emotional support and

this project was new to us and we wanted results. We worked together, involving others (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 119-123).

On the side of HIV support group, we managed to organise a pastor for us who can assist us with a group of people. There are kids who ..., after school everyday, they go to a place of safety where ... they worship, they pray and they play some games thereafter ... (School 3, Participant 13, Line 51-55).

Exactly because we networked with the pastor and place of safety ... We gave it to the pastor and he went overseas to look for sponsors and then he came back, they built a church for them (School 3, Participant 13, Line 61-64).

Yes, can you see the Circle of Life (see photograph 4.38) also, the centre was available but now we're utilising the centre (School 4, Participant 19, Line 178-179).

Circle of Life is an NGO so we make use of the community, you see the asset-based thing that we making use of, that is an NGO, local institution that we're making use of (School 4, Participant 16, Line 66-68).

The visual data in photographs 4.38 and 4.39 shows some of the community resources that were mobilised by teachers in School 4 in order to enhance psychosocial support within their school community context:



Photograph 4.38: School 4
Circle of Life.



Photograph 4.39: School 4
Youth Development Outreach Centre.

It seems that teachers in all four schools networked with organisations and institutions in their communities that provided community members with support on an emotional, spiritual and social level.

iv) Mobilising safety support through networks

Teachers demonstrated the ability to network with organisations and institutions in order to establish resources for the provision of safety, as evident in the following verbatim quotations:

Police are coming once a month, there's the hospice who assist us at the centre, there are nurses who go up and down, assisting us in relation to what is happening (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 230-232).

... we do have a policeman here, we adopted a cop. So whenever we have maybe let's say ... sexual abuse of some sort, the policeman is then called in to come and solve the problem (School 3, Participant 13, Line 154-157).

... the husband is a policeman, he works for the Dog Unit, we sat around the grounds, we have a big ground ... so they informed us and entertained us for the day ... (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 23, Line 409-412).

If you come and trespass now, we have like the adopt a cop per school, you just call the one you liaise with and they come and assist ... we have a safety committee and on that safety committee we have a constable or inspector and you go and you ask and they appoint one to your school and it works wonders. The principal is also part of the X Community Forum, he attends meetings I think once a month where they discuss, concerned parents, they meet once a month with the police (School 4, Participant 16, Line 431-439).

It appears that teachers in Schools 1, 3 and 4 established partnerships with the police in order to establish safety support networks in their communities. Additionally, School 4 became part of the community forum to address crime in their community.

v) **Mobilising health support through networks**

Teachers demonstrated the ability to network with organisations and institutions in order to establish resources for the provision of health, as evident in the following verbatim quotations:

... we went to the hospital ... (School 1, Participant 7, Line 564).

This child has been in and out of hospital ... (School 1, Participant 3, Line 607).

... we are going to call an ambulance to send them to hospital if possible, if not send them to Hospice where we will talk to the lady, ... encourage good diet, ... need exercise ... (School 1, Participant 7, Line 852-857).

And there is a lady, there was a lady from Hospice who came to our school and she told us that she's going to work with us here at school in our support group (School 1, Participant 8, Line 513-515).

As you can see here are the nurses who mostly help us if we have problems (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 23, Line 353-354).

... there are school nurses that we are working with. And then there's sister X, she was one of the nurses in the local clinic, now she has opened her own hospice. So if the child reports that I have a parent who is very ill, I just pick up the phone and call sister X, she comes to our school we go to the place and then she does the rest. Admission is done by her (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 23, Line 436-441).

... she is like the co-ordinator of the first aid, usually when we have serious problems then we sent the children to her, if it is not serious, but serious serious we take to the doctor or hospital. But the first aid team is also like, you know, in progress, it is there, it is stable (School 4, Participant 19, Line 180-184).

However, teachers in School 2 reported that they found it difficult to establish a meaningful network with the clinic in their community. They indicated that their community members still believed in witchcraft and preferred to consult “*inyangas*⁸”. The following verbatim extract serves as support:

⁸ A person who provides traditional African witchcraft services.

... in our area you know, we are not going to give statistics of people who are HIV positive because of the fact that most of our people still believe in witchcraft. So if somebody is sick there, it is never reported, even if you would be checking around you won't find the exact cases in our area. We have a clinic but you find the exact cases because it ends up viewed as being natural death in the process, because the people do not consult more in the clinic. They go to inyangas and all the stuff. So I won't be able to give the statistics right now, but from the point of view, we are aware that as deaths are increasing, there is relatedness to HIV. Looking at the symptoms, we know when you're sick you will become thinner, but there are other changes that are there, which you can associate with HIV and AIDS but because they not reported you cannot put that include them in your statistics (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 652-666).

It seems that teachers in Schools 1, 3 and 4 managed to establish networks with hospitals, clinics and hospices in their communities in order to enhance health support in their communities. However, School 2 reported that many community members still believed in traditional healing and therefore found it difficult to establish sustainable relationships with westernised health institutions.

To conclude, this subcategory demonstrated teachers' ability to establish networks and/or partnerships with faith-based organisations, educational institutions, health-related organisations, local businesses, NGOs and government organisations in order to address community needs on the following levels: knowledge and skills, financial, emotional, spiritual and social, safety; and health.

b) Subcategory 4.2: Mobilising assets by building networks with neighbouring schools

Teachers reported the ability to network with neighbouring schools in their broader community, with the aim of sharing their knowledge and skills, and working together towards addressing needs by utilising assets. The following verbatim quotations serve as supportive evidence of teachers' ability to build networks with neighbouring schools:

You know I've been inspired by the fact that neighbouring schools, especially here in PE, they are able to work together like that (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 916-918).



We have already spoken to one of our neighbouring high schools whom we always share the same environment but kilometres apart. So we are hoping that next year we will take this idea further, and now working with those people, the principal of that school he's so positive that in his plans he has already put that one (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 918-923).

So we are four primary schools each school get a term, it's actually like a joint venture (School 4, Participant 16, Line 61-62).

It seems that teachers in Schools 1, 2 and 4 managed to establish partnerships with neighbouring schools to work together towards addressing barriers in their community contexts.

c) Subcategory 4.3: Mobilising assets by building networks with international resources

Teachers reported the ability to network with international resources in order to obtain financial support for their schools and communities. The following verbatim quotations serve as supportive evidence of the teachers' ability to build partnerships with international resources:

Ja, from New York, so they took photographs of those kids, they are going to adopt them. Adopt them in a sense that they are going to send money, food and then parcels, clothes and other things that the kids need (School 3, Participant 13, Line 89-92).

Fortunately when we presented the issue of the 140 orphans in our school to one of the pastors around us, he took a phone and called Netherlands where he has friends, they asked for a list of the orphans ... They flew them to Netherlands, I still remember on that day we worked until 6 in the evening compiling the profiles. Then they were sent to Netherlands, after two weeks they came back, he reported to us that they are going to build a place of safety for the kids (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 374-381).

We have a big library, the sponsor was from America (School 3 – PE Seminar, Participant 21, Line 453).

But there's also a lady from Sweden, she comes here once a month and she brings seeds for us, actually young plants, like cabbage, and spinach and so on, and she gives advice on the insects, what we must do and whatever (School 4, Participant 17, Line 153-156).

Teachers in School 3 reported on partnerships with organisations in New York and the Netherlands, while teachers in School 4 liaised with a woman from Sweden. It seems that the mobilisation of international networks was mainly based on financial donations.

In conclusion, it seems that teachers demonstrated and reported the ability to build partnerships and/or networks with various organisations and institutions (including faith-based organisations, educational institutions, health-related organisations, local businesses, NGOs and government organisations); neighbouring schools; as well as international resources. In some cases these networks and partnerships were a single incidence, while in other cases an ongoing partnership was founded. The established networks and partnerships resulted in school-based psychosocial support, which are underpinned by the following reported outcomes: mobilising learners', teachers' and parents' knowledge and skills on various psychosocial topics in order to equip them to deal more effectively with daily psychosocial challenges; mobilising material support in the form of physical apparatus, food and financial donations; establishing assets for the provision of emotional, spiritual and social support; health support and safety support; sharing acquired knowledge and skills with neighbouring schools, and working together towards enhanced psychosocial support as well as mobilising supportive school-based community relationships. Table 4.2 provides a summarised comparison between the results of asset-mobilisation in the four school-community contexts that participated in the study.

Table 4.2: Summarised comparison between the results of asset-mobilisation in the four school-community contexts that participated in the study.

Teachers mobilising assets	Reported results that lead to school-based psychosocial support	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
Mobilising individual assets of teachers	Sharing of knowledge and skills transferred to wider school-community context.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Providing support on an emotional, spiritual and social level.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mobilising individual assets of children	Involving children in active participation regarding the establishment and maintenance of vegetable garden initiatives.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Equipping children to act as potential peer educators regarding psychosocial issues.	✓			
Mobilising individual assets of parents and community members	Involving parents and community members to actively participate in asset-based initiatives.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Improving skills development of parents and community members.	✓	✓		
	Addressing unemployment.	✓	✓	✓	
	Mobilising supportive school-based community relationships.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Equipping parents with knowledge on various psychosocial topics, with the goal that parents transfer knowledge to the wider community context.			✓	
	Preventing children from exposure to risk factors during school time.			✓	
Mobilising natural and environmental assets	Mobilising active parent involvement and participation.	✓		✓	
	Mobilising active parent involvement and participation (but encountered difficulties in sustaining parent involvement).		✓		✓
	Mobilising supportive school-based community relationships.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Addressing unemployment by creation of job opportunities.	✓			
	Addressing unemployment by creation of job opportunities (but encountered difficulty in sustaining).		✓		
	Addressing crime.	✓			

Teachers mobilising assets	Reported results that lead to school-based psychosocial support	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
	Supporting vulnerable and HIV/AIDS-affected children and households with food parcels.	✓		✓	
	Supporting vulnerable households with vegetables.				✓
	Benefiting the school's agricultural department and fundraising for school.		✓		
	Enhancing active learner participation and involvement.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Obtaining rewards on vegetable garden initiative.	✓			✓
Mobilising physical assets	Renovating or restructuring an existing building or room to provide physical space for an asset-based initiative.	✓	✓		✓
	Renovating or restructuring an existing building or room to address an encountered context-specific barrier or challenge.			✓	
	Mobilising supportive school-based community relationships.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mobilising assets by establishing partnerships and networks	Mobilising learners', teachers' and parents' knowledge and skills on various psychosocial topics in order to equip them to better deal with daily psychosocial challenges.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Mobilising material support in the form of physical apparatus, food and financial donations.	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Establishing assets for the provision of emotional, spiritual and social support.	✓		✓	✓
	Establishing assets for the provision of health support.	✓		✓	✓
	Establishing assets for the provision of safety support.	✓		✓	✓
	Sharing acquired knowledge and skills with neighbouring schools, and working together towards enhanced psychosocial support.		✓		✓
	Mobilising supportive school-based community relationships.	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.4 SUBTHEME 1.3 TEACHERS MANAGING THE ASSET-BASED PROCESS

Teachers seemed able to manage the asset-based process and reflect a future perspective regarding their existing and future asset-based initiatives. They demonstrated the ability to manage the asset-based process by 4.4.1) identifying additional assets; 4.4.2) revising existing strategies and planning new strategies; and 4.4.3) envisioning potential future possibilities and outcomes.

4.4.1 Category 1: Identifying additional assets

Teachers reported the apparent ability to identify additional or new assets in their school-community contexts that had not been recognised or optimally utilised in the past in order to address emerged needs. The following verbatim quotations illustrate the teachers' ability to identify additional assets in their schools and communities:

Now we felt that it was not enough just to launch, let us involve the people again from the community to assist (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 177-178).

So I was just thinking that maybe if we can involve our learners here in our school with the project, because they are here everyday, maybe we can come up with the time so that we can sustain the project (School 2, Participant 9, Line 10-20).

To add maybe more, we would like maybe to work with other schools, maybe as facilitators, but the time will be very limited, so as a group we are going to step back, we are going to sit down and discuss and strategise and see which school we can work with, we are going to look at other alternatives and strategies on how can we work with them effectively and efficiently (School 2, Participant 9, Line 518- 523).

We have already spoken to one of our neighbouring high schools whom we always share the same environment but kilometres apart ... and now working with those people, the principal of that school he's so positive that in his plans he has already put that one ... (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 918-923).

So there's actually a lot of ... and you know what like the peer groups are also there as an asset because they are working together in the classroom. And the classroom as well,

because that is also an asset (School 4, Participant 16, Line 80-83).

And I think there's still a lot more assets because we have a library in our community, it's not that we don't use the library but we don't go with the children to the library as such ... (School 4, Participant 16, Line 230-233).

It seems that teachers in Schools 1, 2 and 4 were flexible and open to identify additional assets in their school-community contexts that were not previously recognised or utilised. Some of these assets include involving additional community members and children as well as neighbouring schools in asset-based initiatives.

4.4.2 Category 2: Revising existing strategies and planning new strategies

Teachers demonstrated flexibility in revising existing strategies and planning new strategies with regard to the effectiveness of asset-based initiatives. Their flexibility and ability was marked by open communication strategies and the enablement of different role-players to contribute their capabilities. The following verbatim transcripts illustrate the teachers' ability to revise existing strategies and implement new strategies with regard to their asset-based initiatives:

What are our future plans, I am still here ... next year we shall be having a social worker who is going to be based on our school premises, she is going to stay here for us, we are given that social worker who is going to be with us full time (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 295-299).

Every year we plan, we have our own year planner – we have 7 pillars, each pillar has got its own goals, we give it to say what do we intend doing next year, so that we know exactly what is happening where and how. So next year, we will organise people from outside to come and talk to these learners, to come and give some advice that is going to assist them (School 1 – PE Seminar, Participant 20, Line 301-306).

It changed much if we sat down and focused again, like the garden has already started, maybe let's involve our learners more, even though it would be subject related but in the end we raised some funds for the school in the process, focusing on what we have started (School 2, Participant 11, Line 93-96).



So I think maybe if you can go on encourage the people who are still remaining to continue with this so that we can go and look for the market in different places, I think maybe that one can also bring money in (School 2, Participant 10, Line 205-208).

So I think if we can come up with a different strategy now, delegate people amongst the groups, select the ones that seem capable to take the lead. The project will then be sustainable (School 2, Participant 10, Line 320-323).

Just to empower them with a skill so that they will be able to take care of themselves, like maybe introducing other projects like maybe building bricks for building houses ... we teaching them how to build bricks and even this one of welding, the welding project (School 2, Participant 10, Line 427-431).

That is possible, but before it becomes possible we first of all have to make sure that we focus our attention maybe on part of our project that will be a success, then it will be easier to rope somebody in ... then I think if we can now, instead of spreading our attention, we come together, the three of us, we are a group now, and we pay more attention to one aspect of the different parts of our project – to make it a success (School 2, Participant 11, Line 389-396).

And now we asked ourselves a question “what is the next step” (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 743-744).

We sat together and ... we identified the bead project, we said the bead project has sustain us because it has shown that it can move (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 840-843).

We are thinking of doing it ourselves as a school ... (School 3, Participant 12, Line 136).

We are able to meet time and again and reviewing our strategies, where we are lacking and how can we move forward, but it was through your motivation that we are now meeting frequently, strategising again and again, checking wherever we are lacking, whether we need to change our strategies and things like that and so on (School 3, Participant 12, Line 560 – 565).

... will be organised very soon, maybe the 1st of September 2008 or maybe the week of the 1st of September, we will be calling people in to come and highlight or give us more knowledge about HIV and AIDS and the police will be coming soon, they’ve been invited

to the school to come and address the learners about safety, how to take care of themselves during school hours and after schools now that there's a lot of bullying in schools (School 3, Participant 13, Line 171-176).

I'm looking at our posters of planning, and I'm actually so glad that we've almost covered everything (School 4, Participant 17, Line 396-397).

The following verbatim quotation refers to School 2's teachers reported ability to re-assess one of their initial asset-based projects, namely the ABET⁹ class initiative. This project was intended to address the lack of adult literacy in their community. Teachers found that this project did not work and decided to revise their initial strategies and come up with new ideas:

The other one was that since we are being more rural, we realised that most of our parents did not go to school so we were looking now at an option of ABET, that we ourselves are going to sacrifice our time and work through the parents so that at the end of the day they can something ... So fortunately the school approved of the idea and said "no we will provide space" ... classes that will be vacant, we can use those classes ... So now on the ABET centre, we tried then to recruit the parents to come for ABET, but unfortunately they never turned up, education is one of those things, when you ask somebody to go to a class you have to psyche the person, work on the psyche and so that the person can see the need of going there, if the person doesn't see the need of going there, if the person doesn't see the need he won't get into the classrooms – it is one of those things. So the Abet project never kicked off ... we sat together and we said you know guys now let us look at ... , which projects are going to sustain us as a group (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 819-842).

This contribution is supported by an extract from my research journal, referring to School 2's observed ability to revise their initial strategy of starting an ABET class group at their school with more viable possibilities:

X told me that they are struggling to get the ABET classes of the ground ... They are considering a new project namely a Career Information Centre. They think there is a great need for learners to get more info on future career paths. I think it is a good idea. I told her I will assist with some brochures on different courses at UP (Research journal, 25 May 2006).

⁹ An acronym for *Adult Basic Education Training*.

It appears that teachers met on a regular basis to monitor the progress made on their asset-based initiatives by brainstorming on strategies that worked and strategies that did not work. They seemed flexible in adapting their initial strategies accordingly. Teachers were seemingly able to focus their attention and remain committed.

4.4.3 Category 3: Envisioning new possibilities and outcomes

Teachers demonstrated the ability to envision future possibilities and potential new outcomes regarding their asset-based initiatives, which is evident in the following verbatim quotations:

To add more on that. I can see that in the future there will be a less crime because most of the young men who are not working they just come here and do something there in the garden and you know when I see them they are very willing, they are willing to work. I can say there will be less crime ... (School 1, Participant 2, Line 747-750).

... it will not be a garden anymore, it will be a field (School 1, Participant 1, Line 807-810).

But what I think is, we can still work you know (School 2, Participant 11, Line 380).

So it will be easy now for us to club and work together and with what has now happened in our school, we hope that the idea will grow and become bigger and bigger amongst our learners and we hope that with the idea that we have and the vision we are having in our group we think that it will grow into the community and the community will see that we are not just there for teaching but we are also there for the other errands that affects the community. So that is on the future and way forward, but we are hoping (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 906-913).

When we get back there, where we are going to hit the nail. We are not going to hit nails, we are going to hit a nail, just one and when we hit that nail we're going to make sure that it is holding and we know that this house on the ground will never fall, if you are going to hit ... , and we hope that this group that you see today will increase (School 2 – PE Seminar, Participant 24, Line 964-970).

... nothing will be impossible for us to achieve (School 3, Participant 12, Line 614-615).

So we're going to have a media centre one of these days (School 4, Participant 16, Line 233-236).

It seems that teachers were able to envision possible future outcomes of their asset-based initiatives. Some of these envisioned outcomes included less crime in their communities; a “field” of vegetable gardens; enhanced support to their community and to establish a media centre.

In summary of this subtheme, teachers seemed able to manage the asset-based process by identifying additional or new assets in their school-community contexts that had not been recognised or optimally utilised in the past in addressing emerged needs; revising existing strategies and planning new strategies with regard to the effectiveness of asset-based initiatives; and envisioning future possibilities and potential new outcomes regarding their asset-based initiatives.

4.5 LITERATURE CONTROL: POSITIONING THE FINDINGS WITHIN EXISTING LITERATURE

In the previous section of this chapter, I presented results in terms of themes, subthemes and categories. In this section of the chapter, I position the results of the study within existing literature. I refer to congruent and contradictory literature as well as silences between the results of this study and current literature. I make use of the same headings and subheadings as in the preceding section.

4.5.1 Confirmation of existing knowledge with regard to teachers' implementation of the asset-based approach

The asset-based process followed by teachers in the current study correlates with the writing of Saidi *et al.* (2003) on the main components of the asset-based approach, namely asset mapping or asset identification, asset mobilisation and asset management. Likewise, many other authors report on similar phases or processes that were successfully implemented in their community-based interventions (see Bender, 2004; *Child Protection Society of Zimbabwe*, 1999; Cook, 1998; Cook & Du Toit, 2005; Lucas, 2004). I next refer in more detail to the correlations between the way in which teachers implemented the asset-based approach in the current study and two of the community-based interventions conducted by Bender (2004) and Cook (1998).

The manner in which participating teachers in the current study implemented the asset-based approach shows similarities to the Triple A approach to asset-mobilisation that consists of three phases described by Cook (1998). The first phase is the *assessment phase*, where the facilitator engages with key persons in the community to assess the current situation in the community. This phase correlates with the way in which teachers in the current study assessed their community by visually creating community asset maps. This phase further correlates with a study by Diale and Fritz (2007), where they emphasise the importance of identifying assets through asset mapping as a powerful tool to achieve asset-based community development. The second phase in Cook's (1998) Triple A approach is the *analysis phase*. During this phase, the information that was obtained in the first phase is analysed. The facilitator uses this information to identify and categorise various themes. In the current study, the participating teachers went through a phase of analysing their asset maps and information obtained during the first phase. They identified priority areas and possible community initiatives as a way of mobilising assets in their community. The third phase is called the *action phase*, which correlates with the way in which teachers in the current study formulated and implemented their action plans.

Furthermore, the way teachers in the current study implemented the asset-based approach resembles Bender's (2004) steps towards community development and support. These steps are summarised as follows:

- formulation of a common goal and vision;
- assessment of the current situation in terms of existing assets within the community;
- formulation of goals and themes within the framework of the wider vision, in other words to develop strategies to overcome the gap of where they currently are and where they want to be;
- identification of specific and measurable outcomes expected;
- development of action strategies, that provides answers to the following questions: who, what, where, when and how;
- implementation of formulated action strategies;
- evaluation of the progress and outcomes that have been obtained.

I next structure my discussion on the confirmation of existing literature on the way teachers implemented the asset-based approach according to the three phases of the asset-based process: 4.5.1.1) identification of assets; 4.5.1.2) mobilisation of assets; 4.5.1.3) managing the asset-based process; and 4.5.1.4) implementation of the asset-based approach for psychosocial support.

4.5.1.1 Identification of assets

Similar to the way in which teachers in the current study demonstrated a belief in the presence of assets and showed the ability to “discover” assets within their unique school-community contexts, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) define assets as “undiscovered treasures” within a system. In addition, teachers’ positive awareness and ability to identify assets in their school-community contexts, is in line with the following statement by Kretzmann (1992:5): “Once we begin to reconsider our neighbourhoods as collections of assets, strengths and capacities, the door is open to the development of an internally focused asset driven approach to building strong communities.” Therefore, the teachers

demonstrated a paradigm shift towards a new way of thinking and conceptualising the world (Ebersöhn, 2006c; Eloff, 2006a; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

The emerged categories on assets identified in the current study are consistent with the fundamental classification of assets proposed in the literature (see Ammermann & Parks, 1998; Bender, 2004; Ebersöhn, 2006c; Eloff, 2006a; Green & Haines, 2002; Mathie & Cunningham, 2002; Tibaijuka, 2003). In further congruence with the notion of the assets identified in the current study, Diale and Fritz (2007) conducted a study at the Simunye Centre for destitute children in which they likewise identified assets in individuals, associations, local institutions and physical resources. Similarly, the identified categories in the current study relate to Kretzmann and McKnight's (1993) five key assets identified for mobilisation within a community in order to create change and development. These authors highlight the fact that communities can steer the process of change by identifying and mobilising under-utilised and often unrecognised assets. In line with Kretzman and McKnight's (1993) view, the results of the current study also indicate that teachers were able to identify and mobilise assets to address vulnerability in term of psychosocial support. In this regard, the results are supported by Cook and Du Toit's (2005) finding that highlight asset identification as the first key step in planning for the implementation or asset mobilisation phase. This brings me to the phase of asset mobilisation.

4.5.1.2 Mobilisation of assets

In congruence with the results of the current study, Ebersöhn and Mbetse (2003) indicate that the mere identification of assets is insignificant if it does not turn into action of asset mobilisation. In the current study, teachers seemed able to mobilise identified assets in their school community contexts, which reportedly addressed barriers experienced in the school-community contexts and resulted in enhanced psychosocial support.

a) Mobilising individual assets

Within the context of mobilising individual assets, the results of the current study are in agreement with Borrup's (2003:1) view on asset-based community development: "It is

about seeing opportunity to learn from the people around us, to foster exchange among them, to respect their cultural richness, and to nurture their creativity and talents.” The literature supports the results on the mobilisation of individual assets for contributing to psychosocial support in school-community contexts. As such, Shoultz, Oneha, Magnussen, Hla, Brees-Saunders, Cruz and Douglas (2006) report on community-based participatory research as an effective strategy to build on assets of individual role-players to address challenges in communities. Similarly, the current literature emphasises the importance of mobilising individual assets in successful asset-based community support and development (Ammermann & Parks, 1998; Choksi, 2004; Diale & Fritz, 2007; Ebersöhn, 2006c; Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Eloff, 2006a; Ferreira, 2008; Green & Haines, 2002; Kelly *et al.*, 2002; Mathie & Cunningham, 2002; Tibaijuka, 2003). In *Building communities from the inside out – a path toward finding and mobilising a community’s assets*, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) identify individual skills and capacities as the first of five key assets fundamental to strong and enabled communities. In a similar way, Bender (2004) refers to people as the core of community matters and an important determinant for success. In agreement with the results of the current study, literature indicates that individuals may feel empowered when utilising their capacities optimally and that a community as a whole could benefit by contributions from individuals (Bender, 2004; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

Firstly, teachers in the current study demonstrated the ability to mobilise their own assets. In line with the way in which teachers acted as a driving force in mobilising assets in their school-community contexts that ultimately resulted in school-based psychosocial support, literature agrees on the important role of teachers within the school context as agents for community care and support (Clonan *et al.*, 2003; Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming; Ferreira, 2005; Giese *et al.*, 2003b; Kretzmann, 1992; Saidi *et al.*, 2003). In this regard, Kretzmann (1992) emphasises the important role that schools could play as active partners in community support and development.

Secondly, the teachers in the current study mobilised the individual assets of children, by involving them in the establishment and maintenance of vegetable garden initiatives.

Similarly, Kretzmann (1992) regards young people as assets that have the potential of becoming active participants in community initiatives who could play significant roles in community development. He identified a variety of potential community-based activities (for example to interview community leaders; “shadowing” executives; designing placemats for community restaurants and assisting local businesses) in which young people could be creatively and productively involved to act as active contributors to community support and development. Kretzmann (1992) also found that incentives were often an effective way to act as motivation for youth participation. In the current study, children did not receive any incentives for participation in asset-based initiatives. This could be a possible motivational factor for youth to get involved in community projects, but needs more research.

Choksi (2004) also mobilised youth to participate in his asset-based study, by involving them in constructive social activities and programme development. In the current study, children were mainly mobilised to assist in the implementation and maintenance of vegetable garden initiatives. Although the vegetable gardens in the current study were in the school grounds, and the only direct contact the children had with the community was via the community members who also participated in these projects, these initiatives seemingly still contributed to community care and support. However, although children’s assets were mobilised in the current study, I am of the opinion that children are still to a great extent under-utilised assets and have the potential of playing a more prominent role in community development and support. Existing literature agrees that children and young people can be viewed as valuable assets to be developed and mobilised (Benson, 2006; Benson & Pittman, 2001).

Thirdly, teachers mobilised parents’ and community members’ assets, by involving them to actively participate in asset-based initiatives. In this regard, Christenson and Sheridan (2001) agree that schools could mobilise and embrace parents in partnerships that go beyond traditional partnership roles for parents. Similar to the way in which parents’ and community members’ skills were mobilised, Holmer and Drescher (2005) mobilised community members’ skills in participating in their asset-based allotment vegetable

gardens project in the Philippines. Current research is in agreement on the valuable role that community residents may play in the context of participatory community-based and asset-based initiatives (Choksi, 2004; Cook & Du Toit, 2005; Holmer & Drescher, 2005).

In the same way, the *Child Protection Society of Zimbabwe* (1999) argues that it is important for communities to take ownership and responsibility for mobilising human resources in their community. In its study, the Society utilised community volunteers to support AIDS orphans on a practical, material, emotional, educational, recreational, legal, cultural and spiritual level. The study argues that community members are one of the most valuable assets that could fill the gap between needs and resources.

b) Mobilising natural and environmental resources

In congruence with the results of the current study of teachers' ability to mobilise natural resources in school-community contexts, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) refer to the mobilisation of under-utilised open space as a valuable asset in a community. Furthermore, the results correlate with existing literature within the context of the asset-based approach, in which vegetable gardens were initiated with the goal of community support and empowerment (see Choksi, 2004; Hallberg, 2009; Holmer & Drescher, 2005).

The results of the current study also show some correlations with an asset-based research initiative conducted by Holmer and Drescher (2005), which aimed at empowering urban poor communities through the establishment of allotment vegetable gardens. Community members in their study reported that the harvest from the vegetable gardens was consumed by the community itself, given away to friends and family and sold to walk-in clients. In line with the outcomes of vegetable gardens in the current study, Holmer and Drescher (2005) found that the vegetable garden in their study had several positive results: heightened food security and availability; income generation and employment opportunities for community participants; heightened social values in the sense that the garden was a local point where people met and spent time with their relatives and friends;

enhanced networks and partnerships within the community; enhanced knowledge and skills with regard to ecological sanitation and crop management; and the reduction of solid household waste, that was converted to compost.

c) Mobilising physical resources

Similar to the way in which teachers mobilised physical resources in their schools and communities, the current literature also refers to physical resources as important community assets (Bender, 2004; Diale & Fritz, 2007). The results of the current study show some correlations with Choksi's (2004) findings from his asset-based ethnography research study in Austin. He found that existing infrastructure was one of the key assets identified and mobilised in his study, which included the mobilisation of an abandoned building to run a soup kitchen, the use of an old district police station building to start a youth centre and of open public spaces to host community events. Although Choksi (2004) focused on physical resources within the community, the teachers in the current study focused more on mobilising the physical resources on their school premises. However, the mobilisation of physical resources within participating schools also seemed to have a positive impact on the community itself, as the schools are part of the greater community context.

d) Mobilising assets by establishing partnerships and networks

In line with the way in which teachers mobilised resources by establishing partnerships and networks in their communities, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993: 8) state: "The key to community regeneration is to locate all of the available local assets, to begin connecting them with one another in ways that multiply their power and effectiveness". The following comment by Kretzmann (1992:8) also holds truth for the current study: "In strong communities, strengths and assets have been connected with each other in newly strengthened webs of mutually beneficial relationships". Teachers in the current study mobilised different assets by linking them through the formation of new networks and partnerships. In a similar way, Benson (2006) found that healthy communities typically

mobilise social networks and meaningful participation of community members in support of shared community goals.

The results of the current study correlate with the reviewed literature, that agrees on the potential of the application of the asset-based approach for community change, by involving different community members to actively engage in establishing and maintaining relationships between local residents, associations and organisations (see Ammerman & Parks, 1998; Bender, 2004; Bouwer, 2005; Cordes, 2002; Diale & Fritz, 2007; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; 1997; Loots, 2005; Mathie & Cunningham, 2002, 2003; McNulty, 2005; Odell, 2002; Pinkett, 2000; Roos & Temane, 2007; Siegel, 2005; Thompson, 2005; Tibaijuka, 2003).

Similar to the way in which teachers in the current study built networks with various organisations and institutions, neighbouring schools and international resources, Bennell *et al.*, (2002) and Choksi (2004) refer to local businesses, churches, educational institutions and community organisations as valuable community assets. In this regard, Kibel (2010) argue for schools to build networks and partnerships with parents, health organisations, social services and community resources in order to negotiate care and support for children. Cook and Du Toit (2005) also emphasise the importance of building community capacity in partnerships with various community partners such as families, community leaders and young people. These authors introduced a “Circle of Care” project, to establish support structures for vulnerable community members through community partnerships and networks (Cook & Du Toit, 2005).

The results of the current study are further supported by a study by the *Child Protection Society of Zimbabwe* (1999), which focused on the importance of mobilising communities to take action to support AIDS orphans. The Zimbabwe study emphasises the important role of external organisations, community resources as well as individual community members to create networks as an effective way of supporting these orphans. Building networks is a process of collaboration and cooperation between different role-players. Although the current study did not exclusively deal with HIV/AIDS support to

orphans, it focused on school-based psychosocial support to address various challenges encountered in school-community contexts.

It is, however, important to note that teachers in School 2 did not report on the establishment of assets for the provision of emotional, spiritual, social, health and safety support as outcomes of their networks and partnerships. One possible explanation is that School 2 also reported that their community still believed in traditional witchcraft practices and therefore preferred to consult traditional healers instead of resorting to what they believed to be Westernised practices. Another possible reason, reported in Ferreira's (2006) study, is that HIV-infected individuals often tend to deny their status and avoid disclosure because of stigmatisation, and that clinics therefore tend to be under-utilised in many communities. A further possible reason stated by Balfour, Mitchell and Moletsane (2008) is that the infrastructure and support are often better in urban areas than in rural areas, offering more opportunities for obtaining assistance and support (such as services and organisations). A lack of transport and large distances often make these services difficult to access in rural communities. In the current study, teachers in School 2, within a rural community, probably found it difficult to establish networks and partnerships, as a result of these factors identified by Balfour *et al.* (2008).

4.5.1.3 Managing the asset-based process

The results of the current study of teachers' ability to manage the asset-based process are corroborated by the reviewed literature in the field of asset-based community development, where several authors agree on the importance of asset management and taking ownership of asset-based initiatives (Bender; 2004; Cook, 1998; Ferreira, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Minkler & Hancock, 2003; Snow, 2001a, 2001b). Ferreira (2006) states that the management of assets is the responsibility of individuals, to sustain their initiated actions. This correlates with Bender's (2004:214) definition of sustainability in the context of community development, namely to "build and maintain momentum". Although some of the teachers in the current study reported on their ability to successfully sustain their asset-based initiatives and develop it even more (for example

School 1's HIV/AIDS support and resource centre), some of the other asset-based initiatives were reported as not sustained (for example School 2's beadwork project and ABET project) and needed to be re-assessed and revised. One of the main reported reasons why these initiatives were not sustained, was contradictory expectations from the different participating role-players (see 5.3.2 for a detailed account on this matter). A study by Israel, Krieger, Vlahov, Ciske, Foley, Fortin, Guzman, Lichtenstein, McGranaghan, Palermo, & Tang (2006) complements this finding and provides some insight in the importance of engaging in continuous planning and re-assessment of processes in order to re-establish commitment, objectives and actions. In the same way, Visser (2007) found that the ability to monitor ongoing interventions is fundamental to successful community initiatives.

Furthermore, teachers in the current study seemingly displayed the ability to manage the asset-based process, by implementing and demonstrating Bender's (2004) key elements for successful sustainability within the context of community development. Firstly, the teachers displayed a flexible and active manner of reflecting on and re-assessing the successes and value of their current strategies and asset-based initiatives. They took ownership in revising their strategies and future goals. Teachers reported the ability to envision future possibilities and potential new outcomes regarding their asset-based initiatives (see also Cook, 1998). Secondly, teachers seemed able to build on community capacity (see also Ferreira, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), which involves skills, knowledge, access, commitment and resources. They were seemingly able to share control, adapt to change and take responsibility to improve situations. Thirdly, the teachers appeared to be able to form partnerships that consisted of local participation and enablement, planned inclusion, and enhancement of local and collective skills. Lastly, they openly communicated about various aspects of their asset-based initiatives and collaborated towards shared goals. They reportedly encouraged active participation within the school-community contexts, received information and provided feedback to others, developed support for initiatives and enabled role-players to contribute their knowledge, skills and capacities (Bender, 2004).

4.5.1.4 Teachers' implementation of the asset-based approach for psychosocial support

In line with the results of the current study, many authors (Bebbington, 1999; Bender, 2004; Cook, 1998; Diale & Fritz, 2007; Ferreira, 2006, 2008; Hunter & Williamson, 2000; Kelly *et al.*, 2002; Lucas, 2004) agree on the importance of asset-based community initiatives to enhance community development and support. The focus is on the development, mobilisation and coordination of assets in a community. By utilising and managing assets, resources, skills, capabilities and talents within the community, community members are able to facilitate and steer community-based interventions. In this way, individuals are provided with the competence required for acting in and meaningfully engaging with their world. The results of the current study are in agreement with the view that when communities become active partners for change, instead of recipients of aid, they are more likely to take ownership and develop a sense of enablement (Beaulieu, 2002; Cordes, 2002; Eloff, 2006a; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2002, 2003; Nares *et al.*, 2001; Parker *et al.*, 1998; Richter *et al.*, 2004b; Thompson, 2005; Tibaijuka, 2003). The results indicate that the implementation of the asset-based approach and related outcomes seemingly enabled individuals to deal more effectively and actively with daily psychosocial matters in their school-community contexts.

The results of the current study relate to Lucas' (2004) description of a successful community response to HIV/AIDS, namely the Salvation Army Change Programme in Zambia. This intervention focused on facilitating community action and building on both existing individual and community resources to support people affected by HIV/AIDS. Although the current study did not solely focus on HIV/AIDS, it also seemingly facilitated community action by developing and mobilising assets within individuals as well as in the school-community context.

Campbell *et al.* (2007) conducted a similar study in a rural South African community with the aim of facilitating contextual changes that enable enhanced HIV/AIDS

management. Their findings suggest six key strategies for effectively facilitating the development of AIDS-competent communities, which correlates with the results on the strategies that teachers implement for psychosocial support, namely: building knowledge and basic skills; creating social spaces for discussion and reflection; promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility; developing a strong focus on assets in the community; mobilising existing local networks and building partnerships between communities and external organisations, on a local, national and international level.

Furthermore, the results of the current study show striking similarities with Bennell *et al.*'s (2002) six fundamental priority areas for school-based support to vulnerable children and children at risk. Firstly, teachers should identify, refer and monitor vulnerable children. These authors advocate the importance of establishing networks between different government departments and community agencies in order to support vulnerable children. This priority task correlates with the results of the current study in the sense that teachers seemingly established networks and partnerships with various organisations to provide emotional, spiritual, social, health and safety support to vulnerable children and community members. The second priority area identified by Bennell *et al.* (2002) is school-based feeding schemes for vulnerable children. This correlates with the results, where teachers in all four schools reportedly managed to provide vulnerable children and households with food parcels with the harvest from their vegetable gardens as well as donations from sponsors and donors. The third priority area identified by Bennell *et al.* (2002) is pastoral care and counselling. This relates to the ability of teachers participated in the current study to seemingly provide emotional care and support to vulnerable children and community members. This priority area also relates to participating teachers' awareness of their multiple roles as teachers (see Chapter 6). Fourthly, school-based support usually incorporate financial assistance with fees and other school-related expenses as priority area. In the current study, teachers demonstrated the ability to address financial constraints due to poverty and unemployment (see Chapter 5). The fifth priority area identified by Bennell *et al.* (2002) refers to the inclusion and involvement of parents and caregivers. This correlates with the actions of the teachers in the current study, who mobilised parents and community members to participate in their

asset-based initiatives. Lastly, Bennell *et al.* (2002) identified the implementation of support structures to children who are infected and/or affected by HIV/AIDS as a priority area in school-based support. In the current study, teachers seemingly addressed HIV/AIDS-related barriers in their school-community contexts by educating children on HIV/AIDS and by providing material, emotional and spiritual support to these children (see also Chapter 5).

In congruence with the results of the current study, Kretzmann (1992) argues in his report, *Community-based development and local schools: A promising partnership*, that schools are a compilation of assets and essential contributors of community support and development. In the current study, four schools were utilised as rich sources of various assets and potential assets that contributed as active partners towards school-based community support.

Similar to the way in which teachers in the current study acted as driving force behind psychosocial support initiatives within their school-community contexts, Kretzmann (1992) compiled a list of potential areas of contributions of schools as active community partners towards community support and development. Firstly, schools reportedly acted as facilities where community groups met and community activities were performed, for example School 1's HIV/AIDS support group; School 2's beadwork project; School 3's information days and School 4's feeding scheme. Secondly, schools' equipment and materials were seemingly utilised as resources for the community, for example, School 1's media centre was used as part of the HIV/AIDS information initiative. Thirdly, schools' employment practices focused on hiring local community members, as the asset-based projects involved unemployed parents and community members. Fourthly, schools reportedly provided education and training opportunities for local community members; for example, teachers shared their acquired knowledge and resources to equip parents, colleagues and learners with information and relevant resources to be able to address psychosocial issues in their communities. Additionally, School 2 seemingly provided community members with beadwork skills. Fifthly, schools reportedly established networks and partnerships with various organisations and institutions, which provided

them with access to funds, donations and sponsors. This financial capacity was thus a valuable resource for community development and support. Sixthly, schools acted as a magnet for adult involvement, developing parents' and community members' participation in the asset-based initiatives. Lastly, children became active participants in community support and development, where the teachers in all four schools reportedly utilised learners to assist in vegetable garden projects.

4.5.2 Contradictions in existing knowledge with regard to teachers' implementation of the asset-based approach

Despite the many similarities between the results of the current study and existing literature, I also encountered some contradictions. One contradiction between the results of the current study and findings from literature refers to the goals and outcomes of the mobilisation of natural resources. Although participating teachers in the current study had different as well as similar goals with regard to their vegetable garden initiatives, the initial fundamental goal of all groups can be summarised as being to address unemployment and support needy children and households and those affected by HIV/AIDS. In contradiction with results of the current study, in Choksi's (2004) study, community vegetable and flower gardens were initiated with the primary goal and outcome of creating social interaction and recreational opportunities in the community. A possible explanation for this contradiction can be found in the unique circumstances of each community. Participating communities in the current study are characterised by poverty and high HIV/AIDS rates and therefore teachers attempted to address these challenges through their vegetable gardens. On the other hand, the community in Choksi's (2004) study did not face similar challenges as those in the current study.

Another discrepancy found between the results of the current study and existing literature lies in different approaches to creating community support. In contradiction with utilising the asset-based approach for community support and change, Yoo, Butler, Elias and Goodman (2009) present a six-step model for community empowerment as a strategy for

community-based participatory health improvement. This six-step strategy focuses on community members' active role in identifying problems and creating solutions to problems. Although Yoo *et al.*'s (2009) study also focused on solutions to problems, the authors do not place the same emphasis on mobilising assets in individuals and communities as in the asset-based approach. However, the two approaches both use the formulation of strategies and action plans to overcome community challenges.

Where the results of the current study highlight the notion that communities are generally able to better deal with existing daily psychosocial challenges by relying on existing resources and assets, some authors do not agree. Smart (2003) argues that communities' ability to deal with psychosocial challenges are already exhausted. Subbarao, Mattimore and Plangemann (2001) add that communities at ground level often struggle to deal efficiently with psychosocial adversities. Another contradiction to my finding was evident in the study by Bennell *et al.* (2002), who found that schools in all three participating countries (Uganda, Malawi and Botswana) provided limited care and support to orphans and HIV/AIDS-affected children. The researchers explored the underlying reasons for the unsupportive school contexts found in their study. Firstly, schools in all three countries had limited resources to assist learners. They found isolated examples of financial assistance by some of the teachers. In contrast, the teachers in the current study specifically focused on the available assets and on mobilising the resources that already existed. Secondly, Bennell *et al.* (2002) found that many school managers and teachers believed that supporting orphans was not their responsibility, but rather that of other community and social services. The teachers in the study by Bennell *et al.* (2002) felt that they already struggled to cope with their existing responsibilities. Although the teachers in the current study also experienced workload as a barrier (see theme 2, Chapter 5), they took ownership beyond their teaching responsibility and took on their pastoral role in their communities. Thirdly, the teachers in Bennell *et al.*'s (2002) study felt that they did not have sufficient training for caring for and supporting orphans. Teachers in Bennel *et al.*'s (2009) study also reported that most children in their schools lived in poverty and suffered from neglect and that they could therefore not focus only on the orphans' needs. Although participating communities in the current study were also

characterised by poverty and high HIV/AIDS prevalence rates, they demonstrated the ability to deal with adversities, by implementing the asset-based approach (see theme 2, Chapter 5).

4.5.3 Silences in existing knowledge with regard to teachers' implementation of the asset-based approach

In my review of the literature, I also encountered some silences between the results of the current study and the literature. The first silence I came across is with regard to the mobilisation of children's assets. In the current study, teachers mainly focused on mobilising children to assist with the implementation and maintenance of vegetable gardens. However, literature refers to additional ways in which children's assets could be utilised. Although teachers in School 1 mobilised children's assets by equipping them to act as potential peer educators with regard to psychosocial issues, the results regarding peer educators in the current study were not monitored. Current literature highlights the potential benefits of peer support that could contribute to psychosocial support for children, for example the improvement of children's capacities and skills for dealing with difficult challenges, conflict management skills, leadership skills, social skills, self-esteem and raising awareness of issues that could affect emotional health (Cowie & Wallace, 2000; Parsons & Blake, 2004). In this regard, Mott *et al.* (2009) successfully implemented an asset-based approach initiative to mobilise and empower youth caregivers within child-headed homes in Africa. The authors reported that youth caregivers' inner strengths were mobilised to portray a higher self worth, sense of belonging and collective ownership. Another study that focused on mobilising children's assets was conducted by Cook and Du Toit (2005). They involved vulnerable children as meaningful agents for change in their Circle of Care approach that focused on enabling children's and community members' resilience. These authors mobilised children and young people in identifying community assets and any limitations in their support programme.

It seems that although children were identified as assets in the current study, they were mobilised to a limited extent. In my opinion, children in the four participating communities are still an under-utilised asset. A possible explanation for this silence could be that teachers focused more on the mobilisation of adult human resources, for example parents and community members. I therefore propose that future studies focus more on mobilising children's full potential as assets in schools and communities.

A second silence I encountered between the results of the current study and the literature was in the context of the mobilisation of individual assets. Choksi (2004) highlights senior citizens as a group of individuals with valuable skills and experience that could be mobilised in community interventions as they are generally retired and have more time available than working community members. In the current study, senior citizens were under-utilised individual assets. One possible reason for senior citizens being under-utilised in the communities in which I conducted the current study is that grandparents often needed to adopt the role of parents for orphans (see subtheme 2.4, Chapter 5) and therefore did not always have time for added responsibilities. However, I agree that senior citizens are valuable assets in a community context and that the notion of senior citizens as potential resources needs to be explored more in future studies with a similar focus.

Another silence found between the results of the current study and the reviewed literature is with regard to the identification and mobilisation of physical resources in communities. In the current study, physical resources identified by teachers included buildings, apparatus and equipment. Teachers mainly mobilised buildings on their school grounds for their asset-based projects, which included classrooms, the school's kitchen, the sick room and the assembly hall. The reviewed literature refers to many other physical resources in communities that were not mobilised in the current study. Diale and Fritz (2007) identified numerous buildings with electricity, an ablution block and showers, telephones and a swimming pool, and computers as physical assets at the Simunye Centre where they conducted their research. Similarly, Bender (2004) refers to infrastructure resources, which include buildings, structures and transportation. Although participating

teachers in the current study mainly focused on the mobilisation of buildings on their school grounds, it is not to say that their school-community contexts do not have similar physical resources as identified by the referred literature (Bender, 2004; Diale & Fritz, 2007). A possible reason for this silence can be found in these teachers' focus on following through on their asset-based projects; they therefore focused on physical resources that could be mobilised specifically for the purpose of their asset-based projects.

I also came across a silence between the results of the current study and the reviewed literature with regard to the mobilisation of corporate support. Kretzmann (1992) reports on corporate support in school-community partnerships. He found that businesses could support partnerships in various creative and meaningful ways, for example by involving employees in mentoring young people and “shadowing” as a way of introducing young people to the world of work. Although the teachers in the current study managed to build networks with local businesses, they focused more on receiving financial and material support from them. Therefore, I argue that more can be done to utilise businesses and organisations in participating communities, as proposed by Kretzmann (1992).

Another silence was found in the context of the way teachers viewed their role in providing psychosocial support. Bhana *et al.* (2006) found that teachers participating in their study stated that they needed to make many personal sacrifices in their pastoral role, for example starting feeding schemes out of their own pockets. Although the teachers in the current study also started feeding schemes in their schools, they reportedly mainly mobilised resources in the form of building networks and partnerships to obtain donations. According to my view, the difference between the current study and that of Bhana *et al.* (2006) lies in the approach. Teachers in the current study seemingly implemented the asset-based approach and actively built networks and partnerships to assist them in psychosocial support. On the other hand, teachers in the Bhana *et al.* (2006) study only focused on their own assets, without considering alternative opportunities and potential solutions in their communities.

4.6 INSIGHT IN THE WAY TEACHERS IMPLEMENT THE ASSET-BASED APPROACH FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

In the current study, teachers in all four schools underwent similar facilitated workshops and were supported in implementing the asset-based approach (see Chapter 3), whereafter they implemented this approach in their school-community contexts. During the teachers' implementation of the asset-based approach, it was found that each of the participating school-community contexts consisted of unique capacities, assets and resources that were identified, mobilised and managed by teachers. During the teachers' implementation of the asset-based process, school-based initiatives were planned, steered, revisited, revised and improved. This process resulted in various unique outcomes that ultimately contributed to school-based psychosocial support initiatives within each of the school-community contexts.

Some of the outcomes that led to enhanced school-based psychosocial support in the current study included enhanced emotional and spiritual care and support amongst community members, material support to HIV/AIDS-affected and needy households, active participation of children, parents and community members in various asset-based initiatives, knowledge sharing and skills acquisition, and supportive school-based community relationships. Figure 4.2 illustrates the asset-based process that was followed to ultimately promote psychosocial support within each of the four school-community contexts.

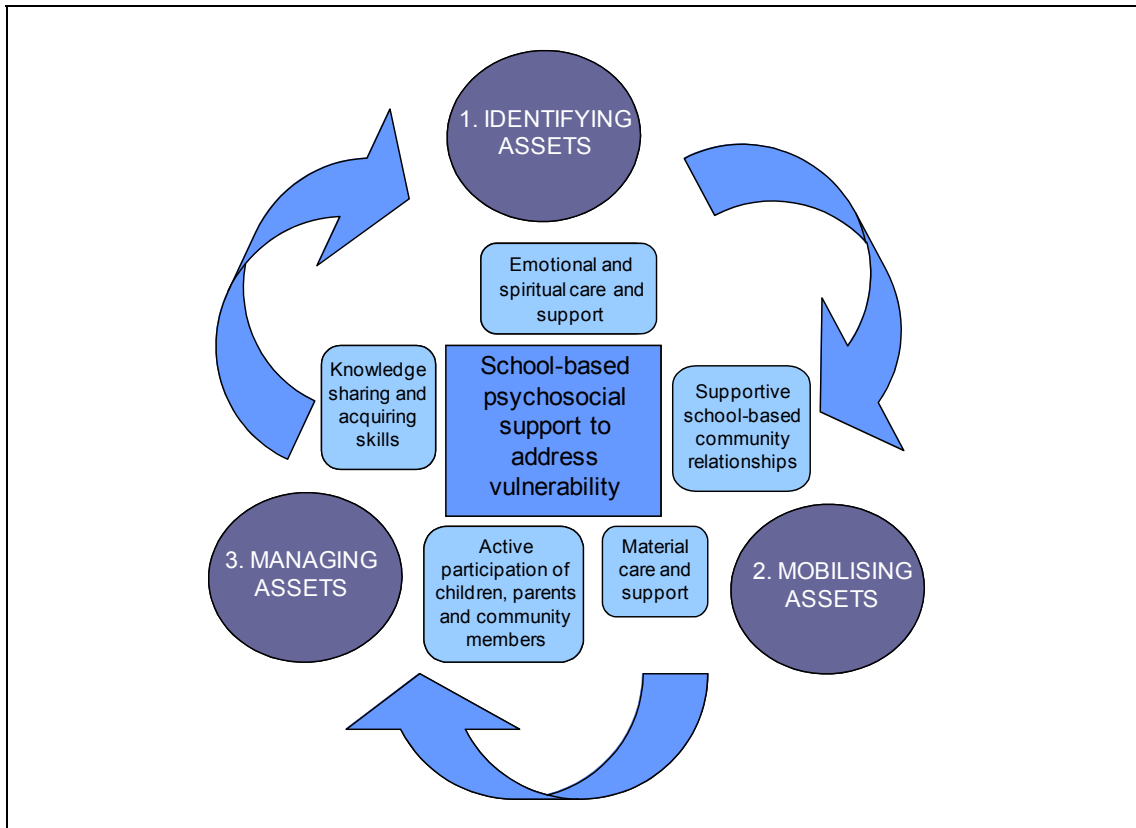


Figure 4.2: The way in which participating teachers implemented the asset-based approach to address vulnerability in terms of psychosocial support.

The findings of the current study therefore suggest that teachers seemed able to implement the asset-based approach given the necessary facilitation and training similar to the asset-based intervention in the current study (see 3.3.3. for a detailed account of the STAR intervention process that was followed). This suggests that teachers or communities can therefore not be required to implement the asset-based approach without any outside support or facilitation.

I argue that in the process of implementing the asset-based approach, teachers could act as protective resources for psychosocial support in their schools and communities. Similarly, Visser (2004) found that once teachers are given the right training and support they could become effective vehicles for contributing to the envisioned community change. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) also emphasise local schools' potential: they are not only educational institutions, but also rich sources of capacities and assets that

could be mobilised to strengthen communities. In support of this view, the reviewed literature agrees on the important role that teachers and schools can play in school-based community support (Ebersöhn, 2006c; Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming; Eloff, 2006a; Ferreira, 2005; Giese *et al.*, 2003b; Kretzmann, 1992; Saidi *et al.*, 2003). In the same way, Clonan *et al.* (2003) recommend that schools be utilised as environments to promote individual assets and enhance positive human development.

The participating teachers in the current study reportedly identified and mobilised both their individual assets and community resources to establish a sense of self-sufficiency in the community. Within this approach, the teachers viewed community members as experts of their own lives and they therefore had a good understanding of the environmental and social position of their own community (Cordes, 2002; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2002). Community support and development within the framework of social capital was one of the outcomes of the current study. Indicators of community support and development were evident in community participation and a sense of responsibility for the success of the larger community. This active community participation seemingly inspired the participating communities to recognise that every individual has something significant and valuable to contribute to a common good. This reportedly led to a sense of community self-sufficiency, enablement and a shared vision. The findings of the current study therefore highlight how teachers could address psychosocial challenges on a local level, through community participation, building of networks and shared action. Figure 4.3 provides an outline of the process in which teachers could act as change agents for asset-based psychosocial support.

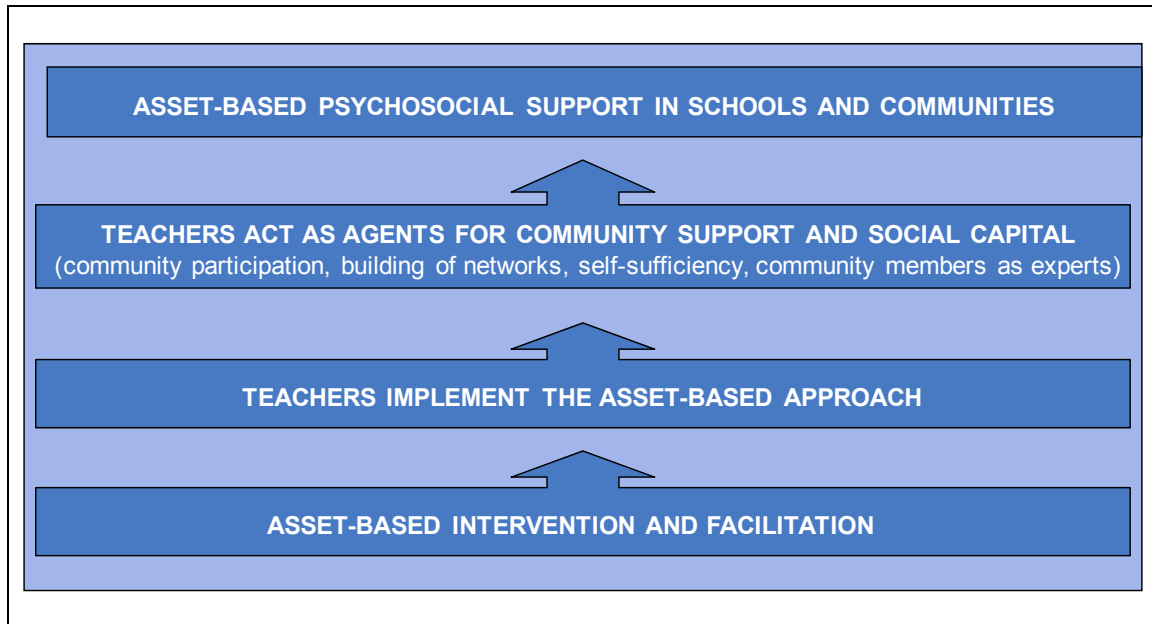


Figure 4.3: Teachers as change agents for asset-based psychosocial support.

The important issue is that the implementation of the asset-based approach has the potential of being a powerful instrument for community development and positive change (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003; McNulty, 2005). Although the findings of the current study are only based on four unique case studies and can therefore not be generalised to every school-community context. I argue that systems, communities and individuals have the potential for generating positive change and enablement by implementing the principles of the asset-based approach. This correlates with the three basic principles of the asset-based approach, namely focusing on the positive, considering individuals as possessing the necessary inner strength to be able to take charge of their own lives, and building relationships and networks (Bouwer, 2005; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming; Eloff, 2006a). As demonstrated and found in the current study, it is important to work with what is available within a system and utilise individual assets and community resources as building blocks for enabled communities and positive change. In this way, initial energy that was focused on barriers can be re-directed to opportunities and shared action (Ashford & Patkar, 2001; Cordes, 2002; Ebersöhn, 2006c; Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Ebersöhn & Ferreira, forthcoming; Eloff, 2006a; Saylor, Graves & Cochran, 2006; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie &

Cunningham, 2003; Roos & Temane, 2007; Saylor *et al.*, 2006; Tibaijuka, 2003). To conclude, given a solid understanding of the asset-based approach, teachers would be able to implement the approach, which could lead to community support and social capital and ultimately psychosocial support in schools and communities.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I reported on the findings of the first theme that emerged during the thematic analysis and interpretation phase of the current study. I made use of participants' verbatim quotations, visual data and extracts from my researcher's diary to enrich and authenticate the results I presented. Furthermore, I expanded on congruent as well as contradictory findings between the current study and the reviewed literature and presented insight in the way teachers using an asset-based approach for psychosocial support. In Chapter 5, I present the next theme of the current study, namely *teachers addressing barriers resourcefully*.

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