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Programme

- 4.1 *African Childrens Feeding Scheme*
- 4.2 *Early Childhood Development*
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Figure 48 : *Schedule of accommodation, Diagram, Author (2015)*

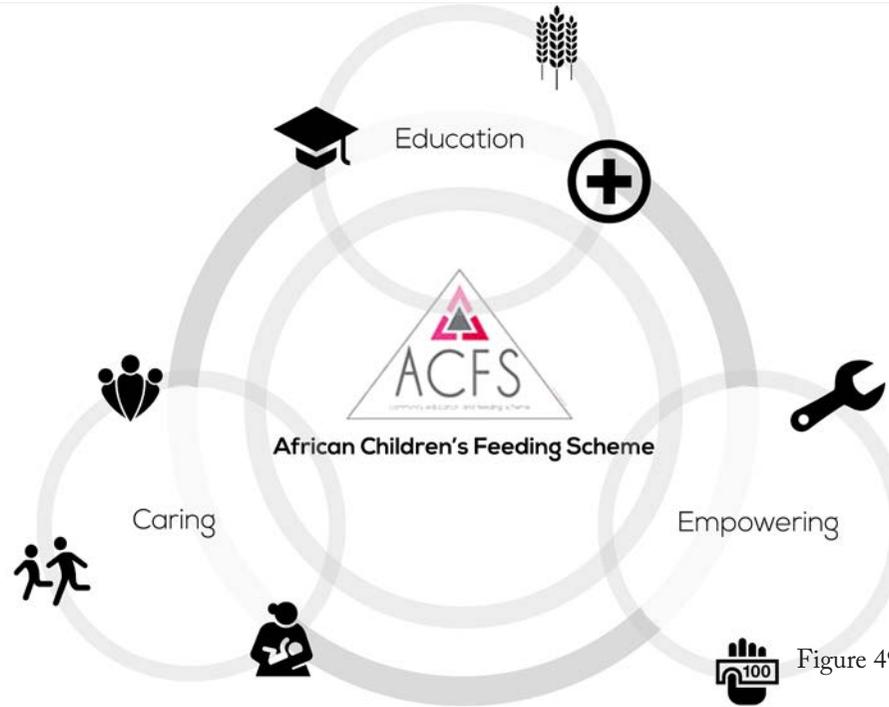


Figure 49 : *African Children's Feeding Scheme approach, Diagram, Author (2015)*

4.1 African Childrens Feeding Scheme

It was not until the 1990s that the tide began to change in significant terms, signalled by a shift away from government to government funding and toward more partnership-based and government to NGO funding. The significance of this has two primary characteristics the first is a realization that working with smaller organizations is more efficient and far more effective – an issue first raised by E. F. Schumacher in 1973; and the second is that communities and the organizations that they participate in must be a part of the process in order for any project to have the ability to improve people's lives (Carter 2008).

The *African Children's Feeding Scheme (ACFS)*, focuses on educating remaining community members in health, nutrition and how to cultivate a personal vegetable garden. Through the development and participation of community members and their skills, dependents of others have the opportunity to help sustain their families. The selling of surplus produce is also encouraged by the ACFS to promote financial independence. This creates a positive environment which is both caring and nurturing at its core. Hence all parties receive a sense of gratification and achievement. The ACFS found its origin in the provision of food to scholars, and has a history of providing health assessments at schools (*ACFS 2015*).

Besides for the cultivation skills development, the ACFS also educate women on how to prepare nutritional meals, as well as hosting literacy classes and other skills development courses (*ACFS 2015*). Currently the ACFS is active in Soweto, Thembisa and Alexandria, but there is no base in Mamelodi (*ACFS 2015*). Having established, through the site visits of Phomolong, that there is the self-organized potential of the existing network of the elderly dependents looking after children as a communal caretaker, as well as the lack of nutritional meals that are given to the children at these informal day-care centres, the identified *NGO (ACFS)* would be an ideal support system to help establish the existing network further.

The addition of the *NGO* as well as the further incorporation of a day-care centre to the ACFS scheme reinforces their ideals of education in a caring and nurturing environment. This would also serve as an addition to a multi-functional space, which serves multiple networks throughout the week and weekends.

By taking Hertzberger's advice we can explore the story behind the architecture and in so doing arrive at a better processes that engage the organizational deminsion to delivery meaningful projects to those living on society's margins (Carter 2008).



4.2 Early Childhood Development

Early childhood development (ECD), as defined in the Children's Act (No. 38 of 2005), means the process of emotional, cognitive, sensory, spiritual, moral, physical, social and communication development of children from birth to school-going age (Roper 2014).

The national Department of Education defines early childhood development (ECD) as "The Processes by which children from birth to nine years of age grow and thrive physically, mentally, Emotionally, morally and socially" (Atmore 2012).

Early Childhood development plays an important role in a child's early years, yet it is often seen in poverty stricken communities that the children do not have access to the necessary education, stimulation or facilities. These types of facilities accommodate a stimulating environment, as well as caring and nurturing the children as users.

An ECD Centre, according to the Department of Social Development Guidelines for ECD May 2006, refers to "Any building or premises maintained or used, whether or not for gain, for the admission, protection and temporary or partial care of more than six children away from their parents." Depending on registration, an ECD centre can admit babies, toddlers and/or pre-school aged children. The term ECD centre can refer to crèche, day care centre for young children, a playgroup, a pre-school, after school care etc. ECD centres are sometimes referred to as ECD sites (Roper 2014).



Figure 50 : *Current creche situations in Phomolong, Collage, Author (2015)*

It is important for communities to be aware of how important the early years of a child's life are, and that the investment into those years can help children become responsible and socially beneficial adults.

Community-based early childhood development (ECD) organisations make a significant contribution to the development of children who might otherwise go without care and stimulation in South Africa (Roper 2014).

Hence an investment in the education of toddlers and pre-schoolers becomes inherently an investment into the community. Early Childhood Development is a key point in the bridging of the intergenerational gap and poverty. The education of socially responsible adults, promotes the chance of creating a better future for the next generation.

Early childhood development (ECD) is a critical component for breaking the cycle of poverty and inequality, particularly among this most vulnerable young population. Evidence shows that interventions for children under age 5 that promote resilience and help soften adverse childhood experiences through secure attachment to a caregiver also support positive brain development, social and emotional development, and contribute to positive future health outcomes (PEPFAR 2015).

The built environment has the ability to create the awareness of how important these ECD sites are and children become the catalysts for change. As well as catering for basic needs services (as well as basic rights) such as clean water, sanitary infrastructure and access to education.

Infrastructure in the ECD setting includes the building, grounds, learning equipment and learning materials (Atmore 2012).

The Built environment becomes the advocate for the children's rights in an environment where daily survival is the only constant.

Early childhood development services refer to ALL services that promote or support the development of young children. This includes infrastructural provisions, social security, birth registration, health services, day care and educational stimulation in centres, home and community based centres (Roper, 2014).

As with Maslow's pyramid, if a person is constantly fighting for the basic needs like shelter, food and water, the person cannot excel to the next level of the pyramid; hence through catering for these basic needs at the ECDC, children experience the freedom to discover the rest of the pyramid, towards self-actualisation.

Providing appropriate cognitive stimulation, nutrition, care and health services during this critical development period result in increased primary school enrolment, enhanced school performance, lower repetition and drop-out rates, reductions in juvenile crime rates, reduced remedial education costs and improved economic and social productivity in adulthood. These benefits produce significant social, education and economic returns to society far outweighing the returns on other forms of human capital investment (Atmore, 2012).

The crèches that were visited in Phomolong were not only brimming at the edges with the amount of children that were being accommodated, but the crèches charged between R350-R600 per child per month (this was seen on laminated posters at most crèches visited). Considering that most people living in Phomolong earn minimum wages (R3000 per month according to *Census 2011*), enrolment into a crèche for your child makes an enormous difference to the financial situation of the parent(s) and siblings lifestyle. Hence many children grow up at home under the care of an older sibling or family member, seldom integrating with other children their own age.

Children who have not attended a crèche at all are usually unable to socialise with other children, cannot answer questions from the teacher, cannot talk to an adult, are unfamiliar with the learning process or unable to identify shapes and numbers, and are unable to listen to other children, or ask questions. In addition, the physical development of the child is also important and a child who has jumped, run, used hoops, climbed jungle gyms and moved to music is more coordinated and has the fine motor control needed for learning to read and write (Roper 2014).

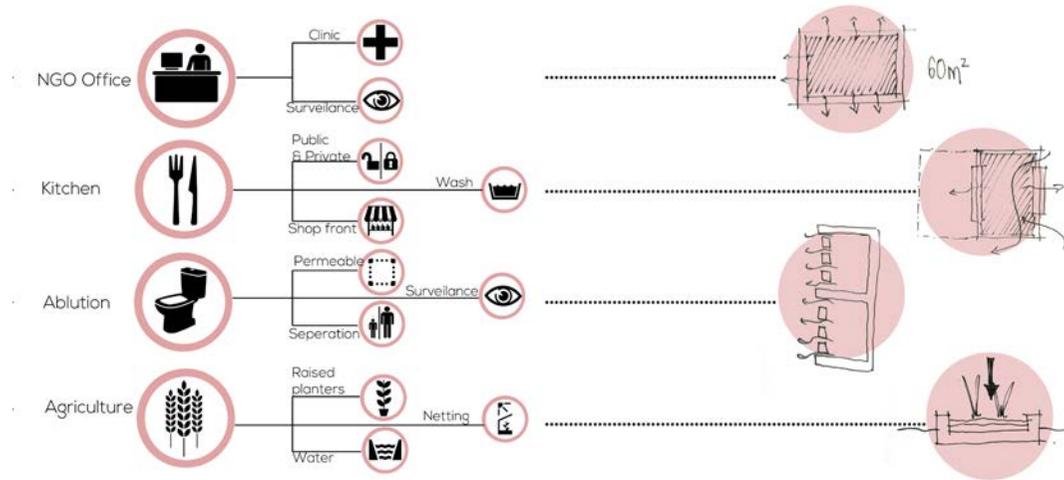


Figure 51 : *Schedule of accommodation and needs interpreted through diagrams, Author (2015)*

4.3 Schedule of accommodation needs of a Day-care centre

The NBRI report on Pre-primary school designs aimed to assist architects and gives a broad overview of the workings of nursery schools in order to enable the designer with a better understanding of the programme and all its requirements. It is mentioned multiple times that the designer should have an understanding of the activity patterns to create the most appropriate response, as well as the influence the structure has on the young users of the space in terms of their daily exploration and experiences. These spaces should complement the children's investigative nature as well be stimulating for their social, physical and cognitive development (NBRI, 1977).

During 1938 in Britain the government took great responsibility in the design and management of nursery schools, including the medical and nutritional care that each child receives on a daily basis. Seeing as this was during the Great Depression years, responsibility was taken for children whose parents could not provide all the necessary care. Thus the nursery school designs incorporated daily check-ups by nurses, feeding schemes and kitchens, and washrooms where children could receive a bath if they did not have access to hygienic facilities at home (Wright and Gardner-Medwin 1938).

These were similar conditions to those seen in Phomolong, Mamelodi.

Nursery schools were categorized as:

Facilities which were under private management; taking children from 2 to 5; keeping them all day from 8h30 to 18h00; supplying a midday meal; organized in groups of 35 children looked after by one teacher and a helper (Wright and Gardner-Medwin 1938).

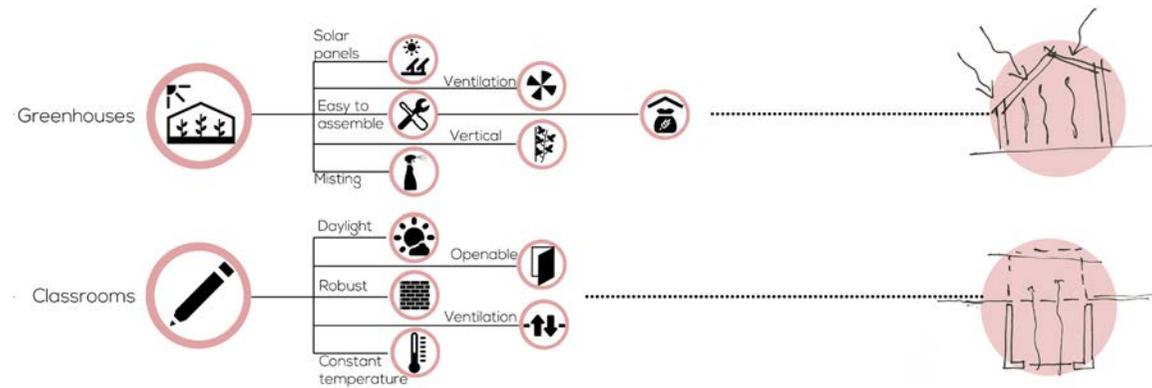


Figure 52 : *Schedule of accommodation and needs interpreted through diagrams, Author (2015)*

Nursery schools aim at the supervision and healthy development of children between the age of 2 and 5 years old, on physical, mental and health level. From the age of 2 children start to learn self-reliance and enjoy exploring and social interaction of children at a similar age (*Wright and Gardner-Medwin 1938*).

- Routine plays an important role, throughout all activities supervision is needed but with freedom of exploration in a controlled environment.
- The various activities include check-up's from the nurse to evaluate the overall health of the child, homeroom activities and free play would continue until breakfast time.
- It is encouraged for the child to help in cleaning up his/her dishes.
- Outside play areas should have a great area that is covered, for in case of bad weather, this should have a non-slip surface, with a sand-pit. Inside play is split into activities, such as creative and musical play and instructive play.
- The creative play area should consider a washable floor finish and multiple mediums to explore. The music room should preferably have large storage and acoustic panelling.
- All classrooms and activity rooms should preferably open up towards the covered play area or have the possibility of expanding in area as to occupy more children if the activity needs more space.
- A quiet room with books and cozy atmosphere is appropriate for both storytelling as well as nap times. Storage for blankets would be needed, as well as a laundry facility. (*Wright and Gardner-Medwin 1938*)
- The site of choice should also adhere to certain prerequisites such as easy access and within walking distance (taken as 500m) (*NBRI 1977*); it should be separated from major traffic routes.
- Generosity of space for children to run and play as well as trees for shade and climbing is proposed. The desirable maximum of children per group is 30.

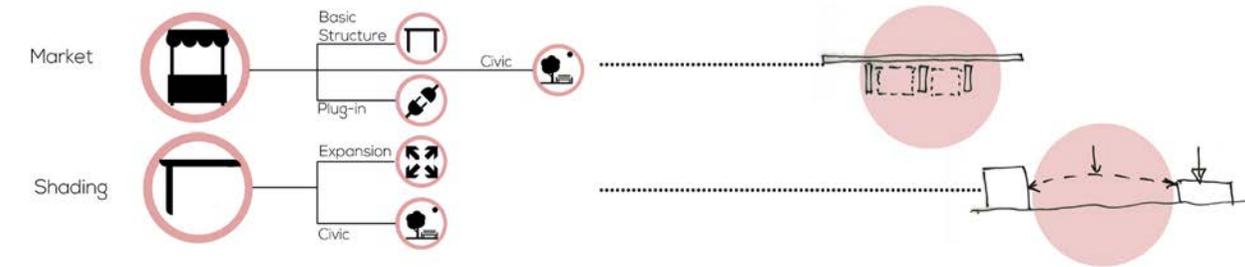


Figure 53 : *Schedule of accommodation and needs interpreted through diagrams, Author (2015)*

Entrance areas should be welcoming and control access through surveillance. Circulation routes should incorporate cloakrooms and lockers for children to keep personal items and extra clothes in case of an accident. Bathrooms should also be on the circulation routes for children who need to be washed (Wright and Gardner-Medwin, 1938).

It is proposed that all two classrooms should share a lavatory between them with *1 water closet for every 10 children*. The W.C's and hand wash basins should be at an appropriate scale for the children to use and the lavatory should have a viewing panel from the classroom for the teacher to observe if help is needed. Windows should have sills at a maximum of 550mm above floor level so children can view outdoors. (NBRI, 1977)

The NBRI describes the different design conditions of activity spaces as follows

1. Wet and noisy – creative centre (hub of school)
2. Dry and noisy – music centre
3. Dry and less noisy – dolls and instructive play area
4. Dry and quiet – book centre

Physical requirements to accommodate the necessary activities, is proposed to be 3m² per child for playroom space. The atmosphere should be domestic and secure whilst differences in ceiling and floor levels are described as interesting spatial defining elements (NBRI, 1977).

- *These guidelines specifically state (but are not limited to) that the ECD centre should*
- *be clean and safe- all precautions are taken to protect children and centre staff from physical, emotional, and social harm, preventing any risk of fire, accidents, or other hazards;*
- *have at least 1.5m² of indoor space per child;*
- *have at least 2m² of outdoor space per child;*
- *be disability friendly;*
- *be weatherproof and well ventilated;*
- *have a separate area for any food preparation;*
- *have safe and hygienic toilet facilities available to children and centre staff (Atmore 2012)*

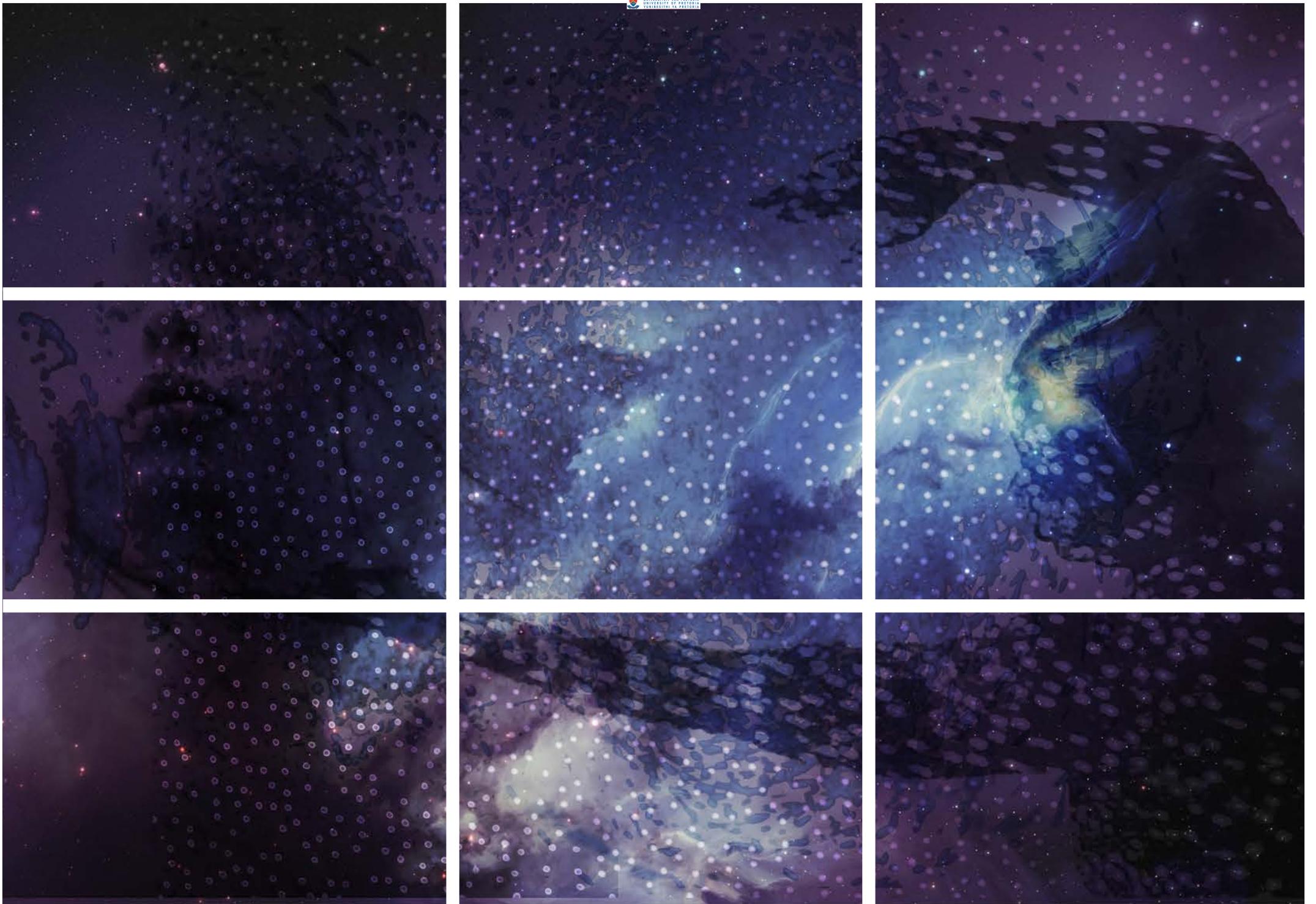


Figure 54 : *The passing on of knowledge, Collage, Author (2015)*