



Workingⁱⁿ Warwick

Including street traders in
urban plans

Richard Dobson and Caroline Skinner
with Jillian Nicholson



Published in 2009 by the School of Development Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Howard College Campus, Durban, 4017, South Africa.

© 2009 School of Development Studies,
University of KwaZulu-Natal

The views expressed in this book are those of the authors and should not be attributed
to the School of Development Studies.

Content input and project oversight: Richard Dobson
Research, writing and project oversight: Caroline Skinner
Editing and writing: Jillian Nicholson
Design and layout: Anna Gaylard
Photographs: Dennis Gilbert and Gerald Botha
Archive photographs: Angie Buckland, Richard Dobson, Terence Hogben, Yusuf Patel,
Jeeva Rajgopaul, Sue Windsor and Justine Wintjies.
Video footage and production: Brandswell with Collective Film and Video
Printing: Fishwicks, Durban

ISBN: 978-1-86840-667-8

For email queries contact book@aet.org.za




Workingⁱⁿ Warwick

Including street traders
in urban plans


Richard Dobson and Caroline Skinner
with Jillian Nicholson





Contents

| | | |
|---|--|----|
|  | Introduction | 1 |
|  | Chapter 1: A walk through Warwick | 5 |
|  | Chapter 2: Turning Warwick around | 43 |
| | Warwick from the mid-1880s to the mid-1990s..... | 43 |
| | Post-1994: Setting up the Warwick Junction Urban Renewal Project | 47 |
| | Project structure and way of working | 51 |
| | Opening a Project Centre..... | 55 |
| | Marketing the 'new' Warwick: changing people's perceptions | 57 |
| | Two project fundamentals | 59 |
| | An overview of completed projects | 61 |

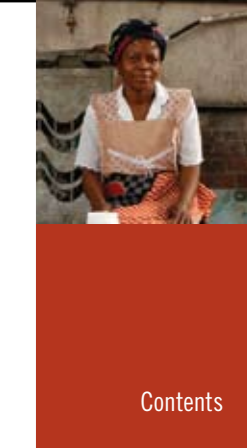
| | | |
|---|--|----|
|  | Chapter 3: Different sectors, different challenges | 65 |
| | The Traditional Medicine Market: The first major sector-based initiative | 65 |
| | Cooked mealies: A hazardous trade with a high turnover | 75 |
| | Cardboard collectors: Dealing with exploitation | 79 |
| | A closing reflection | 83 |

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
|  | Chapter 4: From street to informal shopping concourse: urban design solutions | 87 |
| | Early Brook Street | 87 |
| | A joint venture to provide shelter in Brook Street | 89 |
| | An overview of the major infrastructural changes | 93 |
| | Trader storage | 98 |
| | Street trader sites, tables and shelters | 100 |
| | Providing more sophisticated infrastructure – trading kiosks, with water and electricity..... | 104 |
| | Looking back..... | 105 |

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
|  | Chapter 5: Tackling urban management issues: a cooperative effort | 109 |
| | Tackling crime | 110 |
| | Cooperating to keep Warwick clean..... | 114 |
| | Transforming toilet and water facilities..... | 117 |
| | Managing pavement sleeping | 117 |
| | Addressing health issues..... | 118 |
| | Providing childcare | 121 |
| | The overall impact of these support services | 123 |

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
|  | Chapter 6: Conclusion | 127 |
| | Lessons learned | 127 |
| | Opportunities and challenges ahead | 131 |

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Bibliography | 132 |
| Index | 133 |





Introduction: From decay to renewal - the triumph of Warwick

The Warwick Junction Urban Renewal Project¹ has received domestic and international acclaim for its active support for street traders. This local authority project was tasked with tackling urban management and design challenges in the area surrounding the primary transport node in Durban, South Africa. Since there are very few examples in South African or internationally where street traders are incorporated into urban planning, the story of Warwick is one worth telling.

Historically South African local authorities kept street traders away from city centres and tourist areas and generally regarded them as a nuisance rather than an asset. There are many cases of sometimes violent mass evictions of street traders. This Project recognised that street trading was an important part of the city, contributing to its economy and to employment. Although incomes are often low, the economic benefits to the municipality and the turnover generated by traders in Warwick, far outweigh the relatively small capital costs of the Project. In addition the profits from these activities go back into poor communities where traders often support large families – yet another incentive to create street trading spaces.

In responding with vigour and enthusiasm, Durban's municipality has added a new and exciting dimension to the city. Warwick is an example of enhancing rather than hindering the livelihoods of street traders, and of paying attention to their needs rather than building infrastructure that is inappropriate and, in other local authorities, often unused.

Much of the success of the Warwick Junction Urban Renewal Project, which was set up in 1995, is due to the way in which the council² was prepared to suspend conventional management practices in favour of a participative inter-departmental approach. This combined the skills and knowledge of officials in the renewal process and in ongoing management of the area. Street traders and their organisations were integrally involved in shaping this change and in raising key issues. Through this process innovative solutions were found to urban management, architectural and design challenges.

The regeneration process was, inevitably, not always plain sailing. The Project experienced failures and disappointments as well as successes. These gave rise to lessons and reflections that are an important component of the book and are helpful both for initiating change as well as for ongoing planning and management. The principal lesson was the realisation that success required real and continuous commitment on the

part of those working in the Project.

This book is more than a documentation of the Project. It aims to demonstrate the benefits for local authorities and their citizens of integrating street traders into urban plans and to excite interest in implementing some of the initiatives described here. Its primary message to all those in a position to effect positive change in this sector, particularly for those in local government, is 'your city can do this too'. While the scale of the renewal process of Warwick was significant, it grew incrementally and so should not deter others from embarking on smaller initiatives.

During the writing of this book the city started to consider plans to redevelop parts of Warwick. This has introduced some uncertainty about the future of Warwick's street and market traders. In contrast to the approach of the Project, there has been little consultation with traders. This book, therefore, is also a call to the city to continue its inclusive and consultative approach which provides an inspiring example for other cities.

Awards and nominations

- Mail and Guardian Green Trust Award for urban renewal, 2000
- KwaZulu-Natal Institute of Architects' Heritage Award for renovation of the Project Centre, 2000
- Nominated for the IBM Innovations in Government Award in 2007
- South African Institute of Architects' President's Award 2007/2008
- UN Habitat / Dubai International Award for Good Practice for the Brook Street Market, 2008.

¹Throughout the book this is referred to as 'the Project'.

²Council refers to the local administrative body. It is made up of both elected representatives or councillors, and bureaucrats or officials. The terms 'council', 'local authority' and 'local government' are used interchangeably.

