



Community networks as a means to improve service delivery efficiency?

A Case Study

Jonathan Carter

Social science that makes a difference



HSRC
Human Sciences
Research Council

Overview

- Aim of study and intended approach
- ...what I found
- Suggest stimulation – key findings presented alongside recommendations/conclusions

Rationale/Origin

- Social Macro Report:
 - “Social networks extend beyond ... socio-economic issues, and are impacted on by factors that can define a trajectory of their own (PCAS, 2006:70)...”
 - “social networks, even among the poor, do have some influence on individual’s access to resources, opportunities for employment and so on (PCAS, 2006:74).”

Research Objective

- What can government do for Community Based Organisations and with community based groups and networks to improve the *efficiency* of service delivery?

and *ensure* efficiency and effectiveness





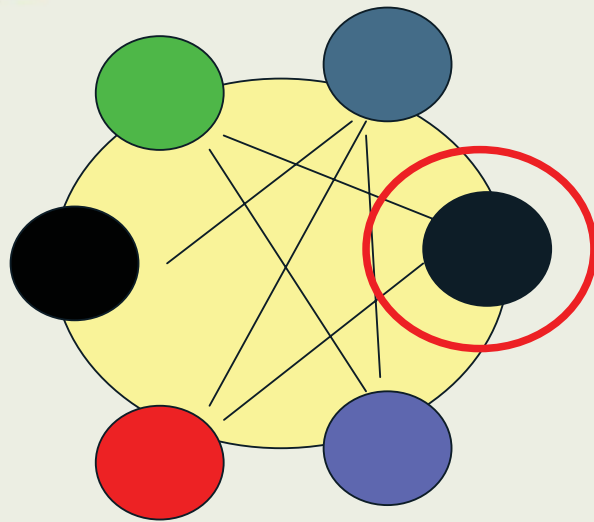


Intended approach

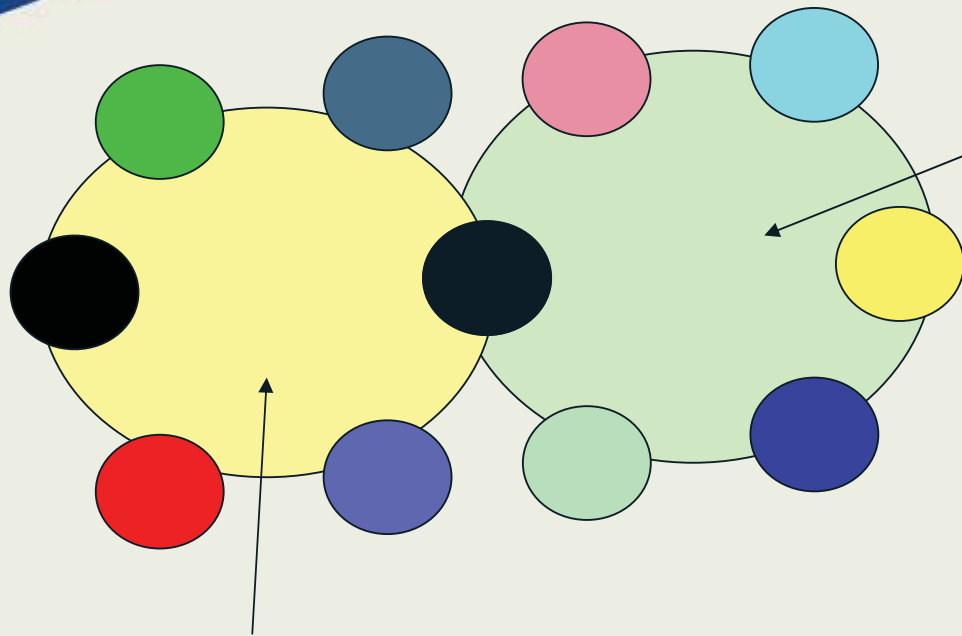
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Bunga Avenue Women's Group



She volunteers one of her other groups to be part of the research

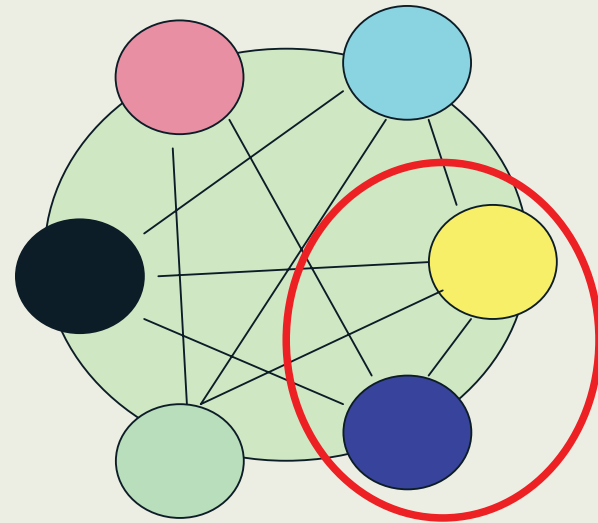


**Bunga Avenue
Women's Group**

**Love Life youth
Group**

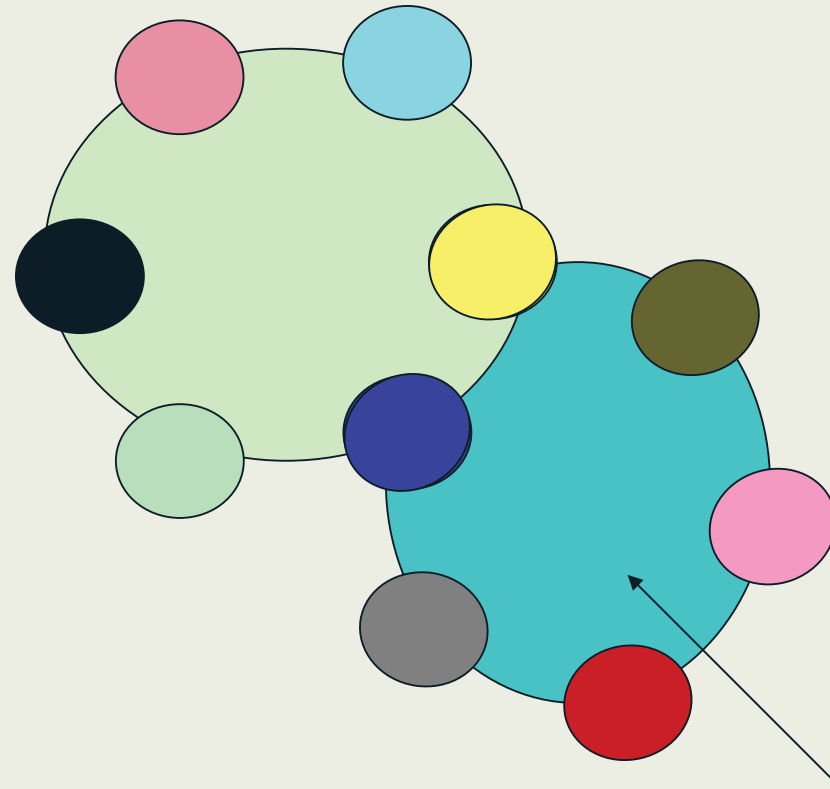
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Love Life youth Group



They volunteer
another groups to be
part of the research

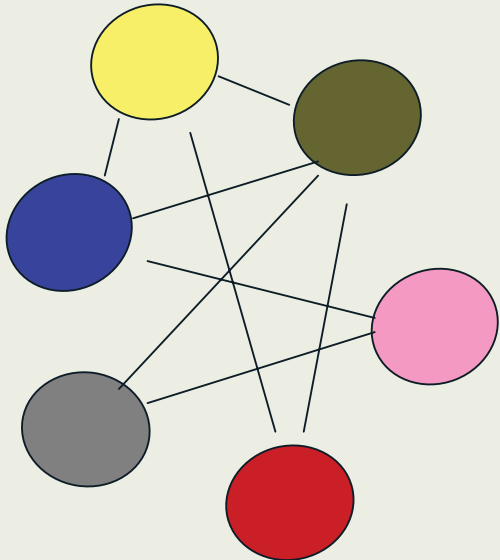
**Love Life youth
Group**

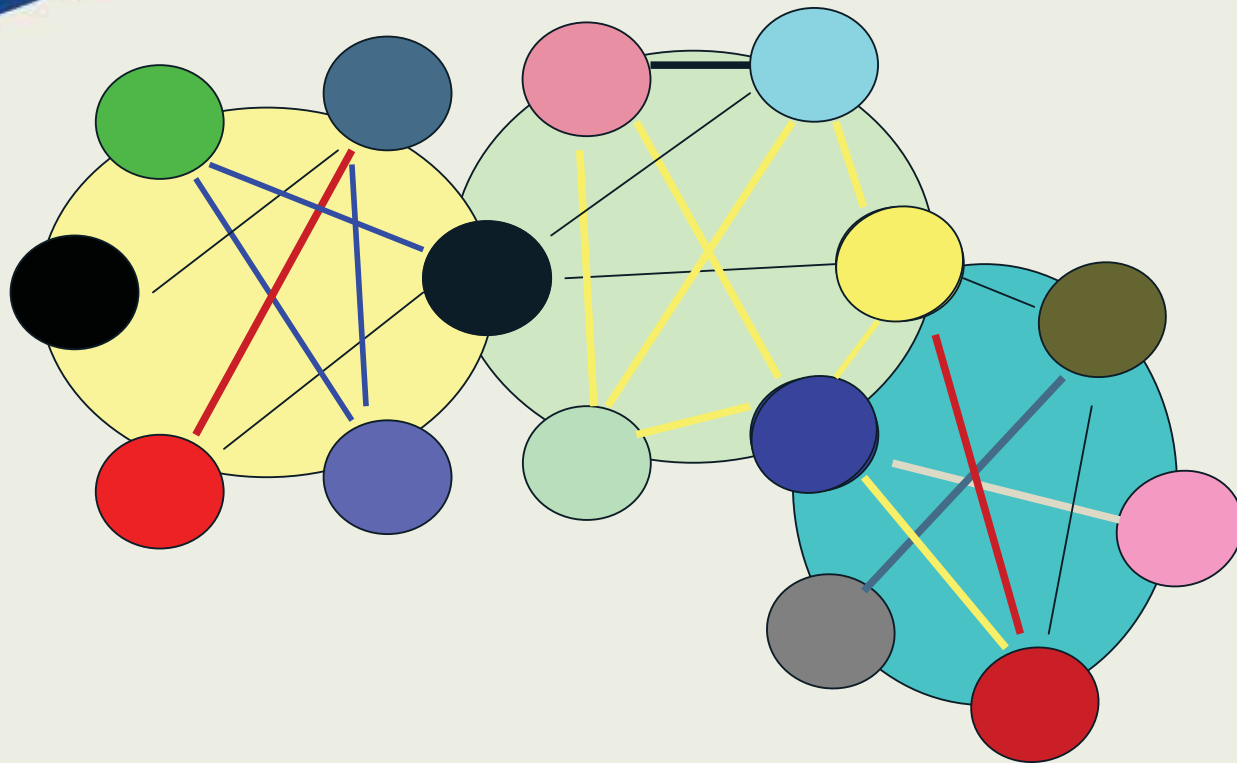


**St Francis Faith
Group**

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St Francis Faith Group





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| Name | Group | Purpose | Size | Area | Member Link | Rank |
|----------|-------------|------------------|------|---------|-------------|-----------|
| Ndiki | Food Garden | School Nutrition | 5 | Khaya C | Church | Member |
| Bukelwa | Food Garden | School Nutrition | 5 | Khaya C | Church | Head |
| Sipho | Food Garden | School Nutrition | 5 | Khaya C | School | Secretary |
| Mandisa | Food Garden | School Nutrition | 5 | Khaya C | School | Member |
| Zama | Food Garden | School Nutrition | 5 | Khaya C | School | Member |
| Zama | ECD | ECD | 6 | Khaya C | Church | Member |
| Zinthle | ECD | ECD | 6 | Khaya C | School 2 | Member |
| Cynthia | ECD | ECD | 6 | Khaya C | Shebeen | Member |
| Tandi | ECD | ECD | 6 | Khaya C | Work | Head |
| Nandipha | ECD | ECD | 6 | Khaya C | Stokvel | Member |
| Vuyo | ECD | ECD | 6 | Khaya C | Burial Soci | Member |
| Temba | Stokvel | Money | 9 | Town 2 | Church | Head |
| Tebogo | Stokvel | Money | 9 | Town 2 | Soccer | Member |
| Bheki | Stokvel | Money | 9 | Town 2 | Soccer | Member |
| Nandipha | Stokvel | Money | 9 | Town 2 | Creche | Member |
| Bukelwa | Stokvel | Money | 9 | Town 2 | Creche | Member |
| Tando | Stokvel | Money | 9 | Town 2 | Business | Member |
| Wendy | Stokvel | Money | 9 | Town 2 | Neighbours | Member |
| Odwa | Stokvel | Money | 9 | Town 2 | Church | Member |
| Patrice | Stokvel | Money | 9 | Town 2 | Business | Member |

Event Map

1995 - 98

1998 - 2001

2001 - 04

2004 - 07

Started when
Albertina joined
Soil for Life – got
Land through
Councilor Q

Jenny left to
Look after family
In Transkei

Tandi, Nandi
Joined, Zintle
invited them

Child Welfare open
In Khaya, gave help

Child Welfare
Open In Khaya,
gave help

Given money
From the church

Able to build
Two rooms and
For care

Vuyo and Nandi
joined

What happened

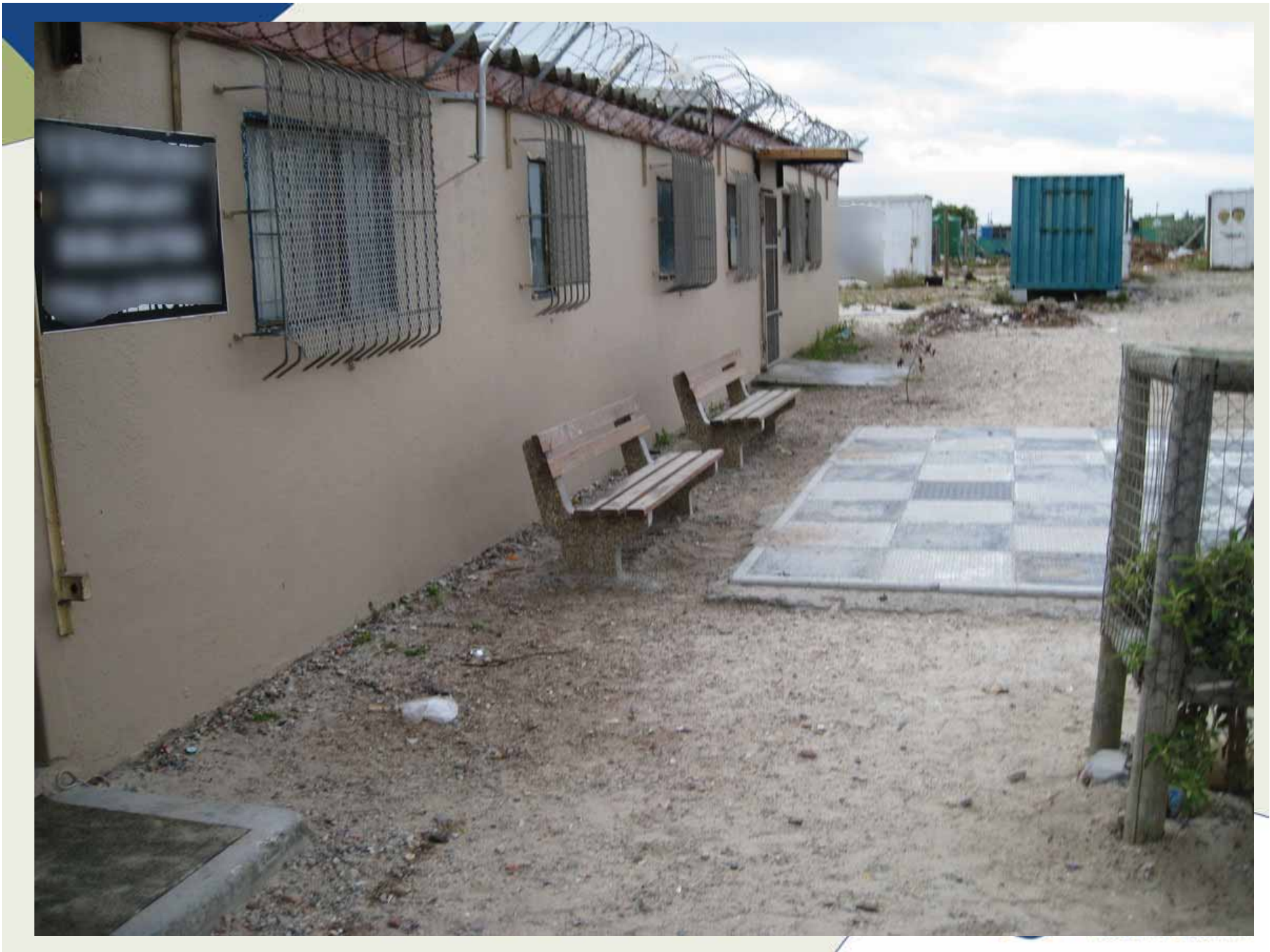
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Vrygrond - Findings

- MP to me: “you chose the worst community possible to do this research in”
- All: government hands so cleanly washed they forget they were once dirty
- Racism
- Housing project – corrupt distribution

Vrygrond – findings (2)

- Networks and Groups
 - Trust?
 - Everyone *saw* everyone's business, but no-one *knew*
 - Myths formed and spread rapidly
 - Groups form - get support – then infighting within the groups...donors scared away
 - Groups that worked, did it quietly
 - Wider than this community?

Problems with analysing

- Trust develops as you peel the onion
 - Takes time, understanding changes over time
- Risk of issues being lost in translation
- Difficult to tell between meeting a group or causing one to form
- In this context I would rather consider network stimulation

Considerations around network stimulation

- Rules should enable achievement of purpose
 - ECD forums covers 6 communities
 - The CPF covers an equally large area, but a different one
 - <15
- Work with transient nature,
 - Can start at the drop of a penny
 - Can end because someone dropped the penny
 - Can keep going through smallest amount of support/interest...but tend to need it

Considerations around network stimulation

- NGOs are a good entry point
 - Provide *space* (venue + more), which is in short supply
 - Offer mechanisms for transparency and accountability...which can debunk myths
- Training is a good way of getting groups together – and is a good way of attracting people who want to help themselves
- Law of the few (change makers and their need for support

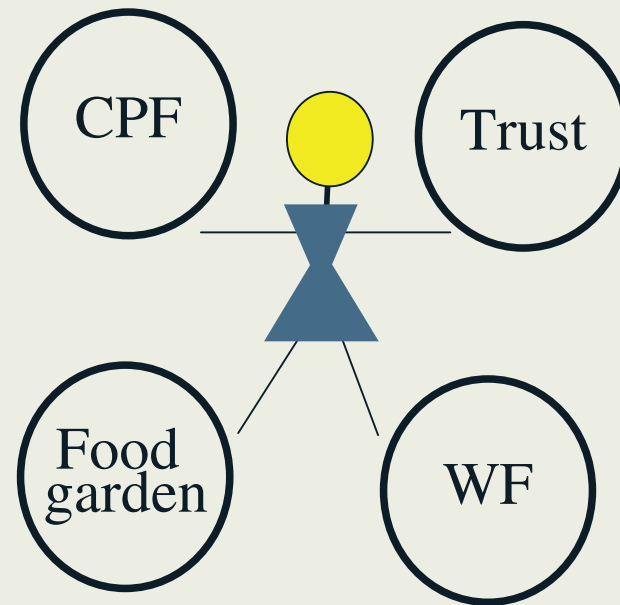
One example that works

- www.yabonga.com – HIV support groups –
 - Stipend is paid to group leaders
 - Established, earned their trust
 - Meet potential members in clinics
 - Now meeting potential male members in shebeens
 - Transient nature worked with – graduation in and out of group
 - Continual support

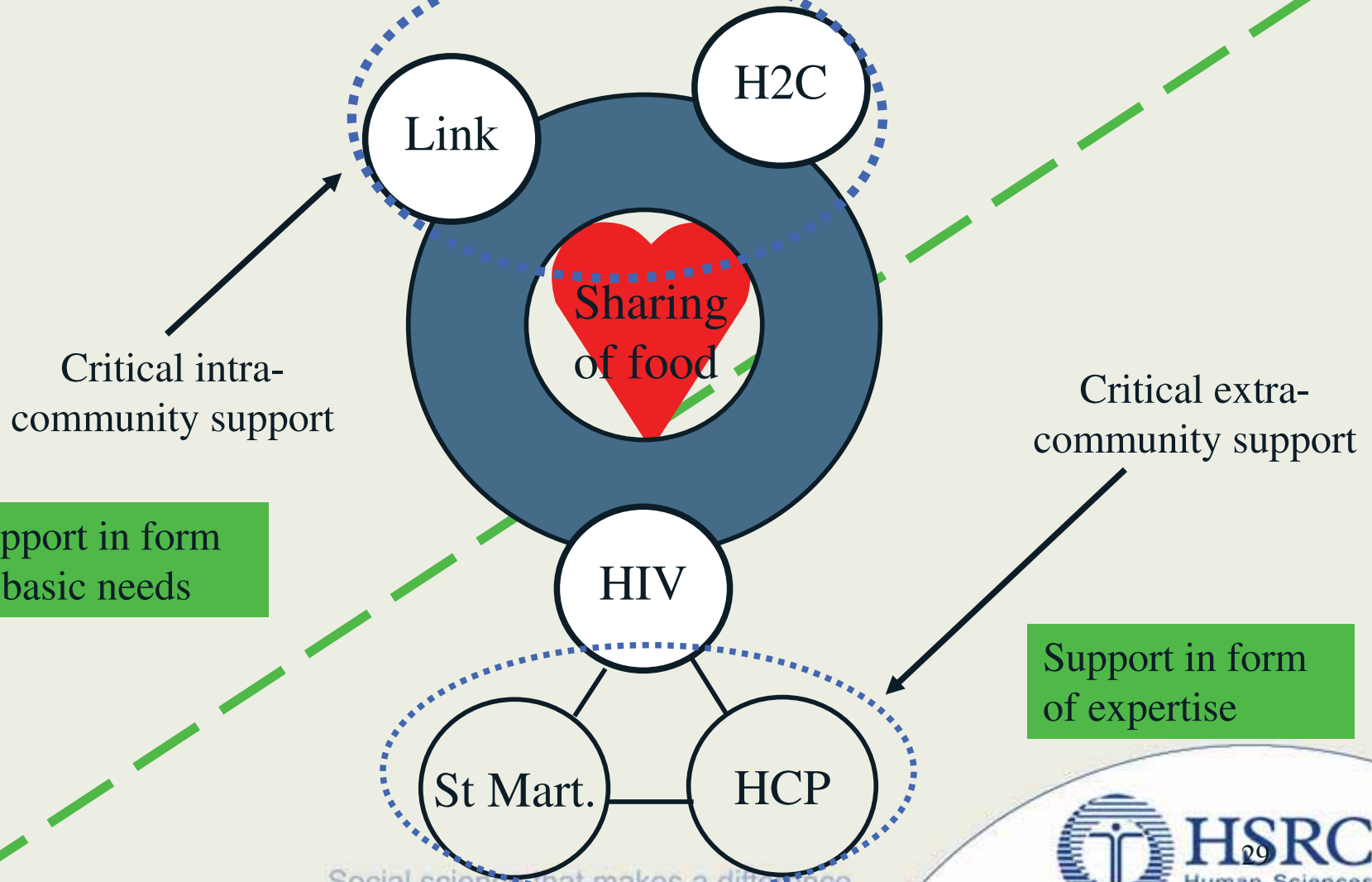
Networks and Groups

- What could you do?
- Trust is fundamental and has to be *managed*
 1. *Processes of shared learning, not events*
 2. Insist on transparency and accountability
 1. See the governance structure, annual reports that have been publicized, audited
 3. Understand the *resilience* of the poor and how *little* they live on

Examples – one person supported by many groups



Number of groups assist through sharing resources – e.g. bonded by need to provide food



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Groups can share space without talking to each other and be productive!

