

# Agenda 21 Partnership Cape Town - Aachen

Newsletter No 32, April 2022



Another year was defined by the Covid19 pandemic and, as in the previous year, this had a significant impact on our partnership.

No official face-to-face exchanges between the two twin cities could take place in 2021 either. Projects already postponed in 2020 were postponed further. The school partnerships in particular remained on hold. However, the Heinrich Heine Comprehensive School kept the ball rolling and there were events with a South African background. In "online ping-pong", the Mayors Portfolio of Urban Sustainability of both city councils was created. Furthermore, due to some generous donations, the climate ticket could be extended to additional gardens. The letmetellyou project was continued and a young singer from Delft won our hearts.

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## Mayor's Portfolio of Urban Sustainability

On Thursday 24 June 2021, the City of Cape Town and the City of Aachen launched the joint edition of the Mayor's Portfolio of Urban Sustainability to mark the 20th anniversary of the Aachen–Cape Town LA21 Partnership. While the cities of Cape Town and Aachen confront unique environmental and socio-economic challenges, they share the common goal of pursuing a sustainable future.



**CAPE TOWN-AACHEN MAYOR'S PORTFOLIO OF URBAN SUSTAINABILITY**

**DAS KAPSTADT-AACHEN PORTFOLIO DER OBERBÜRGERMEISTER\*INNEN ZU URBANER NACHHALTIGKEIT**

Making progress possible. Together.

The joint Cape Town-Aachen Mayor's Portfolio showcases and celebrates the partnership and the many projects that have been realised through our collaboration, showcasing a sample of initiatives and sharing sustainability lessons between the two cities. Over the past 20 years, the Aachen–Cape Town LA21 Partnership has supported practical projects that promote sustainable development as part of everyday life in both cities. The 22 projects profiled in the portfolio are either a collaboration between the sister cities, or projects of mutual interest or highlight similar approaches.

Projects such as Premium Ways into Aachen's greenery and Cape Town's Source to Sea river corridor initiative are examples of projects seeking to enhance green infrastructure and improve access to green public open spaces in their respective cities.

In addition to projects led by the local governments of Cape Town and Aachen, others are managed by stakeholders from civil society, cultural, business and education institutions that drive the Aachen–Cape Town LA21 Partnership.

These include the Good Hope Lab, Hlumani and the school exchanges programme.

This publication demonstrates that the partnership has enabled us to achieve remarkable things together. Both cities are committed to future collaboration and to deepening their cooperation, exchange of knowledge, and mutual support. This includes promoting opportunities for exchanges between Aachen and Cape Town and creating and maintaining platforms to promote contact for sustainable development.

Each of the projects showcased closely align with one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The projects also contribute to the growing body of knowledge and practice with regards to urban sustainability.

## **Video conference with the author Lutz van Dijk - Reading project of the basic course 10 in German at the Heinrich Heine Comprehensive School**

Birgit Komanns

Actually, everything was supposed to be different: Already in the summer of 2020, the basic course in German - at that time still in the 9th grade - had received the book "Themba" by Lutz van Dijk (sponsored by the Aachen/Cape Town Partnership Association) and was supposed to read it during the vacations. A reading project was planned, which was to end with the author's visit to our school in the fall.

The pandemic thwarted all plans. At first, the visit turned into a video conference. But this, too, had to be pushed back further and further and could finally only take place after the central exams of the 10th grade in June 2021. To this end, the course refreshed its book knowledge by watching the film "Themba" and prepared for the conversation with van Dijk by asking really good questions.

The author greeted all the students individually and personally with a few questions - and then it was on to his answers to the students' questions about the book and the film. The young people were impressed by who is really behind the character Themba, how van Dijk came to know this boy and what prompted him to write the book (2005). The "real Themba" is now a young man, father of a small child, became a nurse for the elderly, although he was illiterate at the time and had never attended school.



At the end of their school career, which they sometimes found exhausting, the students were nevertheless very moved to hear from someone "on the other side of the world" who is grateful for his education, his profession, and who would have loved to attend school.

Lutz van Dijk also touched on apartheid and the situation in South Africa today, not least during the pandemic (there is nowhere near enough vaccine).

The class found the 70-minute talk "really cool" - the author thought it was a great encounter!

## **General meeting of the partnership association - 18.10.2021**

At the general meeting, despite the difficult Corona times with a worldwide partnership, it was possible to look back (and ahead) with satisfaction on one or the other project that was well launched.

For this, the General Meeting thanked all active people and helpers who have contributed to the success, further development and linking of the projects in the past difficult time. Even if not everything worked out, the list of projects is quite impressive: Mayors Portfolio - Relaunch Climate Ticket - School partnerships - Award for Hlumani - Award ceremony Community Garden Haaren - letmetellyou. Work and budget of the board in 2021 was approved and the board was thus discharged.

But there is a change - Anne Proligheuer-Griese and Peter Blum stepped down as board members after many years of tireless work, but fortunately remain closely connected to the association. Birgit Jakobs, Dagmar Polis, Sabine Schönberg-Ehlen, Nika Stützel and Ron-Roger Breuer form the new board.

It should be mentioned in particular that Gabriele Schütz-Lembach, who supported the association intensively over many years, is unfortunately withdrawing from active participation.



Therefore, here again a big thank you for the many years of intensive and good cooperation to all!

## District Garden Haaren

In the summer semester of 2021, an impromptu design competition was held for students from RWTH University (Department of Landscape Architecture) to design the former parish garden in Haaren. A ZOOM in May informed the students: Their questions were answered by our experts Norbert Kuntz (Partnership Association) and Nika Stützel (Lecturer, Department of Landscape Architecture) and Kurt Ackermann (Oranjezicht City Farm, Cape Town). The main functions of urban gardens in ecological and social terms, planning issues and planning conflicts were discussed using examples from Haaren and Cape Town. Lutz van Dijk highlighted political and social issues, as well as the situation after Corona in Cape Town. He gave a clear and poignant description of the poverty and hunger crisis.

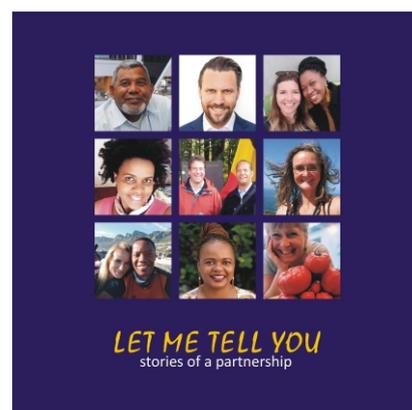


The designs were submitted to the chair and reviewed and awarded prizes by a jury. The winning designs were exhibited in the district council starting in September. The prizes were presented by Lord Mayor Sibylle Keupen on the 2nd December 2021.

## Brochure Let Me Tell You – Stories of a Partnership

Due to the great success of our website [www.letmetellyou.de](http://www.letmetellyou.de), we were asked from many sides whether we could not also publish the stories of the partnership in a brochure. This was to supplement the association's brochure on topics and projects, which had been published on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the partnership in 2020, with very personal experiences of the people who had visited the other side of the globe in the exchange.

If you like to get one of the brochures, please contact us through our website [www.aachen-kapstadt.de](http://www.aachen-kapstadt.de)



## News from Climate Ticket

Birgit Jakobs and Norbert Kuntz visited the gardens supported by Climate Ticket in November and December 2021. In the process, the two learned about very different success stories - but also gained insight into obstacles and difficulties.

Soneike High School in Kuils River has developed into a farm of unbelievable proportions within a year, some private gardens in Gugulethu prospered and provided far more vegetables than the gardeners could consume, and the long-standing projects in Khayelitsha also continued to be successful. New projects, on the other hand, struggled with a wide variety of problems such as theft, water and staff shortages.



It was also possible to visit other projects that will be included in the funding in 2022: Primrose Park Primary School in Manenberg, Ingcungcu Sunbird Restoration Fynbos Garden in Muizenberg, Feed the Future in Elsies River and Food Agency Cape Town in Mfuleni.

There is also a revised Climate Ticket info sheet with the latest information on the funded garden (Separate pdf).

## LIVING DIVERSITY - PROMOTING DIVERSITY

### Project days at the Heinrich Heine Comprehensive School 20. + 21. January 2022

UTA Göbel-Groß

At the end of the school semester, two project days were held at the Heinrich Heine Comprehensive School under the theme "Living Diversity - Promoting Diversity". My creative workshop offered free painting on the topics "DIVERSITY . I am me . Who am I?" and the SDGs.

At the beginning I introduced the partnership Aachen-Cape Town, pictorially accompanied with photos mainly from the creative wall painting and school projects. The students of grades 11-13 worked both days with great intensity and concentration. More than 30 paintings were created by a total of 18 young people.



They range from partly abstract-experimental pictures to realistic-looking scenarios. - Accompanying the paintings, some of the students wrote down their thoughts on their paintings.

Continuity of work was complicated by the Omicron variant of the Corona virus, which sent several young people into quarantine each day; some were therefore present for only one day. Also, the commitment to some important upper-level courses that could not be dropped left some students present only sporadically. As a follow-up to the 2 project days, I created a collage from the painted images that will be printed on a banner that will be hung - in addition to the existing ones - in the spacious hallways.

A general presentation of the project days will be held later in the year.

## One World Song Contest – My experiences in Germany

Lisa Chinogaramombe

Friday, 11th of February 2022:

A typical sunny afternoon in Cape Town. I am Lisa, 15 years old, waiting outside of our house in a township called Delft, my suitcase is packed and I am ready for the adventure of a lifetime. My supervisor from Africa Unite, Mira Modise comes driving around the corner. "Quick, quick, we are late", she says. Traffic is particularly bad this day and the boarding gates are about to close, but there needs to be time for proper goodbyes with my family of course. This can't be rushed.

I enter Cape Town International airport for the first time in my life - destination: Berlin/ Germany. I am nervous but mainly excited. Luckily the plane is not fully booked so we can sit next to the window and watch the city become smaller and smaller as we take off. Upon our arrival we get greeted by an icy cold front. OMG, Germany is a giant freezer. Did I pack enough warm clothes? I'm not prepared for this! Where can I get a hot chocolate around here?



A nice lady from Engagement Global picks us up. Oh, I forgot to mention: My song "One World-One Peace" got selected into the top 5 of the International Song Contest from Engagement Global. I was supposed to be part of the finals in December but then I couldn't get a Visa. So disappointing, but that's the past. They invited me to come to Germany for one week to record my song for the upcoming One World Album in a professional recording studio in Berlin, Germany. I couldn't be prouder of myself!

A little bit about myself: I was born in Zimbabwe but have been living in South Africa since 2007. I currently attend Grade 10 at Rosendaal High School in Delft, a township in the Cape Flats. At my school I'm the current president of the Africa Unite School Club, a project where we as learners initiate and oversee various projects tailored to the needs of our school and community.



Besides the two exciting studio recording days in Berlin Kreuzberg one of my highlights was the trip to Aachen. Thanks to the Aachen Cape Town partnership I got invited to visit a High School in Aachen (Heinrich Heine Comprehensive School) where I got the opportunity to learn more about the German school system and exchange my story and music with a group of German students. I even received a rose for Valentine's day.



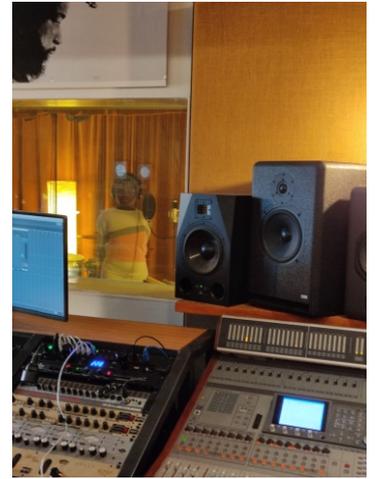
During my stay in Aachen, I met so many beautiful people from the Aachen-Cape Town partnership who invited me into their houses, showed me their work, made music with me and took me to the Aachener Dom. I have never been in such a beautiful cathedral.





The entire trip was very eye opening for me and I'm so glad I got the opportunity to come. I learnt a lot about Germany's history, including the Berlin wall, which inspired me to write a new song called 'Unity'. Luckily I was able to record this song at the studio as well. Now this song and the pictures are my precious memory of the time I spent in Germany.

P.S. Upon her return, Lisa faced challenges with re-entering South Africa as her asylum seeker permit was expired. Africa Unite is currently looking for ways to help Lisa finish her education in South Africa.



## MISCELLANEOUS

### Guided Tour Nelson-Mandela-Park

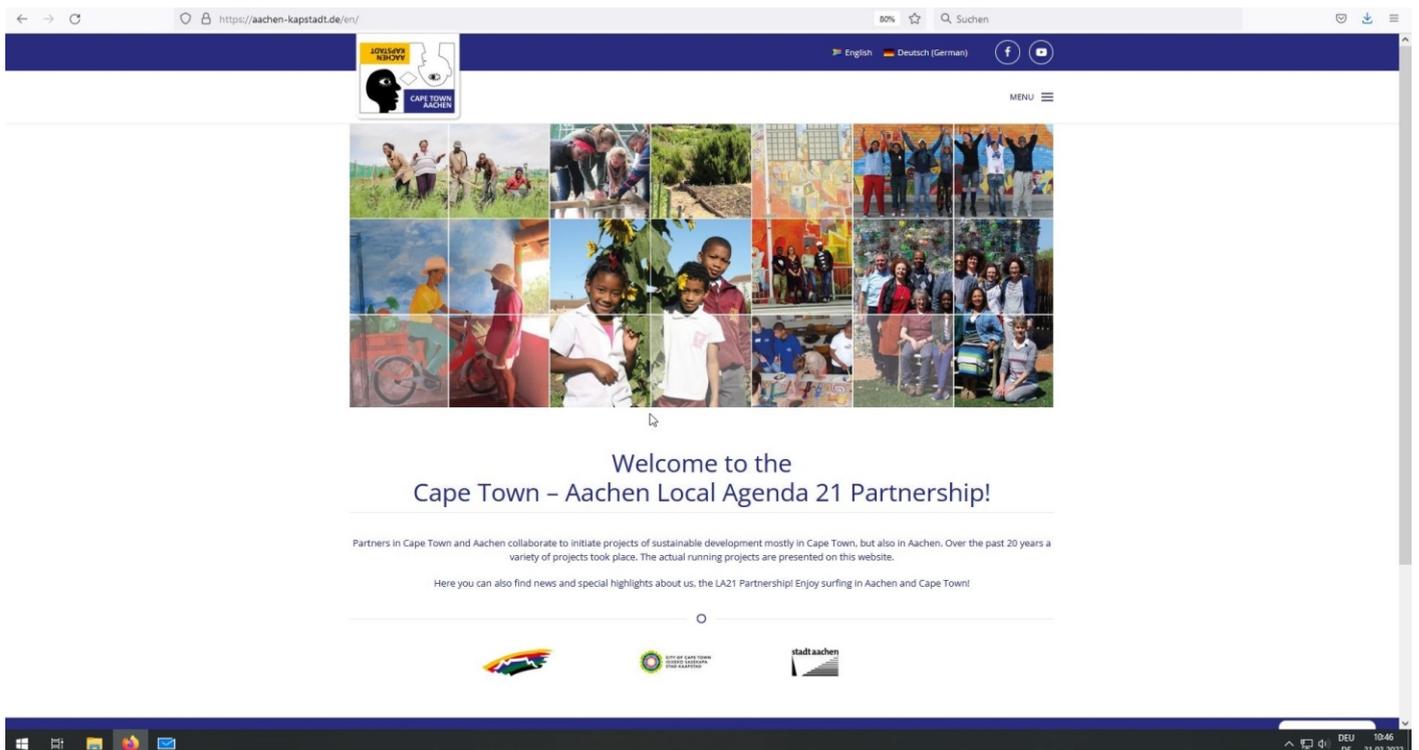
Under the expert leadership of Birgitta Hollmann, a guided tour of the Nelson Mandela Park took place again last year on 18 July to mark Nelson Mandela's birthday. This "new tradition" will be continued in 2022.



### New Website

We have used all the time in the home office to completely redesign our partnership website. It is now "up to date", both in terms of content and design. Among other things, it is now possible to change the language on each page (German-English). Please have a look:

[www.aachen-kapstadt.de](http://www.aachen-kapstadt.de)



## New faces in Cape Town

There have been major changes in the Cape Town City Administration in the past year, which also affect the partnership. Osman Asmal, the long-time director of environmental management, who had accompanied the partnership since its beginnings, left his post. His position was taken by Lorraine Gerrans, who has also been associated with the partnership for a few years and has already visited Aachen in 2019.

Bongani Mnisi has taken over as Manager of Environmental Planning and Sustainability. Head of Environmental Strategy and Implementation became Saul Roux and Head of Sustainable Partnerships and Funding became Bronwen Griffith. The direct contact for the partnership in Bongani's and Saul's team is also Muofhe Pedzai, who was in charge of the Mayors Portfolio of Sustainability together with Saul. For all of them, the partnership is a new experience, but they are very motivated and bring new momentum to the partnership work. In addition to the virtual meetings, there have already been several face-to-face meetings in Cape Town with Birgit Jakobs and Norbert Kuntz, where the Cape Town team has eagerly absorbed their wealth of experience.



A first attempt to establish a partnership committee has also already been made. In line with corona principles, Muofhe, Norbert and Birgit, Mira from Africa Unite, Loquitur Maka from Soneike High School, Siphko Mfosa and Sanele Mabeke from Luhlaza High School and Melanie Stuart from Oranjezicht City Farm met at Aderne Garden. A good start!



On the 24th March 2022 the two partnership committees had their first joint meeting via ZOOM, which was very successful. It was decided to have such meeting every 3 months now.

## Logo change

Last but not least, we come to a somewhat difficult topic: our partnership logo. The original version originated from an art workshop at Inda-Gymnasium in Aachen-Korneilimünster in 2004. Together with an artist from Cape Town and two artists from Aachen, learners from Luhlaza High School in Khayelitha and from Inda-Gymnasium had painted pictures of their life situations. And one of these so-called "swaps" attracted general attention. It shows a German and a South African head in their neighbourhoods, communicating across the continents. In the painting, North and South are actually upside down, just as they are on a globe.

The partnership used the original swap as its logo in the following years. After some time, however, this was considered too complicated and was simplified and made monochrome. Again, a few years later, another change took place, with only the stylised heads remaining and the communication between the two being represented by a lying rhombus. However, the designer of the new logo at that time had only used the outlines of the heads. As a result, both now appeared white because the background was white.

In the course of the racism discussions in recent years by the Black Lives Matter movement, this logo of the partnership was increasingly questioned by the partnership members. Therefore, it was decided by the general meeting to show one head black and the other head white according to the original painting.

AGENDA 21-PARTNERSHIP - CAPE TOWN - AACHEN



AGENDA 21-PARTNERSCHAFT - AACHEN - KAPSTADT



# Happy Eastern!



## OUTLOOK 2022

### Food Dialogues

The 'Aacheners' were very impressed by the food dialogues 2021 in Cape Town. They are interested in planning food dialogues in Aachen too. On **18th of May**, there will be a presentation by Kurt Ackermann to a professional audience.

### One World Festival

After two years of absence due to the Covid19 pandemic the One World Festival will take place in the **11th of June** at Welthaus Aachen. The partnership will participate with a stall and the presentation of a new film: "Urban Gardens in Cape Town and Aachen".

### School exchange

Kreisgymnasium Heinsberg and Phoenix High School in Manenberg are busy planning an exchange form Germany to South Africa for the **last week in September** and the **first week in October**.

### Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)

The MoA has to be renewed in 2022. A group has to be formed by the two partnership committees to review the one from 2017 and make suggestions for changes. It has to be signed by the two mayors and NGO-members until **end of this year**.