

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF HOUSING
PROVISION, LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES AND
SOCIAL REPRODUCTION IN URBAN
COMMUNITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA:
THE CASE OF EZAMOKUHLE, MPUMALANGA

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Abstract

The post-apartheid South African state has formulated, introduced and implemented nation-wide policies and programmes pertaining to urban housing in order to address and tackle the challenges of social reproduction in and for poor urban black communities. This however has been undermined for a number of reasons, such as state incapacities and the state's neo-liberal overreliance on the market to remedy past injustices. At the same time households, as critical sites of social reproduction in poor urban black communities and under conditions of extreme vulnerability, engage in a range of productive and non-productive activities often in a desperate bid to construct and maintain a semblance of livelihood sustainability.

The thesis seeks to critically understand the relationship between state housing programmes and the diverse livelihood activities of poor urban black households in South Africa in the context of an ongoing systemic crisis of social reproduction which exists in these urban communities. This is pursued with specific reference to eZamokuhle Township in Amersfoort, Mpumalanga Province.

The thesis is framed conceptually in terms of the notion of social reproduction. In doing so, it brings together two sets of literature which are often disconnected. On the one hand, there is South African literature which critically analyses the post-apartheid state's housing programmes including the many challenges which exist in this regard. On the other hand, there is literature which considers the urban livelihoods of poor black communities in contemporary South Africa and often from within some kind of livelihoods perspective.

The thesis is innovative in bringing these two sets of literature together in terms of the overarching notion of social reproduction and providing, therefore, a more holistic and integrated understanding of the multi-dimensional character of social reproduction. The depth of the crisis of social reproduction in eZamokuhle is explicated and examined in this way but in a manner which articulates the lived experiences and agency of eZamokuhle households despite vulnerability constraints and challenges.

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Acronyms

AFP	Anti Privatisation Forum
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
ASGI-SA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa
BAAB	Bantu Affairs Administration Boards
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
BNG	Breaking New Ground
CAWP	Coalition against Water Privatisation
COHRE	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DFID	Department for International Development
DHS	Department of Human Settlements
DoH	Department of Housing
GEAR	Growth Employment and Redistribution
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSS	Housing Subsidy Scheme
IDP	Integrated Development Plans
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRDP	Integrated Residential Development Programme
MERG	Macro-Economic Research Group
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGP	New Growth Path
NP	National Party
PIE	Prevention of Illegal Eviction

PIP	Policies Institutions Processes
RDP	Reconstruction Development Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SDI	Spatial Development Initiative
SLF	Sustainable Livelihood Framework
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
TB	Tuberculosis
UF	Urban Foundation
UN	United Nations
UNRRA	United Nations and Rehabilitation Administration
WCED	World Commission for Environment and Development

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Chapter 1 Introduction and Methodology

1.1 Introduction

The post-apartheid South African state has introduced and implemented a number of policies, legislation and programmes at national level concerning urban housing in order to address and tackle the crisis of social reproduction in and for poor urban black communities. These initiatives however have been problematic for a number of reasons, such as corruption and mismanagement, incapacities of the state bureaucracies and the state's neo-liberal overreliance on the market to remedy past apartheid-era injustices (Hunter 2011). At the same time, households – as existing within houses – are critical sites of social reproduction in poor urban black communities as elsewhere, and these households engage in a range of activities and strategies often in a desperate bid to maintain a semblance of sustainability. In this regard, the thesis seeks to critically understand the relationship between state housing programmes and the diverse livelihood activities of black households in the context of an ongoing systemic crisis of social reproduction which exists in these urban communities. This is pursued with specific reference to eZamokuhle Township in Amersfoort, Mpumalanga Province.

The concept of social reproduction captures a range of state and non-state social processes and practices centred on maintaining and reproducing lives and livelihoods, and these are ultimately associated with social reproduction at household level. Broadly speaking, social reproduction occurs as a result of human agency and interventions at different scalar levels, from central state level to community and household levels (Mullings 2009, Katz 2001, Bakker and Gill 2003), and the specific forms of agency and intervention prevalent are open to significant historical and spatial variation. Certainly, though, households themselves normally play a critical role in their own social reproduction. Thus the “provisioning of caring needs may be wholly privatised within families and kinship networks or socialised to some degree through state supports” (Bakker 2007:541). Until the neo-liberal age, at least in relation to advanced capitalist societies, ‘state supports’ (or state social programmes) over a number of decades were of crucial significance in ensuring the social reproduction of households (including through public housing programmes). Under neo-liberal restructuring globally (involving a process of state ‘de-regulation’), a deepening crisis of social reproduction has emerged and this has two interrelated dimensions, namely: the “wider privatisation” of certain state apparatuses and functions, and the “reprivatisation” of key components of social reproduction including

housing, health and education (Randriamaro 2013:4). These processes are increasingly placing the burden of social reproduction on households “in the form of unpaid caring labour” (Mullings 2009:176, Somerville 2010). The histories of advanced capitalist societies compared to South African society over the past fifty years are very different with respect to neo-liberal restructuring (in large part because South Africa never had an inclusive Keynesian-style state). But, as discussed later, the relationship between neo-liberalisation and crises of social reproduction is very evident in post-apartheid South Africa.

1.2 International and South African Housing Context

Even though international development policy has focused significantly on questions of sustainability over a number of decades (Bergeron 2011), billions of people around the world, notably in less developed nations and emerging economies (including South Africa), encounter a crisis of social reproduction on a daily basis. They have for example limited access to formal employment, insecure forms of housing tenure and shelter, and inadequate access to sanitation and water (Gray 2010, Moore et al. 2003). Combined, these social problems add up to a systemic crisis of social reproduction on a global scale. The depth of the systemic crisis of social reproduction was discussed – at least implicitly – with respect to housing and households at the United Nations (UN) Habitat I Conference held in Vancouver in 1976, the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987 and the Habitat II Conference held in Istanbul in 1996 (Aribigbola 2004). However, limited state intervention in public infrastructure, facilities and services under the current neoliberal orthodoxy advocated by international institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund has had far-reaching detrimental impacts on social reproduction (Mullings 2009, Antrobus 1989, French 1994), and in ways which have exacerbated household poverty. In addition, the challenges for women with respect to domestic labour have been ignored by these institutions in the belief that commodified labour was a solution to empowering women (Bergeron 2011).

Settlement patterns in contemporary South Africa, as inherited by the post-apartheid state, are a direct result of former legislation such as the Natives Land Act of 1913, the Urban Areas Act of 1923, the Group Areas Act of 1950 and the Promotion of Self-Government Act of 1959 (Soussan 1984, Smit 1989, De Beer 2001, Beinart et al. 1986). Apartheid South African cities and towns were distorted spatially and were marked by racial inequality and fragmentation, with vastly separated places of work and residences for urban blacks (du Plessis and Landman 2002). This issue was not simply about the form of the socio-spatial structure of the city, as it also entailed influx control as a means of controlling black urbanisation. The black population

was regularly considered as temporary sojourners in urban white South Africa and the quantity (and quality) of housing delivery for urban blacks took place accordingly. Such oppressive legislation and institutional discrimination under apartheid and the earlier period of segregation, in conjunction with a whole slew of other discriminatory practices, led to a constant and daily struggle for social reproduction by urban blacks. In 1985, the President's Council released a report entitled "An Urbanisation Strategy for the Republic of South Africa", which called for the abolition of influx control and pass laws. It argued though that state regulation should continue, in order to ensure that urbanisation took place in a planned and systematic manner and to enable – from the state's perspective – the optimal reproduction of the black urban population and labour force (Hindson 1985). Nevertheless, as the state began to roll back apartheid regulations, massive urbanisation took place, including into the transitional years in the early 1990s and beyond.

Because of the history of segregation and apartheid, the post-apartheid state in South Africa was immediately faced with a number of challenges with regard to the social reproduction of poor black households. These included delivering the sheer quantity of housing stock needed to reduce the massive housing backlog (notably in black townships) and overcoming the problem of racially-based spatial separation (du Plessis and Landman 2002). Since 1994 the newly-elected democratic government of the African National Congress (ANC) has broadly adopted a neo-liberal macroeconomic programme which has perpetuated social inequalities including along racial lines (Kallis and Nthite 2007, Cross 2008). Initially, though, central to the early Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) mandate was the articulation of housing as a human right, which was formulated in the 1994 Housing White Paper (entitled "A New Housing Policy and Strategy for South Africa") and in the Constitution Act of 1996 (Bond and Khosa 1999). The ANC government subsequently introduced a number of policies, laws and programmes such as the Housing Act (No.107) of 1997 and most recently "Breaking New Ground (BNG): A Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements" (Tissington 2011, Department of Housing (DoH) 2004) in a quest to overcome the crisis of social reproduction. In this regard, levels of household income became the foundation of the state's approach to low cost RDP housing. The income bands were categorised by monthly household income and a potential housing beneficiary needed to submit proof of his or her income (Pottie 2003, Ndinda 2003, Adler and Oelofse 2003). However, a significant number of households which are over the threshold are not able to access public

housing yet they do not have the financial capacity to purchase their own houses independent of state housing.

In addition, under the seemingly progressive RDP housing policies and programmes of the ANC government, urban spaces continued to be racialised; for instance, poor urban black populations continued to live far from employment opportunities and major social facilities (Tissington 2011), and this added further burdens particularly on women in the domain of social reproduction (Hassim 2005). Indeed, despite the massive RDP housing programme initiated (in terms of the quantity of housing stock), thought-provoking questions remained about whether RDP housing represented a clear “alternative vision of how a state should address questions of social reproduction” (Hunter 2009:1113). Such questions became even more relevant with the substitution of RDP – which was a state-interventionist redistributive strategy (Hunter 2009) – by the more mainstream neo-liberal Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) in 1996 (Goodlad 1996). After a further ten years, GEAR was replaced by the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGI-SA) (Chagunda 2006) and, subsequently, the New Growth Path (NGP) (Van Aardt et al. 2011) emerged in 2010 followed by the current National Development Plan (NDP) (RSA 2012a, 2012b). All of these policies, starting from GEAR, are marked by a pronounced neo-liberal macro-economic orientation which requires the state to spend less on social services including housing (Shivambu 2013, Goodlad 1996, Van Der Walt 2010).

The literature on urban housing in South Africa gives considerable attention to themes such as service delivery, institutional failures, housing policy and programmes, and informal settlement upgrading (Goodlad 1996, Pottie 2003, Pottie 2004, Victor 2009). But, as a general trend, this literature fails to focus in any detail on the everyday lives and livelihoods of households as they pursue social reproduction at household and inter-household levels. While the shifting forms and levels of state housing are of importance for social reproduction, the full(er) story requires a sustained examination of localised household-centric forms of social reproduction activities and strategies. Additionally, such an examination relates to a separate body of literature which touches in some way on urban livelihoods within poor urban black communities in contemporary South Africa, though this literature is not always or even often framed with reference to social reproduction (Cross 2006, 2008, 2010, Mosoetsa 2011, Samson 2010, Fakier and Cocks 2009, Rossouw and Naude 2008, Neves and Du Toit 2012, Sekhampu 2012). This literature focuses on a range of diverse themes, such as: poverty alleviation, informal trading activities, intra-household relations (notably gendered relations), and inter-

household relations in terms of social capital. In relating these (and other) themes to social reproduction, the thesis will engage with livelihood analytical approaches which speak about vulnerability conditions, access to various resources or capitals, livelihood coping strategies and livelihood outcomes (Mosser 1998, Lyons and Snoxell 2005, Knutsson 2006).

In this context, the thesis is innovative in seeking to bridge the gap between the housing and household literature: the former literature focuses on state agency and housing programmes while the latter literature examines local household agency and livelihood activities. The common thread used to connect these two sets of literature, as is clear throughout the thesis, is social reproduction, a notion which is discussed in full in the next chapter.

1.3 Thesis Objectives

The key objective of the thesis is to critically understand and explain social reproduction in urban black South Africa with specific reference to housing provision and household livelihoods in eZamokuhle, Amersfoort in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Amersfoort is a very small town in Mpumalanga which was established in 1888 around a Dutch Reformed Church which was constructed in 1876. Lying at 1,664m above sea level in the upper reaches of the Vaal River basin on the banks of the Schulpsspruit, the area was first settled in 1876 when two farmers in the area contributed land for a church, with Reverend Frans Lion Cachet then proceeding to construct a Dutch Reformed Church building. The township of eZamokuhle (meaning “to make it beautiful”) lies adjacent to the town and contributes significantly to its economy. Amersfoort falls within the Dr. Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality, as do Volksrust, Wakkerstroom, Perdekop and Daggakraal. The secondary objectives are as follows:

1. To examine the historical and contemporary provision of housing by the South African state in eZamokuhle including the role of the local Amersfoort Municipality;
2. To understand and analyse the livelihood strategies pursued by the black urban poor in eZamokuhle; and
3. To examine forms of inter-household social relations and interaction in eZamokuhle in the pursuit of livelihood outcomes.

Addressing these three main secondary objectives will lead to addressing the overall thesis objective.

1.4 Research Methodology and Methods

This section focuses on the research methodology and methods which provided the basis for the fieldwork for the thesis, and which were therefore used in order to pursue an understanding and explanation of social reproduction with specific reference to the research site (Rajasekar et al. 2013, Thakur 1993).

The research site of eZamokuhle was chosen because it is a highly under-researched field site and, further, I know the area well because of residing in it in the past. This ‘insider’ familiarity with local residents facilitated my access to eZamokuhle but this did not compromise any capacity on my part (as an ‘outsider’) to identify possibly taken-for-granted or common sense social dimensions prevailing in the township. The study commenced in May 2013 when the thesis topic was discussed with and approved by my PhD supervisor. I then identified, formulated and fine-tuned the main thesis objective, with considerable thought being given to how to frame the topic and objective theoretically (see chapter two) as well as to the necessary broader spatial and historical context for making sense of social reproduction in eZamokuhle (which became embodied in the literature review in chapters three and four). The initial theoretical framing and literature review, along with the thesis objectives, then guided me in the selection of the research methods to be used and the kind of themes to be covered during fieldwork evidence collection. Fieldwork took place in late 2014 and early 2015.

A range of both quantitative and qualitative methods was adopted for the thesis research, known generally as a mixed methods approach (Neuman 2003, Hammersley 1992, Gelo et al. 2008, Long et al. 2000, Sale et al. 2000). A mixed methods approach is particularly suitable for investigating multifaceted and complex social phenomenon because qualitative and quantitative evidence can complement one another and lead to a fuller analysis of the phenomenon (Shenton 2004, Mathison 1988). Quantitative methods are linked, epistemologically, to the quest for sociological explanations (often of a causal kind) and methods such as questionnaire surveys are included within the realm of quantitative research. Though a survey was used in the fieldwork for the thesis (see Appendix 1) in seeking to analyse the crisis of social reproduction amongst poor black households in eZamokuhle, there is no attempt to frame this in terms of a causal explanatory mode of analysis and certainly not in any statistical manner. Additionally, rather than identifying relationships of hard determination as a basis for explaining issues pertinent to social reproduction, the emphasis is on how social reproduction in eZamokuhle is conditioned by the broader context (a kind of soft determination). Further, qualitative methods were central to the thesis fieldwork in order to

understand – in an epistemological sense – the experiences and practices of social reproduction at household level in an in-depth fashion. These qualitative methods included semi-structured interviews (Appendix 2) and focus group discussions (see Appendix 3). In the end, the thesis seeks to explain and understand social reproduction within eZamokuhle, and the two forms of research methods (quantitative and qualitative) along with relevant secondary literature are used where appropriate to address the main and the secondary thesis objectives.

Data was collected using survey questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, primary documents and observation (with the latter two taking place throughout the research phase of the thesis process). Before collecting any research data, I first conducted a pre-test survey of the draft questionnaire with three residents in eZamokuhle. Pre-testing is designed to test the questionnaire on a small sample of respondents with the objective of improving the questionnaire by identifying and eliminating potential problems. After making necessary changes to the questionnaire, I began the survey phase of the fieldwork.

The selection of respondents in eZamokuhle for the survey was based on non-random sampling. Non-random sampling is a method which does not have any sampling frame and it is regularly used for convenience and speed. The probability of selection is not statistically determined (Babbie 1990, Fink 1995, Frey et al. 2000). I adopted this sampling method primarily because the municipality was not able to provide me with an up-to-date and full record of all households in eZamokuhle. In the survey, a combination of two types of non-random sampling were used, namely, convenience sampling and purposive sampling. With convenience sampling, the participants (i.e. households) are chosen because they are easy to access and recruit for research purposes (Fink 1995, Frey et al. 2000). Purposive sampling involved focusing specifically on household heads within the chosen households.

One hundred households, and specifically household heads, were included in the survey, with the actual questionnaire focusing on socio-economic characteristics, housing conditions and livelihood activities of households. I thus divided the survey questionnaire into four sections measuring different variables. Section A was subtitled “Background Information of Households”, Section B was subtitled “Housing Conditions and Household Livelihood Activities”, Section C subtitled “Inter-Household Relations” and Section D was subtitled “Intra-Household Relations”. The questionnaire also assisted in collecting important demographic data such as gender, age, household income and education level. The questionnaires were presented face-to-face in a structured manner, thus ensuring that each

respondent was asked the same questions in the same order (Bryman 2004, Dick 2006, Kitchen and Tate, 2000). This structured questionnaire thus ensured consistency in the collection of evidence across eZamokuhle households. There are a number of advantages in administering the questionnaire by the researcher compared to using a self-administered questionnaire, including: the majority of the participants in this study have a low standard of education; questions can be clarified and more information obtained through probing; and the researcher can exercise control over question order and ensure that all questions are answered. The questionnaires took approximately 35 minutes to complete. The questionnaires, though in English, were administered mainly in isiZulu (the language of eZamokuhle residents) and I am a fluent Zulu-speaker.

Focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews took place after administering the survey. In selecting the participants for the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, I adopted purposive sampling. With purposive sampling, the researcher assesses which people are possibly able to provide the most relevant evidence in achieve the objectives of the study (Babbie 1990, Fink 1995, Frey et al. 2000). In this regard, I carefully selected thirty residents amongst the 100 questionnaire respondents. In-depth, semi-structured interviews are a qualitative research method which involves conducting intensive interviews with a relatively small number of respondents (compared to surveys) to explore their perspectives, experiences and practices (Boyce and Neale 2006). These interviews, involving open-ended questions, were optimal for collecting evidence involving reasonably thick descriptions of lives and livelihoods in eZamokuhle (Mack et al. 2005). The interviews thus provided nuanced descriptions of social reproduction and the construction of household-based livelihoods, as well as perspectives on the role of the state in local housing provision and service delivery more broadly. The interviews were conducted face-to-face (in isiZulu) and guided by an interview schedule. This involved some iterative questioning by which I at times rephrased questions to probe further and obtain confirmation on certain issues (Shenton 2004). The interviews each took no longer than one hour to complete. The interviews were taped and then transcribed verbatim to provide an accurate account of each interview (Minichiello et al. 1996). In addition, an interview was conducted with a Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality official responsible for infrastructural development in Amersfoort.

Focus groups then took place subsequent to the interviews. According to Marczak and Sewell (2009), a focus group is a collective of interacting individuals having common interests or characteristics, brought together by a moderator (or facilitator or interviewer), who engages

with the group and its interaction as a way to obtain evidence on a specific social phenomenon, in this case social reproduction in eZamokuhle. The interactions during such discussions stimulate thinking and speaking about the topic at hand, though it is important for the moderator-researcher to ensure that certain individuals do not dominate the conversation. Focus groups are also an effective method of gaining a deeper understanding of a situation relatively quickly (Neuman 2003: 370). Five focus groups were held, with numbers participating varying between 10 and 15. Of particular importance in the discussions were the themes of inter-household and community-level relationships. Purposeful sampling was used in selecting the focus group individuals (Tongco 2007, Bernard 2002, Groves 2009), with all the participants being respondents in the survey. Focus group discussions were conducted in isiZulu. Answers were recorded on audiotape and notes taken to ensure accuracy (Puchta and Potter 2004: 97). Each focus group ran for about 45 minutes.

Besides these three research methods, I also collected primary documents such as South African government policies and legislation as well as municipal documentation including Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). Additionally, I used observation. This included observations of the structural quality of housing, housing design, settlement design, and of residents interacting with one another in social places like clinics, schools, taverns, football matches, churches, streets and public transport. These observations also facilitated opportunities for informal conversations with various eZamokuhle residents, including about local social networks and livelihood strategies. With time, I interacted with certain *wunga* boys (boys addicted to drugs) who would sit at street corners and talk about their fears, interests and ambitions. At church gatherings, residents spoke to me about the significance of religious practices to their lives, how they seek to generate household income, and the daily challenges they face. This type of observation-based interactions and conversations allowed the researcher to gather rich stories of everyday existence in eZamokuhle. Overall, the stories told revealed the failures, pain, suffering, happiness, success, adversity and resilience of urban black poor people in the face of various threats to their livelihoods.

For all research, it is crucial that questions around validity and reliability are taken into consideration. Reliability often refers to the degree to which measurements are replicated when different researchers make the measurements (at different times and under different conditions) of the same social phenomenon. In brief, reliability is consistency of measurement across research projects in coming to the same research-based conclusions of the phenomenon under investigation (Nunnally 1978). Validity refers to how well a test (and research method more

broadly) measures what it is intended to measure (Bollen 1989). In order for any research, including research for this thesis, to be of significance and of use in terms of its empirically-based conclusions, it must be both valid and reliable.

There are different types of reliability; however, in this study I used specifically parallel-forms reliability and inter-rater reliability (Phelan and Wren 2006, Litzinger et al. 2005, Felder and Spurlin 2005). Parallel-forms reliability is a measure of reliability acquired by using different types of research tools which investigate the same broad social phenomena pertinent to the same group of people. In order to ensure that the results of this study are reliable in this sense, I used both quantitative and qualitative research methods as part of my mixed-methods approach. For instance, in using both a survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews across the same group of households, I was able to corroborate evidence from multiple sources. This also allowed me to check for any inconsistencies between two data sets and the reasons for such inconsistencies. Inter-rater reliability refers to the consistency with which two or more measurements are adopted to evaluate very particular data using the same rating criteria. This is crucial to avoid any discrepancies or disagreements across measurements of the same social phenomena under study, in order to enhance reliability of overall measurements. In this study, when I was investigating for instance the structural quality of housing, I used various measurements such as notes based on unstructured observation and photographic evidence, as well as oral evidence from interviews and focus group discussions. In this case, as with many others, all the ratings were positively correlated.

As stated above, reliability is essential in research; however, reliability alone is not enough as validity is also crucial. There are also different types of validity and I focus here on content validity. Content validity is usually estimated by gathering a group of subject-matter experts together to review the test items. If a test is to be understood as a measure of a specific construct, then the content of the test should reflect the vital aspects of the construct (Phelan and Wren 2006, Litzinger et al. 2005, Felder and Spurlin 2005). In the Department of Sociology at Rhodes University, before my thesis proposal was approved by the Higher Degrees Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, I had to present my proposal to the department before experts in the field of development, sustainable human settlement and related fields of inquiry pertinent to the thesis topic. The proposal contained intended sample sizes and data collection tools based on my thesis objectives. After the presentation, the panel of experts suggested how my research techniques would be better able to measure what the thesis intended to measure, and I made relevant changes on this basis. Any items that the experts identified as being inadequately

matched to the research objectives, or flawed in any other way, were either reviewed or dropped from the assessment. The purpose of this was also to ensure that the thesis study did not suffer from construct under-representation, meaning that its actual content (or the breadth and depth of evidence in fact collected) would not fail to represent the wide range of the content implied by the construct that it proposed to investigate and measure. By ensuring that full representation existed, I could be assured that the fieldwork for the research would be able to address the main and subsidiary thesis objectives.

In terms of data analysis, and consistent with approved methods of handling qualitative data (Ashton-Shaeffer 2001, Rubin and Rubin 1995), transcripts from the interviews and focus groups were analysed and coded with key themes identified. The form of data analysis used in this regard was thematic data analysis. According to Boyatzis (1998), this kind of analysis in its simplest form is a categorising strategy for qualitative data whereby researchers review their data, make notes and begin to sort it into categories. As a kind of data analytic strategy, it assists researchers move their analysis from a broad reading of the data towards discovering patterns and developing themes (Boyatzis 1998).

In the case of the quantitative data (namely, the survey questionnaire which consisted of a mixture of open ended and closed questions), I used another form of data analysis. Data was extracted through analysis of participant responses to the questionnaires. Data gathered from the surveys therefore were coded and manually captured in an Excel spreadsheet. In the case of closed-ended questions, coding involved assigning a numerical value to each response (for example, male = 1, female = 2) since the range of available response options were already known. From this information, I was able to create bar charts, tables and calculate percentages in order to statistically present and examine my data. Coding open-ended questions (of which there were only two) involved first identifying broad categories of responses and then allocating answers provisionally to these categories; subsequently, the categories were refined and data recorded on an Excel spreadsheet. The themes which emerged in analysing both the quantitative and qualitative evidence formed the basis of the presentation for the three empirical chapters (chapters 5, 6 and 7).

In pursuing the fieldwork, I followed the Rhodes University Ethical Standards Committee Handbook (2014) including confidentiality and doing no harm. But a number of challenges arose during the research. For instance, some residents refused to participate because they believed they were not going to benefit at all from the study. This was despite the fact that the

study, I claimed, might have a positive impact in terms of contributing to revised housing and human settlement policies and programmes for their benefit. As well, some residents (especially older people) were very hesitant about sharing their views on the municipal officials (and the councillor) responsible for housing delivery. Some were saying, “you want to destroy our relationship with the councillor”. Others were reluctant because at some point they were requested by municipal officials to provide them with their grievances so that they could be solved but nothing came out of this. The failure of the local municipality to keep their promises resulted in reluctance on the part of some eZamokuhle residents to accept the presence of me as a researcher, because they thought I was one of the municipal officers. It also proved difficult to have interviews with the municipal councillor and officials, such that I only managed to interview the official responsible for infrastructural development. In this respect, I was told repeatedly that they were simply too busy to be interviewed, on the grounds that it was a hectic time of the year for them. This happened despite repeated requests for interviews. Quite possibly, their reluctance stemmed from the fear that I might be from a prosecuting authority which was investigating them or that I might use any evidence provided to expose any wrongdoings within the municipality.

Finally, it is important to speak to the question of generalisation. Given that sampling was not based on any kind of random sampling, I do not claim that the research subjects are in any statistically representative of poor black urban households in eZamokuhle. Further, I do not claim that the social reproduction activities and challenges of poor black urban households in eZamokuhle are necessarily representative (again, statistically) of poor black urban households in contemporary South Africa. However, as chapter 4 on post-apartheid South Africa highlights, there are common themes running through the lives and livelihoods of poor urban blacks throughout the country. On this basis, it is likely that my research findings about social reproduction in eZamokuhle speak to the conditions of social reproduction elsewhere in present-day urban South Africa.

1.5 Thesis Outline

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical framing for the thesis by discussing housing and social reproduction in relation to both the state broadly (including housing policies and programmes) and households (with respect to livelihood activities). Chapters 3 and 4 focus specifically on South Africa with regard to housing, livelihoods and social reproduction, and do so in the context of a discussion of the political economy of the country. Chapter 3 examines this with reference to pre-1994 South Africa and chapter 4 with respect to post-apartheid South Africa.

Together, these three chapters provide the contextual framing for the case study of housing and social reproduction in contemporary eZamokuhle. They also specifically address the first secondary objective ('To examine the historical and contemporary provision of housing by the South African state').

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 discuss the findings in the research site (eZamokuhle), bringing to the fore the relationship between state housing programmes, household-based livelihoods and the ongoing systemic crisis of social reproduction existing in eZamokuhle. Chapter 5 focuses on the built environment and housing programmes in eZamokuhle, including the spatial qualities of the settlement, housing stock, quality of housing, and water and sanitation. In doing so, it addresses the second secondary objective ('To understand and analyse state housing and the built environment in eZamokuhle in the context of social reproduction'). Chapter 6 discusses social reproduction activities in the research site, such as employment, social grants, informal economic activities and urban agriculture. It thus examines the third secondary objective ('To examine household livelihood activities in eZamokuhle in contributing to social reproduction and the prevailing livelihood challenges'). Chapter 7 has a more specific examination of social capital particularly across households in eZamokuhle, and the challenges residents face in relation to building and maintaining social networks. In this context, the fourth secondary objective is pursued ('To examine forms of inter-household social relations and interaction in the pursuit of livelihoods and social reproduction').

Finally, the concluding chapter (chapter 8) brings the entire thesis together, in particular by drawing the links between the theoretical framing of the thesis and the empirical evidence from eZamokuhle.

Chapter 2 Theorising Social Reproduction: State Housing Provision and Household Livelihood Construction

2.1 Introduction

The analytical framework within which this specific study is located is housing and social reproduction within the context of urban settlements. This chapter provides a conceptual understanding of housing and social reproduction with particular emphasis on urban housing. The aim of the chapter is thus to conceptualise social reproduction as broadly understood, and to discuss it with reference not only to the provision of public housing but also urban-based livelihoods.

Even though housing is an essential component of any human settlement which satisfies basic needs, and it has a huge impact on quality of life and human development, huge numbers of people in urban spaces around the world (and particularly within so-called developing countries) have no access to decent housing and in fact they normally live in abject poverty. The view that everyone has a right to housing is deeply entrenched in international discourse. For decades, global initiatives such as the UN Habitat I Conference held in Vancouver in 1976, the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987 and the Habitat II Conference held in Istanbul in 1996 (Aribigbola 2004), all of which seek to facilitate access to housing for marginalised populations, have acknowledged equal access to decent housing as a basic human right guaranteed to all citizens. As well, over the years, the international discussion of access to housing has gone beyond its initial focus of simply access to housing (as understood as physical infrastructure) to speak of sustainable human settlements which encompass the totality of human lives in urban settings.

In this regard, social reproduction (for this thesis) is not merely about access to decent housing (as the material site within which households are located) but is about being able to live a dignified human and social life in humane human settlements. Clearly, the state plays a crucial role in social reproduction in relation to the construction of human settlements, including public housing. But social reproduction in urban settlements is not reducible to the interventions and actions of the state, as urban households (including very poor households) contribute to their own social reproduction through a diverse range of activities and strategies, and often because of shortfalls and deficiencies in the role of the state (Chant 1994, 1996, Latapi and Rocha 1995, Kanji 1995, Moser 1996). In this respect, for instance, social networks and social assets are

important resources used by poor urban people in their quest to reproduce and sustain themselves (Rocha 1994, Moser 1996, 1998). For this reason, the thesis draws upon analytically the livelihoods framework as well, but locates it within the notion of social reproduction.

2.2 Capitalism and Social Reproduction

Social reproduction is a contested concept used in a variety of ways. But, in general, the concept captures a diverse range of social processes and practices centred on maintaining and reproducing lives and livelihoods, and these are ultimately associated with the social reproduction of households. Generally, social reproduction involves the “activities of both males and females, and the ways that the market, the state, the community, the household, and the individual are involved in meeting the direct needs of people” (Cohen 2013: 1). Social reproduction occurs as a result of human agency and interventions at different scalar levels and by different social organisations, groups and groupings, from central state level to community and household levels (Mullings 2009, Katz 2001, Bakker and Gill 2003). Households themselves in some way and to some extent play a critical role in their own social reproduction (and this often raises questions about intra-household arrangements and dynamics, and specifically gender-based relationships). But the specific forms of intervention prevalent are open to significant historical and spatial variation. Hence, there is considerable variation in the exact form and mix of state-, community- and household-based agency when it comes to contributions to social reproduction, such that for example the “provisioning of caring needs may be wholly privatised within families and kinship networks or socialised to some degree through state supports” (Bakker 2007: 541). In this way, the prevailing forms of social reproduction need to be understood in relation to broader processes of capitalist development. For instance, in the decades before the neo-liberal age, at least in relation to advanced capitalist societies, ‘state supports’ (or state social programmes) were of critical significance to the social reproduction of households (including public housing programmes). Under neo-liberalism, households have acquired greater importance in ensuring their own social reproduction (Bergeron 2013:152, Randriamaro 2013:5), thereby placing further burdens on households and in particular poor households.

In this respect, as the next chapter (chapter three) shows, the history of South Africa has not followed the same path as advanced capitalist societies in the sense that, before the end of apartheid, there was never an inclusive and all-embracing state programme directed at the social reproduction of the entire population, as the social reproduction of the black population

in fact was not prioritised by the state. The post-apartheid state since 1994 now prioritises this population, despite significant problems in doing so as discussed in chapter four. One of these problems is a pronounced neo-liberal trajectory in South Africa's macro-economic programmes even though the post-apartheid government often positions itself as a developmental state.

2.2.1 The State, NeoLiberalism and Social Reproduction

Under neo-liberalism, the state is not expected to intrusively intervene in the economy but is supposed to rather establish and facilitate the broad conditions necessary for the market to stimulate economic growth. In this context, social reproduction is often viewed by states as not integral to economic growth and performance, so that it becomes confined or even demoted to questions of social policies. Even social policies supportive of poorer citizens are sometimes articulated as unproductive investments as they are not interventions focused specifically and directly on growing the national economy. Social expenditure is thus considered as undermining economic growth because it “reduces savings and therefore, investment” (Mkandawire 2001: 2-3), with the latter focusing on further stimulating the economy. In any case, it is argued – based on the trickle-down theory – that enhancing economic growth will ultimately lead to broad-based economic development (and redistribution) with benefits to all citizens, including poverty reduction (Ortis 2007:7, Hall and Midgley 2004:45). This neglects the direct importance of social assistance for enhancing social reproduction at household level and in stimulating economic growth – for instance, welfare benefits for the poor (which have been under attack from neo-liberal restructuring) increase the demand for locally-made commodities. The overall result of any neo-liberal programmes, whether in advanced capitalist societies or developing nations, is a deepening crisis of social reproduction for the poor.

The case of many countries demonstrates this, such as Botswana. Botswana has often been touted, as least in comparison to other southern African countries, as a prime example of a country focusing on economic growth which led to significant redistribution. Between 1989 and 1990, Botswana's per capita gross domestic product was US\$2,300 (Good 1992). It is noted that “rapid economic growth and general development in Botswana have been propelled by the mining sector, particularly the diamonds industry, and have been strategically led and managed by the state and decreasingly complemented by foreign aid within the overall institutional context of a liberal market economy” (Maipose and Somolekae 1996: 2). But this ‘general development’ or broad-based development has been limited despite the per capita

gross domestic product, as high levels of inequality, unemployment and poverty also existed (Maipose and Somolekae 1996, Good 1992). In other words, social reproduction for poorer households remained problematic, in part because of an absence of pronounced social policies. In this respect, as Mkandawire (2001) highlights, social policies involving the state's role in social reproduction are crucial "to ensure equitable and socially sustainable development" (Mkandawire 2001: 1).

The ongoing prevalence of neo-liberalism globally, even neo-liberalism with a so-called human face, sits uncomfortably it seems with the focus (over a number of decades) of international development policies and programmes on social reproduction and sustainability (Bergeron 2011: 152). As a result, as discussed further later, this focus has not undone the fact that billions of people around the world, notably in less developed nations and emerging economies (including South Africa), encounter a crisis of social reproduction on a daily basis. They have for example limited access to formal employment, insecure forms of housing tenure and shelter, and inadequate access to sanitation and water (Gray 2010, Moore et al. 2003).

The depth of the systemic crisis of social reproduction on an international scale was discussed at least implicitly with respect to housing and households at the UN Habitat I Conference in Vancouver in 1976. At the Vancouver Conference, it was recommended that the UN Commission on Human Settlements and the Centre for Human Settlements in Nairobi be established. Also at this conference, the concept of 'human settlement' was coined in a way which sought to incorporate various elements which were previously considered not linked to one another. In this regard, human settlement was defined as the "totality of the human community whether city, town or village with all the social, material, organisational, spiritual and cultural elements that sustain it" (UN-Habitat I 1976: 8). The fabric of human settlements thus consists of physical elements, social services and infrastructure. The physical components incorporate shelter which are man-made and vary in size, composition and types. These structures are built for privacy and security as well as for protection against adverse weather within a community. Social services are required by the community as a social whole, such as education, health, welfare and recreation. Lastly, infrastructure is the combination of systems, structures and facilities such as roads and buildings aimed at improving lives in communities (Sarkar 2010: 2). In the Vancouver declaration, it was stated that "adequate shelter and services are a basic human right", that usages of land should be subject to strident public control, and that "governments should assist local authorities to participate to a greater extent in national development" (UN-Habitat I 1976: 28). The Vancouver Declaration ends with a call on the

international community to support specific national endeavours around dignified human settlements (Biau 2011: 2).

Twenty years later, in April 1996, delegates from countries and organisations from around the world met in Istanbul, Turkey, to draft a global action plan to achieve sustainable human settlements. The conference (UN Habitat II) is popularly known as the City Summit. It highlighted the ongoing deterioration of shelter conditions (or housing) globally and the relationship between this and massive poverty. When it came to constructing human settlements, it also insisted on the principles of wide-based participation and partnership and encouraged decentralisation through democratic local authorities; but it noted the ongoing need to mobilise resources outside of the state realm for housing and municipality finances. The documents from the Istanbul declaration can be summarised into two core arguments. First of all, there is a need to promote the right to housing by providing universal access to adequate and affordable housing for all and guaranteeing legal security of tenure (Ismail 2005: 45). Secondly, it is necessary to increase housing provision by allowing markets to operate efficiently and in an environmentally and socially acceptable manner, while also assisting those groups which cannot otherwise partake in housing markets (UN-Habitat II 1996, Aribigbola 2004).

A more neo-liberal tone is evident in the 1996 conference declarations compared to the declarations emanating from the 1976 conference. Hence, the overall objective to be pursued (housing for all) and the means proposed for its implementation are inconsistent in that markets are viewed seemingly as the main housing delivery mechanism. Governments are tasked to play a major role in strengthening regulatory and legal frameworks to enable markets to work and overcome market failure. As well, they are to promote socially responsible corporate investment and reinvestment in – and in partnership with – local communities and to encourage a wide range of other partnerships to finance shelter and human settlements development (UN-Habitat II 1996: 19). There is thus an inherent tension in this trajectory, which plays itself out – as we will see in chapter four – in the case of post-apartheid South Africa.

In the light of these two key conferences, the international community is now said to have a duty to respect and promote housing rights, although quite often these are not “clearly defined” (Leckie 1992: 32). Besides nation-states, the international community includes multinational corporations and international finance organisations (such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank) which have promoted neoliberalism, along with the United Nations and

specifically UN-Habitat. In order for the right to housing (and the broader right to a decent human settlement) to be realised, each state is required to create effective housing policies and programmes. Although governments are not expected to provide houses for each and every citizen, their duty is at least to make sure that all citizens enjoy the right to housing by creating an enabling environment, such that any housing or other policy “does not hinder access to housing rights” (Ismail 2005: 28). In this context, state involvement in social reproduction for human settlements may be direct through controls over such matters as housing standards and building bylaws as well as through state provision of housing, but it may only be indirect through regulations of the terms under which different housing tenure regimes operate (Clarke and Ginsburg n.d: 6). But, in the end, decent human settlements for all are supposed to emerge.

However, the limited state intervention in public infrastructure, facilities and services under the current neoliberal orthodoxy advocated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) has had far-reaching detrimental impacts on social reproduction (Mullings 2009, Antrobus 1989, French 1994), and in ways which have exacerbated household-based inequalities and poverty. In addition, the challenges for women with respect to ongoing domestic labour responsibilities at household level have been ignored by these institutions in the belief that commodified labour (through increased female labour market participation) would be a solution to empowering women (Bergeron 2011: 152). Overall, there has been a marketisation of citizenship under neoliberalism which has caused problems for enhancing conditions of social reproduction, including even undercutting survival strategies amongst the urban poor (Randriamaro 2013: 3).

For these reasons, the international development policy focusing on human settlements and social reproduction, though articulated as embodying developmentalism, has been subject to serious criticism because it is seen to be underpinned by notions of economic and social equity reflecting and driven by northern capitalist value systems centring on neoliberalism. Therefore, scepticism arises about the idea that advanced capitalist nations can provide lasting solutions to problems existing in underdeveloped nations, problems which were produced by the colonial and empire-building activities of these nations in the past. At the Global Urban 21 Conference in Berlin in July 2000, President of Habitat International Coalition (Kirtee Shah) argued that it is highly questionable whether sustainable human settlements would be successful under the development model advocated by the United Nations Development Programme, World Bank and IMF. He believed that “promoting a development model derived from Western values and based on consumerist growth increases inequity, causes cultural alienation, loss of cultural

wisdom and environmental degradation” (du Plessis and Landman 2002: 12). This entailed a criticism of neo-liberal restructuring. Of course, nations in the developing world have embraced this restructuring to varying degrees (including South Africa), if only under pressure to do so, and thus the above criticism resonates with what is actually happening on the ground in terms of national macro-economic packages globally.

The main contradictions contained in housing delivery under neoliberalism seem to emanate from the broader existence of housing as a commodity under capitalism (as a profit-driven system). In this sense, in advanced capitalism after the end of the Keynesian system, neoliberal restructuring has led to re-commodification of public goods and indeed heightened or new forms of commodification (Isaacs 1997, Dechavez 2011, Marcuse 1998). Capitalism as a political and economic system, whether under neoliberalism or not, provides a dubious basis for ensuring human settlement sustainability. Though appropriate for sustaining forms of economic domination and inequalities (as these are built into capitalism’s logic), capitalism and particularly its current neo-liberal form undermines equitable social relations and dignified social reproduction for the underclasses of capitalism. Though a state’s direct intervention and involvement in public housing programmes is commendable and of benefit to these classes (and to the poor in general), the economic inequalities pervasive under capitalism inhibit the state’s capacity to contribute significantly and meaningfully to the dignified social reproduction of marginalised households and indeed even entire communities. This raises questions about the relationship between markets and states under capitalism. Discussing this further will allow for a conceptual positioning of the post-apartheid state and human settlements, with chapter four discussing post-apartheid society in some depth.

2.2.2 State, Market and Citizens

The market under capitalism is seemingly unable to address the social reproduction needs of the poor (including housing), and it is certainly not suitable for resolving any systemic crisis of social reproduction – in fact, it contributes to such a crisis. For this reason, the state introduces and implements social welfare (or assistance) policies and programmes to varying degrees and in different forms to counteract the failings of the market mechanism. Normally, welfarist initiatives are targeted particularly at households which have no guaranteed access to basic services through the market (Venter and Marais 2010: 4).

A three-fold typology of welfare capitalism was put forward by Esping-Anderson (1990). Though housing was not a main component of his typology, subsequently housing has been

incorporated into his three-fold categorisation. The Esping-Andersen typology concentrates in the main on the relationship between the market and the state in the delivery of basic social services. He made a conceptual distinction between social democratic, corporatist and liberal welfare states, though he added that these are effectively ideal-types such that in practice any actually-existing welfare regime may have a combination of two or all three. A fourth type of welfare state was later proposed by Leibfried (1992), that is, a rudimentary welfare-state regime (Venter and Marais 2010: 4-5, Kemeny 2001: 65). For my purposes, the three most important types are social democratic, liberal and rudimentary.

In a social democratic welfare regime, the state is at the centre of providing fundamental social services (such as housing) and the market mechanism plays a less significant role. In this way, social assistance is subject to decommodification or is disconnected from access to the market and specifically the labour market. Housing in such a situation becomes a universal entitlement for all citizens. In the liberal welfare regime, the market is prioritised when it comes to the delivery of social services. In this context, the state is “involved in a residual system of targeted welfare systems” (Venter and Marais 2010: 5). Housing under this regime is a commodity and only those with sufficient capital can afford to own houses through the housing market. Poor populations are disadvantaged and marginalised in owning houses. In the rudimentary arrangement, which in effect takes place at sub-national levels, households themselves and inter-household relationships (including kinship relationships) are critical to the provision of social services, in a kind of self-provisioning outside of both the state and market.

The Bismarckian and Beveridgean welfare systems speak to this typology, particularly the liberal and social democratic regimes respectively (Esping-Anderson 1990). Despite the fact that the welfare outcome of both systems is grounded on a transfer of wealth, there is a significant difference between the two. Bismarckian policies are restrictive and they focus mainly on households which can access welfare services through some form of engagement in the labour market. In this sense, access becomes linked to and dependent upon employment, such as in the liberal welfare regime. Beveridgean policies, like the social democratic regime, are grounded on the universal access to welfare services for all citizens (Bonoli 1997: 357).

For Esping-Anderson (1990), welfare policies were increasingly being founded on Bismarckian social policies in the 1980s, with any welfare security and social protection contingent on employment. This clearly relates to neo-liberal restructuring at the time and the move from a Keynesian ‘wel-fare’ regime to a mainstream liberal ‘work-fare’ regime

(Abrahamson 2005: 18). Hence welfare benefits become distributed based on employment, income, merit and market performance. This Bismarckian system tends to exacerbate economic and social problems (Abrahamson 2005: 18) for the poor and inhibits their social reproduction particularly at times of high unemployment. The Beveridgean system is more consistent with Keynesianism (Matznetter 2001: 1) and is marked by a more interventionist state. It entails the universalisation of access to basic welfare services for all citizens regardless of financial status, with access delinked from labour market status. Unlike Bismarckian systems, the Beveridgean welfare system is thus not grounded on affordability but is based on universalism. Because of this, citizens are understood not in purely economic (labour market) terms but as worthy of social assistance because of their sheer humanity or at least citizenship. By default, it is claimed, welfare states in practice combine elements of both Bismarckian and Beveridgean systems (Bonoli 1997: 362), or liberal and social democratic welfare regimes respectively. No doubt however, over the past few decades, the Bismarckian/liberal state regime has become increasingly to the fore.

The post-apartheid state is undoubtedly marked by a combination of both systems with a pronounced neo-liberal macro-economic trajectory yet a significant social welfare programme based on an ethos of redistribution. In its own way, and not unlike other states around the world, it has “one set of policies for middle-class and affluent households, and another set of policies for low-income households” (Abrahamson 2005: 18), with the latter often living in urban black townships. However, in these townships, there is also a rudimentary system involving the self-provision of basic services (such as through informal settlements).

The differing categories of welfare systems, notably the liberal and social democratic ones, tend to be based on differing notions of citizenship. The former tends to have a market-based understanding of citizenship (or the economic citizen) whereas the latter is more inclined to recognise some notion of social citizenship. Access to decent housing as a right is fundamental to social citizenship particularly given the importance of housing as a site of social reproduction; with the state through its social democratic interventions seeking to bolster or facilitate the possibility of social reproduction at household and community levels (Marshall 1950, Cohen 2010, Torres 1998). This is of particular importance to women who are often integrated into the labour market on a subordinate basis (in the low-income segment of the market) or are totally excluded from it. In this regard, “often they [women] do not have either a de facto or de jure right to housing that is accessible, affordable and can accommodate multiple usage” (Beall and Kanji 1999: 15).

The importance of housing as a right for all citizens (and as a human right) was clearly articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 which stated that “everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family including, food, clothing, housing and medical care and social services” (UN Habitat 1948: 3). This of course is consistent with the UN-Habitat declarations discussed earlier, with housing being seen as crucial to quality of life and sustainable development (Abu Baker et al. 2010: 66), and located conceptually within the notion of human settlements (UN Centre for Housing, Building and Planning 1974: 103, Sarkar 2010: 1, Sageatta 2011: 80).

Though citizenship is a concept that is universally used, its definition is highly contested. The crux of the contemporary views on citizenship can be located in the work of T H Marshall. Marshall divided citizenship into three categories, namely, civil, political and social. Civil or legal rights, such as freedom of speech, thought and religion, as well as rights to justice, are important for individual liberty. Once these rights are realised, citizens are able to pursue political rights, that is, the right to become involved in the political arena (Marshall 1950: 32) including the right to vote and participate in any political party. Such democratic rights paved the way for citizens to contribute to government policy and this resulted in the granting of social rights. These social rights were institutionalised in the welfare state and involved:

The whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and live as a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society. The institutions closely connected with it are the educational system and social services (Marshall 1950: 32).

Marshall was writing at the time of the emergence and consolidation of the Keynesian state based on social democratic principles. He spoke about the “image of an ideal citizenship” in which social rights are institutionalised while recognising that the reality may diverge from this aspiration (Marshall 1950: 29). According to Marshall, social citizenship was an attempt to address the tensions existing between political democracy and capitalism as an economic system. It was a way to allow for the existence of some form of substantive equality of all citizens with the ongoing continuity of social class divisions (Turner 1993: 6), such that social citizenship – while important – did not undermine socio-economic inequalities. In prioritising the importance of social citizenry over market-based citizenry, the significance of social reproduction through state intervention is also brought to the fore.

2.3 Household Livelihood Activities and Social Reproduction

So far, I have indicated that the state, depending on the form of welfare regime in place, makes a particular contribution to social reproduction at household level. In the case of South Africa, the post-apartheid state has made a significant contribution despite its neo-liberal macro-economic programme. But households are not simply recipients of the social reproduction programmes of the state, as they also of course are directly involved in socially reproducing themselves. In this sense, even the poorest of households are not mere victims of a crisis of social reproduction but are active agents in seeking to sustain themselves through various activities. More specifically, they engage in livelihood strategies in seeking to attain livelihood outcomes which somehow address their conditions of poverty. In this context, I make use of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework to understand and analyse the agency of poor households, without implying though that their livelihood outcomes are marked by sustainability. As well, household-based agency takes place within the existence of prevailing structures, which often inhibit agency but may also facilitate it. There is no universal definition of ‘household’ but I use the common definition of a group or unit of people who reside together, ‘eat from the same pot’ and collaborate in generating resources for the benefit of the unit as a whole. Households often imply family and relatives exclusively but at times they may incorporate unrelated co-residents (Beall and Kanji 1999: 1).

In 1987 the Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development coined the notion of sustainable livelihoods and it was described “as an integrating concept dealing with the issues of population, resource, environment, and development, while corresponding with the need and priorities of the poor” (Chambers 1987: 10). Four years later, a conference by the United Nations on Environment and Development recommended the importance of using a livelihoods framework in a mainly programmatic manner, in arguing that poverty alleviation could be accomplished through promoting sustainable livelihoods (Krantz 2001: 5). Any real possibility of ensuring more sustainable livelihoods for the poor would, it seem, involve going against the grain of neoliberalisation (Chirau 2012:22) and pursuing a more developmentalist approach based on social democratic and social citizenship principles. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) though is not used for merely programmatic purposes but is first and foremost an analytical framework or investigative instrument for understanding and explaining household-based livelihoods (Carswell and Jones 2004: 185). It tends not to speak to the notion of social reproduction at least explicitly, but livelihood activities can be conceptualised as ways and means of ensuring social reproduction at household level. The framework is grounded in

the idea that assets (sometimes called resources or capitals) are vital to the pursuance of livelihood strategies. Assets are utilised by households to build livelihoods and offer them the capability to be and act (Bebbington 1999: 2029). Housing, whether provided by the state or arising through self-provision, is a key asset. Overall, the SLF identifies a range of resources including social, physical, political, human and natural capital. But the pursuance of livelihood activities based on existing or acquired assets is, in the case of poor households, done in a context marked by vulnerability (Moser 1998). This vulnerability context, marked by uncertainty in terms of sustainability, is systemic (or embedded in the lives of poor households); however, it also involves specific threats from the external environment in the form of seasonal cycles or sudden shocks such as the death of a breadwinner (Oblack 2008). The impact of vulnerability on household livelihoods depends upon the level and form of external pressures bearing down upon a household as well as household capacity to cope with vulnerability through devising mechanisms to do so. Households may be able to demonstrate resilience in the face of vulnerabilities or even recover from the effects of specific shocks and stresses (Farrington et al. 2002: 9).

In outlining the livelihoods framework, I first discuss the different assets or capitals which regularly appear in the livelihoods literature: financial capital, natural capital, physical capital and human capital and, very importantly, social capital.

2.3.1 Capitals

Financial capital is mainly made of income from the sale of labour, or from income generated from self-employment including within the informal sector. Kollmair and Juli (2002) note that financial capital can be derived from two main sources: firstly, from accessible stocks including bank deposits, cash or liquid assets such as furniture for which there are no liabilities; and, secondly, from fixed inflows of money including social grants from the state, remittances and (as indicated) labour and self-employment income.

This is invariably a key asset for urban low-income groups and thus they have a strong tendency of prioritising it (Twigg and Bhat 1998). The relative absence of financial capital, or its erratic and irregular character, becomes a major challenge for any household seeking to edge its way out of poverty. Any income is also very important for the daily lives of urban households because of the commodified character of urban areas. More specifically, urban households exist within commodity markets in which all basic household goods require income purchases in and through the market. Though commodity markets of course have penetrated rural areas,

rural households are less dependent on these markets as they engage in forms of agriculture and natural resource harvesting such as wood for fuel (Farrington et al. 2002: 19). Such activities are more heavily circumscribed within urban spaces.

At the same time, because of the concentration of manufacturing, financial and retail industries in cities and towns, urban households have more significant employment opportunities. Members of poor urban households though often find themselves working within the secondary segment of the labour market marked by low wages and often irregular forms of employment such as temporary and part-time work. But, given the high rates of unemployment currently existing globally, significant numbers of poor urban households are not integrated or absorbed into the labour market. Because of this, by and large employment in urban areas is in the informal sector (Benjamin and Amis 1999: 41), with informal trading being particularly prominent.

Human capital consists of education, knowledge, skills, expertise, health and the ability to work (Carney 1998). There is a strong association between human capital and financial capital. For example, access to employment opportunities (as a financial capital element) is in large part dependent upon suitable human capital (Rakodi 2000). Human capital itself is heavily linked to decent health and health care, proper nutrition, hygienic living conditions (including sanitation), and availability of educational facilities and levels of education attained; such that health and education are part and parcel of human capital. For poor urban households, both educational and health services are marked by significant deficiencies, though often better than in rural areas (Chirau 2012: 17).

Nevertheless, it is not unusual for these households to make significant investments – financial and otherwise – in maximising the education and health of household members (Crook 1996: 150). Investments in the education of children in households are often seen as a future gateway out of poverty, while poor health (particularly of an adult household member engaged in full-time formal employment) may undermine financial capital sources. At the same time, employment itself may lead to health problems, which is regularly the case for male adults working in unsafe conditions in for example underground mining. Although education is generally accessible in urban areas, the issue of affordability is a serious challenge for poor households even when schooling is heavily subsidised by the state, as there may be fees charged and associated costs such as school uniforms and stationery. As well, pupils from poor households may go to school daily without proper nutrition, which is known to affect pupil

performance at school. These problems around health and education tend to mean that poverty becomes a cross-generational condition of existence for many urban households.

Natural capital concerns the natural resource base on which households draw to sustain themselves. It involves water, forests, erosion prevention, air quality, land, degree of biodiversity, forests and land (Kollmair and Juli 2002: 7). Natural capital is normally divided into two categories, namely renewable and non-renewable resources. The appropriate use of any accessible natural resources (renewable and nonrenewable) contributes to the possibility of viable social reproduction. Renewable resources replace themselves over a certain period of time, such as trees used for firewood and fishery stock; while “nonrenewable resources exist in limited supply and cannot be replaced once they have been extracted and used, including oils and metals” (Ellis 2000: 32).

Although financial capital, as noted, is absolutely vital to urban livelihoods, the urban poor may use a variety of natural resources to contribute to their livelihoods directly (Oblack 2008: 11). In urban settings, agriculture is becoming increasingly evident as a basis for ensuring some level of food security independently of commodity markets. Of significance is the linkage between vulnerabilities and natural capital. Kollmair and Juli (2002:7) assert that “many of the disastrous shocks which undercut livelihoods are natural processes that destroy natural capital, such as fires, floods and earthquakes”. These kinds of natural processes, which are often in fact socially-shaped, may not be particularly pertinent to urban areas but vulnerabilities do arise in these areas. Urban crops are often grown on unutilised land some distance from the household’s place of living, with theft of crops in the field taking place. Further, this unutilised land is regularly state land on which crops are grown illegally, and local authorities may at times instruct police to destroy these crops.

Physical capital is directly related to the question of human settlements, as it refers to housing, basic services and infrastructure required to support housing, sufficient water supply and sanitation, affordable transport and clean affordable energy. Though many of these resources are considered as public goods and are thus provided from the national fiscus, in urban areas some of them are commodified to various degrees (such as water) through policies such as privatisation and user fees (Ellis 2000: 33). In urban areas, people depend heavily on physical capital to exist and make a living (Sapir 1996). According to Chambers (1997), many household goods also may be categorised as physical assets (or transferable physical assets at least) as they store value and may be sold in times of financial crisis to accrue income.

Housing in particular is critical for poor urban people as a site for even minimal social reproduction but it is also used at times as a source of income-generation (for example, through rentals or house-based informal economic activities) (Moser 1998:13). Urban households with very limited financial capital, even insufficient to rent a room in an existing house, may decide to reside in informal settlements where they likely live in fear of officials demolishing their shacks. In this regard, housing location is a very important component of physical capital. Houses which are nearer to places of employment or economic opportunities are often an advantage if only because this reduces transport costs to and from work, and this often is a reason for households residing in informal settlements which may be closer to town than government-sanctioned urban settlements (Farrington et al. 2002: 24). It is also sometimes the reason for why households in informal settlements resist relocation by the state, even with a promise of better housing elsewhere. In urban areas, access to affordable transport is in fact very important to allow people to move from one place to the other in order to carry out various livelihood strategies.

Public infrastructure more broadly is an essential physical asset, and it is a contributing factor (along with employment opportunities) for rural people in migrating to urban areas. Urban spaces generally have more developed water, sanitation and electricity infrastructure compared to rural settlements, though urban informal settlements are regularly undeveloped with regard to public infrastructure. This is largely because informal settlements are illegal and they are rarely serviced by local municipalities. Under conditions of neoliberal restructuring (including earlier structural adjustment programmes and more recent processes of commodification and privatisation) as led by the World Bank and IMF, access to adequate public infrastructure for the poor has become more difficult (Farrington et al. 2002:23).

2.3.2 Social Capital

Central to the SLF and its focus on assets is social capital which entails, in the pursuit of livelihoods, “negotiating social relationships within the household and managing social networks and institutions within communities and the city” (Beall and Kanji 1999: 1). It is also important to the question of housing in particular because the notions of human settlement and social reproduction bring to the fore the socially-framed character of livelihood activities. Despite the fact that human settlements need material resources such as forms of financial, natural and physical capital, the very existence and wellbeing of human settlements is not reducible to such capitals as social capital (involving social relationships and networks along with trust and collaboration) is critical. Even recent work by the World Bank on the role of

social capital in poverty alleviation strategies and the promotion of household sustainability has highlighted the role of social arrangements, trust and networks (Moobela et al. 2007: 5).

Putnam (1993: 3) defines social capital in the following way: “Community cohesion associated with: the existence of co-operative and accessible community networks/organisations; high levels of participation in these; a strong sense of local identities; and high levels of trust, mutual help and support amongst community members” (see also Putnam 2000). In this context, social capital entailing social networks based on trust and reciprocity are effectively “social support systems” (Fischer 1982: 3). The formation of social capital may be quite intentional (such as through establishing savings clubs or burial societies) (Winters et al. 2001) but quite often it arises unintentionally based for example on shared experiences, belief systems, experiences, values and concerns. Social capital, involving a diversity of social patterning forms, is sometimes portrayed as a panacea for livelihood and social reproduction challenges, often based on broad claims such as the following: “The existence of adequate levels of [social] capital within a particular collective group enables people within that group to coordinate their activities for mutual benefits” (Killerby 2001: 6). This tends to be a romanticised understanding of the benefits of social capital, if only because ‘adequate’ levels (so difficult to measure) are rarely met amongst poor urban communities under capitalism. But, further, social capital in-and-of-itself may have disadvantages including being marked by processes of exclusion (Al-Asad 2011).

Three basic forms of social capital are normally identified in the literature: bonding, bridging, and linking. Bonding social capital focuses on strengthening already-existing social relationships such as religious associations, regional-based groups, gender-based groups and ethnic or racial organisations and associations. This social capital therefore reinforces solidarity and norms of reciprocity among people who have an existing high level of trust between and among themselves. However, it can undermine integration of these groups within broader society insofar as these groups are based on principles of exclusion. In this regard, bridging social capital involves social interaction and relationships across diverse groups of people, even groups which might otherwise be in conflict. Therefore, “if bonding social capital provides a type of superglue between highly trusted individuals and groups, then, bridging social capital reduces friction and increases movement between unrelated and often, unknown groups of people” (Tatli et al. 2011: 14).

Finally, linking social capital involves relationships between “[d]ifferent social strata in a hierarchy where power, social status and wealth are accessed by different groups. Positive examples of linking social capital include shared habits of participation in civic affairs, and open and accountable relationships between citizens and their representatives” (Moobela et al. 2007: 6). Community relationships with local state structures become significant in this regard, as any sense of exclusion from democratic processes at local level invariably implies a distant relationship between state and citizens. Whereas bridging capital entails linking groups within a particular stratum in society, linking capital involves cooperation between groups across horizontal divides in a system of stratification. At household level, bonding capital relates to intra-household and intra-kin relationships, bridging capital speaks to bonds between poor households (or inter-household relationships), and linking capital highlights for instance cooperation between poor households and state elites.

Social interactions are marked by different intensities, which tend to relate back to the three forms of capital as well as to different levels of analysis. These levels of analysis are the micro-level, the meso-level and the macro-level. The micro-level is defined by very close relationships and strong emotional ties such as emotional partnerships, close friendships or mother-child relationships. Generally, relationships at this level last for a lifetime and are normally reciprocal and independent from hierarchies and social ranks. The meso-level, which refers for example to the level of neighbourhoods or communities, is characterised by acquaintances and distant friends. The relationships at the meso-level are interchangeable and more short-term compared to relationships on the micro-level (Grunberger and Omann 2011). Macro-level relationships exist at the level of nations or sub-national entities. For purposes of examining poor urban households, the most important levels are micro and meso as these capture intra-household, inter-household and more community-wide relationships.

Portes (1998) highlights the fact that social capital can have both positive and negative results (Kawachi 2006, Narayan and Pritchett 1999). For instance, in the case of the latter, bonding capital within groups such as gangs engaging in robbery and other activities have detrimental consequences for other local residents in a community including material losses and personal insecurity, and would thereby inhibit any possibilities of bridging capital in such cases. Other examples of social capital though point to more beneficial outcomes, including with reference to the informal sector. Thus, “the vast ethnic trading networks and dynamic informal sectors of the African economies ... provide livelihoods, housing and services in the face of crumbling official economies” (Meagher 2006: 554). In the face of market and state failures, these kinds

of social networks provide informal mechanisms for sustaining livelihoods and social reproduction. However, it is also the case that foreign traders, while contributing to the availability of basic commodities, may be in tension at times with nationals, thus undercutting prospects for enduring bridging capital within urban communities.

It is also generally accepted in the realm of urban development policy that the design and form of cities, neighbourhoods and individual dwellings (or the built environment more broadly) have significant repercussions for social capital as the built environment influences the ways in which people interact and bond with each other and the sense of community across households. In linking the built environment, housing design and social capital together, Briggs (1998: 178) argues in a more programmatic sense: “By influencing where and how people live, as well as the services, institutions, and significant social ties that people access, housing policy, more than ever in an era of welfare reform, should help those on the bottom of the opportunity structure to gain more social leverage without losing vital stores of support”. In this way, social reproduction in human settlements depends quite fundamentally on the positive qualities generated in and through social capital which is partly determined by urban design: “Seeds of social capital grow and the design of the physical urban environment can act as the fertile grounds to facilitate that growth” (Moobela et al. 2007: 9).

There is thus a strong relationship between physical design and social relations within urban settlements (Chan and Lee 2008). The ways in which urban settlements are formed may lead for instance to social alienation, segregation, exclusion and disharmony (Davidson and Wilson 2009, Fung 2008). Or, alternatively, they may lead to security, inclusion, belonging and harmony within communities (Littig and Griebler 2005). This sense of belonging entails enhanced levels of participatory modes of intra-community engagement, which is animated by the built environment; for instance, “mixing land use and increasing density may provide residents with a greater variety of activities in which to participate” (Dempsey et al. 2009: 7, Bremley et al. 2010:109). Thus, higher densities may imply that people are more likely to meet each other on the street than in lower density neighborhoods. In comparison, lower densities decrease the potential of unplanned interaction (Bramley et al. 2010, Glynn 1981, Nasar and Julian 1995). But, in high density urban areas, people may minimise public interaction because of possibly high crime rates. Overall, urban physical design does not determine (or cause) in any strict sense the forms and degrees of social interaction and capital prevalent; rather, it conditions interactions in spatially- and historically-contingent ways (Colantonio 2007: 7).

There are very complex and fluctuating linkages between urban forms, social relations and social practices (Yiftachel and Hedgecock 1993: 140).

What constitutes social sustainability in urban settlements is often addressed in the relevant literature and, in so doing, the question of social capital is raised either explicitly or implicitly. For example, Yiftachel and Hedgecock (1993:140) describe urban social sustainability as “the continuing ability of a city to function as a long term viable setting for human interaction, communication and cultural development ... [it is] about the long-term survival of a viable social unit”. Failures around sustainability in urban design impact negatively on everyday lives and livelihoods of households as they seek to pursue social reproduction at household and inter-household levels. Vital social issues in this context include equity, urbanity and a sense of community, which are at the centre of the “debate surrounding planning interventions in the development of cities” (Ansell and Thompson-Fawcett 2008: 425).

An equitable society is one which has no discriminatory or ‘exclusionary’ practices hampering individuals or households from partaking politically, socially and economically in society (Pierson 2002, Ratcliffe 2000). Indeed, quests for a more equitable society are rooted in the founding philosophy of urban planning practices (Ansell and Thompson-Fawcett 2008, Yiftachel and Hedgecock 1993, Butler 2005). Yiftachel and Hedgecock (1993) describe urbanity as the formation of well-designed urban spaces. The important element for achieving urbanity is to produce sufficient diversity, that is, the combination of uses and activities to ensure self-sustainability. A city district must have an adequately dense concentration of people using it for different reasons, including residence. In turn, concentration generates convenience and urbanity. For that reason, reasonably high densities are important but this should not be mistaken with overcrowding (Montgomery 1998: 103). Good urban places for example are regularly determined by their street life. Streets are multipurpose spaces where the elements of “city life are combined: contact, public social life, people-watching, promenading, transacting, natural surveillance and culture”. In short, “streets bring together people who do not know each other in an intimate, private social sense, including strangers” (Montgomery 1998: 109-110). Because of this, urban design in housing is not simply about providing public infrastructure and meeting basic physical needs as it “should also improve liveability” (Chui 1999:140) or enhance the quality of human life or of social reproduction (Fung 2008, Partridge 2005, UN-Habitat II 1996, UN-Habitat I 1976, Susniene and Jurkauskas 2009).

In terms of a sense of community, the layout and design of urban forms may inhibit or facilitate community solidarity and stability. Relph (1976: 49) points out that “to be inside a place is to belong to it and identify with it”, but being inside (or residing in) a human settlement may lead to a range of meanings and identities – both of belonging and un-belonging. In this respect, any sense of place may involve a dislocation emotionally and an undercutting of social capital and social sustainability. A human settlement then may not be an inclusive community in terms of subjective meanings and inter-subjective understandings of the residents concerned (Talen 1999: 1370). Forrest and Kearns (2001) argue though that urban form remains very important to one’s sense of belonging and identity. The built environment and the sense of attachment to a place and space, if commonly shared, create its “own order, its special ensemble, which distinguishes it from the next place” (Relph 1976: 2).

In the case of South Africa, urban design and human settlements remains highly racialised with high-density townships (and informal settlements) being the almost exclusive domain of poor urban blacks, leading to ongoing “problems of segregation and exclusion” (Werner 2004: 4). This undermines quite often the formation of ‘linking’ social capital and leads to deep distrust in the operations of local governments (or municipalities) in part because of physical capital or public infrastructure shortfalls. In terms of equity, urbanity and community belonging, urban black townships and informal settlements (as the thesis shows) fall far short of what is desirable in relation to dignified social reproduction.

2.3.3 Policies, Institutions and Processes

Besides assets and vulnerabilities, the SLF highlights the importance of Policies, Institutions and Processes (PIPs) which involve a number of economic, environmental, political and social factors (which facilitate or constrain livelihoods) such as legislation, institutions, organisations and policies. In a sense, the PIPs (at least institutions and policies) set the structural context within which livelihoods are constructed and pursued, and they affect assets and vulnerabilities in either a negative or positive way. Any effect though is mediated, in some form and to some degree, by the agency of households. Indeed, central to processes is human agency.

Institutions, as used in the SLF, often appears as a vague and unspecific term. Generally, though, it refers to organisational arrangements which exist at different spatial levels, from local to international, including political and governance structures (Lowe and Schilderman 2001). For example, in South Africa, there are a number of national state institutions involved in the delivery of low-cost housing (notably the Department of Human Settlements), as well as

the prevailing ruling political party in the form of the African National Congress. Relevant state institutions also exist at local level, namely, municipalities; as well, more distant international groups, such as multinational financial institutions (for instance, the World Bank) are relevant by way of influencing and establishing policies and programmes at nation-state level. Additionally, examining national-level corporate entities is often crucial to understanding the trajectory of national politics and the content of economic policies (Farrington et al. 2002). The notion of institutions in the SLF also speaks to what sociologists normally consider as institutional arrangements – the norms and values which condition and shape society broadly speaking, such as values underpinning constitutional democracies or, more negatively, patriarchal practices. These norms and values thus become embodied in formal organisations. For the SLF, they are often considered as informal institutions whereas organisations are more formal institutional arrangements.

The notion of *policies* has three linked elements, namely, policy content, policy-making and policy implementation. Policies are often devised at national level thus shaping the framework within which local state apparatuses operate (Meikle et al. 2001, Farrington et. al 2002, Lowe and Schilderman 2001). The urban poor are linked directly to policies (and structures) of governance through their reliance on the delivery of services by municipalities. Pro-poor policies, including around social reproduction, have the potential to create safety nets for the livelihoods of poor black households in urban spaces (Beall and Kanji 1999, Katepa-Kalala 1997). In South Africa, over the past twenty-two years, the national government has introduced a number of policies including housing policies which seek to address the needs of the urban poor especially black people. These policies (and resulting programmes) include the *Breaking the New Ground Policy on Sustainable Human Settlements*, a policy on housing. But there have been significant problems in implementing such policies, including challenges related to state capacity and resources. Further, these policies – in terms of their formulation – have been strongly influenced by broader neo-liberal policies as influenced by international organisations such as the World Bank, with minimal or no local input into the policy-making process. But, for citizens “to feel a sense of ownership and participation in the decision-making process and to have some real effect on service delivery and policy formulation, decisions have to be made as near to the target electorate as possible” (Hobley 2001: 8).

The Department for International Development (DFID) *Sustainable Guidance Sheets* “refers explicitly to *processes* of change in policies and institutions” (DFID 2000:10). If formal institutions are viewed as ‘hardware’ which engage in policy-making and policy-

implementation (amongst other activities), then processes refer to social activities which underpin existing institutions and policies or which reform or even transform them. These activities are embedded in power relations and may be marked by diverse kinds of relationships, including cooperation, consensus, compliance and conflict.

Finally, livelihood strategies are the activities which households carry out to build or protect their livelihoods, and these take place within the PIP context. Livelihood outcomes arising through these strategies feed into, or set the conditions for, further strategies. The notion of strategy does not imply that households are wholly rational agents with clearly-defined ends and means, as the fluctuating context in which they exist entail ongoing alterations to the ways in which they seek to socially reproduce themselves.

2.3.4 Gender and the SLF

The sustainable livelihoods framework provides a useful perspective for examining the complexities of urban livelihoods and, by extension, social reproduction. However, it is not without its weaknesses (Krantz 2001, Agrawal and Gibson 2003, Francis 2000, Beall and Kanji 1999). The framework highlights the significance of human agency at household level in terms of constructing livelihoods but it tends to underplay the relevance of structures in constraining livelihoods, particularly the existence of structures of power and inequality which are irreducible to local community dynamics (Carney 2001). A more sustained recognition of international and national power relations is crucial to making sense of the challenges which urban households experience in terms of accessing and possessing assets and pursuing their livelihoods. Additionally, the framework in-and-of-itself is gender neutral and hence the necessity to intentionally articulate and incorporate questions of patriarchy into the framework.

Since this thesis concentrates on housing, households and social reproduction, the importance of gender issues for the SLF needs to be brought to the fore. This is in part because livelihood-building assets, household-based domestic responsibilities and intra-household relationships (including decision-making) usually have a gendered quality. Under each capital there may be sub-capitals and these need to be differentiated in a gendered-sensitive manner to prevent over-generalisations. For instance, instead of generalising simply about access to and management of natural capital, the patriarchal basis underpinning this needs to be highlighted (DFID 2000: 10), as men regularly have primary access to land while women have secondary rights through their husband or male relative. The division of labour in the urban formal economy, in which men tend to dominate, influences life at household level. Even when women engage in informal

income-generating activities, as they often do, men try to ensure overall authority over spending of the total household income.

Women also are expected to perform domestic functions. Masika and Jockes (1996: 9) therefore argue that unpaid female domestic labour is “often related to perceived female characteristics such as patience, dexterity, caring, docility or to traditionally female activities within the household such as cooking, cleaning, sewing, tending the sick and personal services of various kinds”. The domain of social reproduction at household level, and of economic production in society at large, is heavily structured by patriarchal discourses and practices. According to Chirau (2012: 32), “this gender-based marginalisation (in production) and confinement (to reproduction work) may lead women to engage – or find refuge – in livelihood activities in the informal sector which gives them a sense of dignity, responsibility and autonomy”.

A finer distinction can be made between social reproduction, capitalist production, petty commodity production and subsistence production (Wield and Chataway 2001: 5). As stated above, social reproduction captures a variety of social processes and practices within households centred on maintaining and reproducing lives and livelihoods, mostly done by women. It is questionable whether these domestic activities involve “love or labour” on the part of women, but the unpaid character of these activities subsidise formal employment wages (Beechey 1987: 50). Subsistence production also involves unpaid labour founded on the principle of some degree of shared responsibility within households. The typical example of this is agriculture (Wield and Chataway 2001: 6) which, as indicated, exists increasingly in urban areas. Like domestic labour, agricultural labour at subsistence or below subsistence level primarily involves women.

Petty commodity production, which may include agriculture but also relates to self-employment and informal economic activities, is unpaid in the form of wages but this is compensated through market sales. It is noteworthy that women often dominate the informal economy at least in certain sub-sectors of it such as trading. Capitalist production relates to employment in the formal economy with men traditionally being linked to full-time permanent employment. However, increasingly, there have been trends towards irregular forms of employment including casual and short-term contract labour, with women often ending up undertaking these types of non-standard labour arrangements (Peck 1996: 72). In summary, a gendered perspective becomes necessary in order to fully understand what takes place at

household level – and within households – in relation to economic production and social reproduction activities.

2.4 Conclusion

Housing is a critically-important component of social reproduction in relation to both state-driven human settlement provision and household-based strategies of reproduction. The chapter examined the relationships between state housing programmes, households, household livelihoods and social reproduction. The emphasis, on the one hand, was on the state in the context of neo-liberal restructuring and the ways in which the state intervenes in questions of social reproduction and specifically housing and human settlements. On the other hand, in seeking to move beyond any notion that households are simply recipients of state housing, I examined the sustainable livelihoods framework in order to highlight the agency of households in contributing to their own social reproduction at household and community levels (Chant 1994, 1996; Latapi and Rocha 1995; Kanji 1995; Moser 1996). The next two chapters focus on the political economy of housing in South Africa, first looking at the pre-1994 period and then at the post-1994 period.

Chapter 3 Pre-1994 South Africa: Political Economy, State Housing and Urban Livelihoods

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the historical development of housing and livelihoods in pre-1994 South Africa in the context of the broader political economy of the country, and with specific reference to black urban spaces. This historical overview covers both the Segregation period (from 1910 to 1948) and the Apartheid period (from 1948 to 1994). It highlights the deeply-racialised and repressive character of the white state's housing policies and programmes as well as the livelihood activities of the black urban poor living in locations/townships (in this regard, there is no focus on mining company hostels and compounds). Unlike the urban poor in advanced capitalist nations, the black urban poor in South Africa never experienced an inclusive Keynesian or developmental state which sought to incorporate them under (and within) an expansive social programme. However, near the end of the apartheid era, there were attempts to bring about a series of political and economic reforms which – at least officially – would be conducive to more sustainable forms of urban social reproduction.

3.2 Political Economy of South Africa from 1910 to 1994

It is of utmost importance to reflect upon the past as this allows for an understanding of the injustices of segregation and apartheid in South African history. These injustices have an enduring legacy which contribute in specific ways to the current crises of social reproduction in South Africa. It would also seem that this legacy, if fully acknowledged and acted upon, would provide a key basis for post-apartheid restructuring by the democratic state. As the South African sociologist Bernard Magubane once noted, “the foundation” of sound policy and programmatic interventions is “a knowledge of the problems to be dealt with”, with history providing “a true comprehension of the tasks to be dealt with” (Magubane 1994:4). Of course, knowledge alone is insufficient, given the multiplicity of pressures placed on the post-apartheid state (as detailed in the following chapter) in seeking to move beyond a past marked fundamentally by racial inequalities and oppression.

Though the history of racial segregation and oppression predates the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, I begin with the segregation period from 1910 (to 1948). In doing so, I raise key events and developments only. Of great significance is the systematic dispossession of Africans of their land through colonisation, which reached its peak with the promulgation

of the Native Lands Act of 1913. This piece of legislation provided a foundation for South Africa's distinctive pattern of racially-unequal ownership of land and, in the end, contributed to undermining independent African farming production and turning African people into wage labourers for white agriculture, mining and manufacturing (Bond 2000). Overall, 13% of the land area was set aside for blacks (as Reserves) as against 87% for whites (Beinart et al. 1986: 23), with black people being restricted to possessing land in the Reserves only (DBSA 2000, Roodt 2003). Further, in the quest to control flows of black people particularly into white urban areas (and thereby to ensure that white agriculture had a source of cheap black labour), a policy of influx control was introduced (Worden 1994: 34, Maylam 2001:45). In 1923, the government thus passed the Native Urban Areas Act which permitted Africans into towns only to serve white labour needs, and hence impacted on processes of urbanisation dramatically in the years to come. It also reinforced the already-existing racial patterns of settlement in urban spaces, with blacks living under extreme conditions of poverty and in the main confined to locations. Various forms of taxes for black urban residents, as well as profits from white municipality-run beer halls, were used as contributions in financing infrastructural development in locations.

In 1948, and in the context of significant black worker mobilisation and strike action, the National Party came to power and reinforced the already-existing racial segregation and oppression. This gave birth to the apartheid period from 1948 to 1994. In drawing significant support from white commercial agriculture, the apartheid government intensified the influx control system including imposing passes on black women. Though manufacturing companies in white urban areas expressed concern about the loss of black labour because of tightened influx control, in actual practice such a loss did not take place. In large part, these companies were still able to rely on a readily-available low-skilled black labour force. Likewise, through the migrant labour system, mining companies had an ongoing source of labour in the form of black males (including from beyond South Africa's borders) who were subject to annual contracts. The job colour bar, which emerged long before 1948, ensured that white workers continued to form a privileged segment of the labour force. Opposition to apartheid during the 1950s, including the Defiance Campaign of the African National Congress and black trade union activity, was subject to repressive measures by the racial state (Martin 1982, Pirie 1982).

Additionally, the National Party government vigorously pursued grand apartheid through the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, leading to the formation of homelands or Bantustans (based on the Reserves) as supposedly self-governing territories through which blacks could realise their

political aspirations (Hindson 1987). In 1959, the policy of separate development led to the establishment of nine homelands built upon an intra-black ethnic foundation such as Ciskei and Transkei. Any black people still accessing rural land within white South Africa (so-called black spots) were forcefully removed to the appropriate homeland (Robinson 1996) in which agricultural activity and production were increasingly on the decline (Worden 1994). The government's policy of promoting Bantustan independence was also shown in housing policies. The government therefore built large townships, called commuter townships, near white cities (such as Mdantsane near East London) which housed black workers labouring in these cities and commuting on a daily or weekly basis.

Segregation of urban spaces (or racially-based urban spatial formations) was intensified, which at times involved the forced removal of black people to new townships where poverty continued to prevail as it did under segregation (Hammett 2008, Swilling et al. 1991). This was in line with the enactment of the Group Areas Act of 1950. Black townships (as sites of social reproduction) were far from the centre of white cities and towns, leading to additional financial burdens for the black labour force (Urban Problems Research Unit 1990). In these white urban spaces, local government for black townships became more deeply under the strict control of the central state through administration boards whose members were directly appointed by the relevant minister (DBSA 2000: 9). This also meant that white-controlled municipalities could no longer cross-subsidise township infrastructure, though this was never done in any significant way in the first place. Overall, urban blacks (particularly working class people) during apartheid were subjected to regular, often extreme, livelihood shocks and their daily existence was marked by major challenges and outright hardships.

The golden period of apartheid, at least economically, was in the period from 1963 to 1972 as an undisturbed economic boom took place. At the same time, a deepening economic and political crisis began to emerge in the 1970s because of structural constraints in the economy and heightened trade union and community-based struggles. Thus, despite the pronounced segregationist programmes and overall state repression of anti-apartheid movements, the state began to initiate some reformist measures in the late 1960s, such as introducing (under pressure from manufacturing capital) a "floating job colour bar in which periodic reclassifications of traditionally white jobs allowed blacks to undertake" more skilled work (Lundahl 1992: 314). This took place in the context of an increasing skills shortage. Other reforms soon followed as a way of tackling the crisis without undermining white rule, including legalising trade unions, encouraging the further growth of the black middle class as a bulwark against revolutionary

change, the formation of elected local black authorities in townships such as community councils (Bekker and Humphries 1985, Christopher 1994) and 99-year leasehold schemes in townships implying some degree of urban permanence for urban blacks (Smit 1982: 94).

3.3 Housing until 1994

By the end of apartheid, there were massive housing challenges in black townships as exemplified by the following three points. First of all, there were approximately 7 million black people living in informal housing (Urban Foundation 1991 a: 4). For instance, in Durban, about 50 per cent of urban black households lived in such settlements, at the periphery of white cities and towns (Urban Foundation 1991a:7). This problem (a shortage of public housing) was compounded by the increasing influx of blacks into urban spaces. In part, this occurred in the light of the 1985 report released by the President's Council entitled "An Urbanisation Strategy for the Republic of South Africa", which called for the abolition of influx control and pass laws. At the same time, the report argued that state regulation of rural-urban migration should continue in order to ensure that urbanisation took place in a planned and systematic manner and to enable – from the state's perspective – the optimal reproduction of the black urban population and labour force (Hindson 1985). Nevertheless, as the state began to roll back these apartheid regulations, massive urbanisation took place including into the transitional years in the early 1990s. Secondly, overcrowding in housing was another sign of a shortage of housing. Evidence revealed that "on average, 10 to 11 people live on a single residential stand, with 6 people per house. It is also not uncommon for 2 or more families to share a hostel room designed for 2 single persons" (Urban Foundation 1991 b: 4). Thirdly, in 1990, there was significant political violence particularly in the Johannesburg area (leading to the death of 3,699 people). Though the reasons behind this violence are quite complex, it is clear that the struggle over scarce resources in the urban periphery, including housing, played some role in it (SAIRR 1999, Byerley et al. 1992).

Soon after the formation of the Union in 1910, a housing act was legislated (in 1920). Prior to this, white municipalities had significant leeway in terms of the scale of their responsibility for providing housing in black locations; in a sense, it was almost voluntary. The act arose in the context of the recommendations of a public health commission which investigated the influenza epidemic of 1918. Consistent with the logic of segregationism, the commission and resulting legislation was concerned with the fact that, in certain instances, black and white people were living in close proximity to each other or even in informal settlements together (such as Doornfontein in Johannesburg). As the result of the legislation, local municipalities

were tasked with the responsibility to build, administer and initiate housing schemes in locations, and the central white government facilitated this process by offering low-interest loans to local municipalities. This involved central government controls over for instance building standards as well as regulations about the terms under which different tenure categories for whites and blacks would operate (Sarakinsky 1984, Lester et al. 2009, Robbins 1997, Morris 1981).

This set the tone for all subsequent spatial settlement in urban spaces and specifically housing policies and programmes, linked as they were to the broader geo-political system of racial domination in the country (du Plessis and Landman 2002). Thus several features of the 1920 housing act have tended to perpetuate race, class and status differentials. Under this legislation, urban black populations were discriminated against in both their residential location and access to housing; they were thus compelled to stay along the urban outskirts with segregated and low-quality housing, far away from white areas and places of employment. The exclusionary character of this regime was rooted in the notion of selective citizenship based on race which inhibited access to decent and dignified housing for black people (Robbins 1997, Morris 1981, SAIRR 1999, Khanya College 2001).

In the early years of apartheid, specifically in 1950 and 1951, a survey was conducted by the National Building Research Institute to examine the capacity of urban African households to pay for housing. The results from the survey revealed that 40% of African families could afford to pay unsubsidised rentals or build houses for themselves, 13% could manage to pay for only subsidised rent, and 47% were not in a position to make any significant contribution to housing costs. Clearly, even by government estimates, the majority of urban households were in desperate need of subsidised public housing. It was projected at the time that – over the next ten years – approximately 350,000 houses were required for Africans, at a value of 100 million pounds. In this light, the Native Services Levy was introduced in 1952. This levy meant that, in cities where there were over 20,000 African workers, employers had to contribute to the cost of roads, sewerage, lights and water in African townships. The Native Building Workers Act was also enacted in 1951. According to this act, Africans were to be trained en masse (including on-the-job training) to build township housing under white building inspectors. By the end of 1953, 456 plasterers, 359 painters, 1,065 bricklayers and 432 carpenters had applied for these jobs (SAIRR 1999, Khanya College 2001, Robbins 1997, Morris 1981).

As in the past, ownership of a township housing unit was possible, but the land itself (on which the unit stood) was not purchasable because – particularly under the apartheid regime – land ownership for Africans was confined to the reserves-cum-Bantustans. Under apartheid, purchase of a publically-built housing unit could be pursued (for example, on a sort of hire-purchase basis) but, alternatively, the unit could simply be rented. In seeking to resolve the housing challenges, some local municipalities received loans from the national government and bought building materials in large bulk. Qualifying Africans could purchase building materials to the value of up to 150 pounds to build their own houses and repay the loan in installments. By the end of January 1956, the Native Services Levy had been implemented in 37 towns and, by this time, the money collected under the programme was over 7 million pounds. Local municipalities also continued to raise funds from the sale of liquor in the townships to finance infrastructure (SAIRR 1999, Parnell 1999). The unevenness in housing expenditure across racial lines was clearly evident during the apartheid era. For instance, in 1967, approximately R14,4 million was spent by national government on housing for whites, and only R5 million on Africans. By 1975, the housing budget for whites had increased to R67 million while, for blacks, it was a mere R7.8 million (Robbins 1997, Morris 1981, SAIRR 1999, Khanya College 2001).

Assisted by the Native Affairs Department, the National Building Research Institute published a booklet in 1952 called “Build Your Own House”. Contained in the booklet were plans for different types of houses in black townships and the kinds of construction materials required. The Central Council of the Institute of Architects held a competition on the best design for two-to-three bedroom houses for urban Africans. The idea was to encourage people to construct their own houses by making designs available free of charge (SAIRR 1999, Khanya College 2001). At the same time, and in part because of pressure from urban manufacturing companies, the government increasingly promoted home-ownership for urban blacks, preferably through the market rather than public housing. In promoting privatisation of housing, the government sold off old housing (currently being rented) at a low price for Africans (and Indians and Coloureds). Rentals were in fact increased to compel people to purchase their own houses. The apartheid state also promoted and pursued self-help site-serviced housing schemes. In this context, the Minister of Co-operation and Development indicated that it is “the responsibility of the individuals to provide his own housing where he is at all able to do so” (Khanya College 2001: 20).

In 1957, the housing act was amended but, in effect, it broadly entailed a continuation of the previous housing legislation. According to the act, the local and central government remained responsible for housing for lower-income groups. While local municipalities constructed the housing in black townships, the central government provided loan funds. In general, the state encouraged home-ownership, and the goal was to ensure certain minimum standards at minimum costs. In line with apartheid ideology, a Housing Commission (previously known as the Housing Board) was set up in 1957 in which provision was made for a Bantu Housing Board to administer housing specifically for Africans. The commission was given the power to expropriate land, buy building materials and hire contractors for purposes of building houses on the expropriated land. At times, the nearest local municipality was required to offer basic social services for the housing scheme built. Any incurred financial burdens were shared with the state (Lester et al. 2009, Morris 1981). Furthermore, if a local municipality was reluctant or incapable to carry out housing schemes, the Commission itself could undertake the scheme and recover the costs from the local municipality. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Bantu Housing Board had no African representatives. Additionally, the Commission identified a number of housing options with regard to financing. Under certain conditions, loans could be provided by the Commission to local municipalities for up to 50 years for low-income housing (Calderwood 1953, Khanya College 2001), but individuals could also receive loans directly. Offering of loans to build houses was fostered through a means-test.

From 1976, country-wide protests led to significant destruction of property in black townships and local administration was severely disrupted. People vandalised property especially structures owned and operated by local government including clinics, administration board offices and beer halls. As a result of all this, and its effects on government operations, limited housing delivery took place particularly between 1976 and 1980. During this period, there was also a shocking increase in the number of informal settlements on the urban periphery and along homeland borders (Lester et al. 2009, Robbins 1997, Morris 1981). From 1978, though, government policies were announced which indicated that racial segregation and discrimination should be subject to liberal reforms. This was mirrored in the approval of the permanence of urban Africans, the extension of property rights, the abolishing of group areas legislation and efforts to consult with township communities about local development. There was an increasing acknowledgement by both government and the corporate sector that the living conditions in townships were appalling and needed to be improved.

In 1978, the Minister of Plural Relations and Development in fact launched a 99-year leasehold scheme for black townships. The (business-funded) Urban Foundation, in collaboration with the Association of Building Societies, played a vital role in bringing about this leasehold scheme. The leasehold arrangement was important as it involved a firmer guarantee of tenure security, which thereby made private sector housing finance accessible to Africans and gave them an opportunity to develop a capital base. New township rules administering the conditions of residence in townships were introduced and these eradicated the arbitrary powers of township administrators to evict residents. In 1979, the Housing Amendment Act was introduced. Under the terms of this Act, the separate Bantu Housing Boards were dismantled and all applications for loans for Africans and other race groups were to be processed by the Department of Community Development through the National Housing Commission. From 1978, the amount of finance provided by government for African housing increased significantly compared to earlier years. At the end of the 1980 financial year, the government sourced funding of R150 million from overseas countries for the development of township infrastructure (Bonner and Segal 1998, Reeves 1998, Lester et al. 2009, Robbins 1997, Morris 1981).

In April 1979, housing loans were offered to Africans at similar rates and according to the similar criteria as those for other race groups. The new arrangement also permitted Africans to apply for home loans from building societies. This shift led to the construction of more expensive suburban-type houses in the townships by commercial developers throughout the 1980s. In 1983, the government withdrew its direct and formal status as landlord of township housing and offered all tenants in townships the opportunity to purchase their houses. The initial response to this proposal by township residents was not particularly positive, and it only improved after the costs of the houses had been considerably reduced and the inhabitants were required to make the purchase (Bonner and Niefertagdien 2008, Bonner and Segal 1998, Lester et al. 2009).

In the context of this historical overview, Dewar (1992) identifies three spatial patterns which came to symbolise South African cities and towns before 1994 (during both segregation and apartheid), namely sprawl, fragmentation and separation. Low-density sprawl involved three processes. The first was speculative sprawl, which involved affluent (predominantly) white people seeking to commodify amenities and attract developers, including the building of country estates and resorts. The second process entailed the development of low-cost housing schemes in black townships far from urban centres (and from employment opportunities), while

the third process involved illegal squatting whereby black people engaged in the self-provision of housing in areas often close to places of work. The second pattern, that is, fragmentation, meant that cities and towns in white South Africa mirrored a cellular development arrangement in which urban development took place in distinct cells or silos, and mostly surrounded by freeways and buffers of open space. The third pattern (of separation) had both class and racial dimensions, mainly evidenced by well-developed low-density middle-class white areas and high-density areas for poor blacks with insufficient basic infrastructure. It was often the case that clear buffers existed between racially-separate urban spaces.

It is clear that urban spatial design under segregation and apartheid did not live up to the issues of equity, urbanity and sense of community (as discussed in chapter two), with these issues being at the centre of the “debate surrounding planning interventions in the development of cities” (Ancell and Thompson-Fawcett 2008: 425). Certainly, pre-1994 urban settlements were marked by social alienation, segregation, exclusion and disharmony, which in different ways negatively affected bonding, bridging and linking social capital across South Africa’s urban human settlements.

3.4 Livelihood Activities

Urban spaces in pre-1994 South Africa were socio-spatial zones which embodied segregation and inequalities along racial lines and reinforced racial oppression. Poor urban black working class populations, living far from employment opportunities and major facilities, experienced extreme difficulties in sustaining a decent and dignified quality of life in terms of social reproduction. This contributed not only to the wave of black trade union activity from the early 1970s but also to massive civic mobilisation in black townships which formed part of the overall struggle against apartheid and for democracy and social citizenship. This was consistent with the demands embodied in the 1955 Freedom Charter that “[t]here shall be houses, security of tenure and comfort. All have the right to live where they choose, to be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security” (Khanya College 2001: 27, Van Niekerk 2010). In certain ways, the demands of the Freedom Charter were consistent with the initial macro-economic strategy of the post-apartheid government, namely, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (as discussed in the following chapter). In this section, I detail briefly livelihoods of poor urban blacks during the pre-1994 period by focusing on informal economic activities.

3.4.1 Informal Economic Activities

The apartheid government viewed the informal economic sector as a threat to the system as it had the potential to provide black people with economic freedom. Research findings by Maasdorp and Pillay (1983) and de Smidt (1988) for Durban revealed that the majority of the respondents (who were black people) started their own businesses due to economic motivation. They were not forced into informal businesses due to retrenchment or absence of formal employment, but they wanted to be financially independent. Overall, though, apartheid economic and social planning involved a regime of strict regulations governing street trading and the formation of built markets for blacks in ‘white’ cities, and similar regulations existed with reference to informal economic activities more generally. The Group Areas Act of 1950 contributed to these problems as the legislation restricted right of entry for blacks to urban areas by controlling black movement, economic mobility and residential options. The migration of blacks into these cities was thereby controlled by reinforcing the existing pass laws, forcing blacks (including now black women) to carry identity documents in order to control their urban entry. Only employed blacks were permitted in the cities, making it unlawful for blacks to enter a city for any business other than to sell their labour to whites. At the same time, the Bantu Investment Corporation Act of 1959 was enacted to restrict black economic activities to the newly formed homelands (Karumbidza 2011:12).

By the 1970s, it had become clear that control of black economic activity in cities in white South Africa was difficult to achieve completely. The Licensing and Business Hours Ordinance 11 of 1973 (later the Licensing and Business Hours Act 11 of 1984) was endorsed to regulate and administer the increasing street vending activities in some areas of cities. This law provided for the provision of a permit and levying of a fee to work as an urban street vendor. Through this piece of legislation, it was also possible though to regulate the volume of people who could enter a city for the purpose of street vending, thus serving as an influx control mechanism (Karumbidza 2011: 12). Besides national level legislation, city councils also had the authority to pass regulations that would restrict informal economic activities in city centres. Despite all this, throughout South African ‘white’ cities and towns, there were large numbers of street vendors who sold flowers, vegetables, fruits and other food stuffs (Tabe 2014, Nduma 1992).

One example of city council regulations for street vendors is the case of Cape Town. New rules were launched in 1948, which minimised trading hours and required street vendors to have stockrooms for their goods and products. It was claimed that street vendors stored fruits and vegetables under unhygienic conditions, and their new stockrooms had to be approved by the

Medical Officer of Health (Rogerson 1988, Green 1989). Vendors also needed to now provide their photograph and signature on their business registration certificate. The requirements for storage had a negative impact on their livelihoods as storage entailed an extra cost for the vendors. The shortening of trading hours from 1948 also took place in other cities. Before 1948, street vending hours in South Africa were between 6 am and 11 pm, but the new closing hour was 6 pm in places like Johannesburg and Durban (Tabe 2014). However, considerable illegal trading activity took place, as “structural economic factors such as unemployment and poverty actually forced individuals to defy the law despite the severe threat it posed” (Nesvag 2000: 41).

In Cape Town, between September 1957 and August 1958, there were 1,247 arrests made with some street vendors being prosecuted a number of times. After these incidences, a joint committee of Traffic Control, Markets and Licenses recommended the introduction of a designated police force with powers to arrest street vendors in prohibited areas, and the granting of further powers to the municipality to confiscate the goods of street traders. The committee also recommended the termination of a street trader’s license after three convictions. However, the large numbers of street vendors in the so-called forbidden area of the city centre made it almost impossible for a single police officer to successfully make an arrest because in most instances he was overpowered by the many hawkers. Street traders in fact started using different strategies of trading which sometimes involved relying on children to operate their business for them. This worked in the street traders’ favour as even the apartheid judiciary system was not willing to impose heavy penalties on children (Nesvag 2000, Tabe 2014).

In 1991 the government introduced the Businesses Act which marked a radical shift in policy aimed at regulating informal economic activities including street trading throughout South Africa. It did so firstly because it wanted to substitute the four provincial licencing regulations of Natal, the Orange Free State, the Transvaal and the Cape with a national framework. The second reason was to stimulate economic growth by doing away with increasingly pointless limitations on entry into the economy (Nattrass 1992, Beavon and Rogerson 1986, Tabe 2014). The act indicated the kinds of businesses which needed licenses, and it relieved traders from applying for licenses except for those who sold food. It also instituted a heavy penalty of a fine of R1,000 or a three months’ sentence for street traders who violated the new regulations (Tabe 2014).

The powers to control the operation of traders were transferred from local governments to the provincial administrations. However, some municipal authorities in South Africa opposed the Business Act since it took away their powers. The Cape Town and Cape Province city councils cooperated with the provincial administration to implement the act (Tabe 2014, Green 1989, Nduma 1992). In the Transvaal, and in Johannesburg specifically, the act was not implemented. The rejection by the Johannesburg municipality meant that, for some time, there was no control over the activities of hawkers. Without any control, the situation in the city became very disordered as hawkers operated everywhere and streets were littered with fruit and vegetable remains, plastics and boxes (Rogerson 1988, Beavon and Rogerson 1986, Nesvag 2000).

In summary, the lives and livelihoods of black informal businesses during (segregation and) apartheid South Africa were exposed to regular, often extreme, shocks and their daily existence was marked by major challenges and absolute hardships. But they showed significant endurance and perseverance in building and maintaining livelihoods centred on their households.

3.4.2 Gender and Livelihoods

Pre-1994 South Africa was particularly difficult for black women. As one black woman under apartheid highlighted: “Apartheid did nothing for us. During apartheid if you were a woman you would not get a house but now we are single parents with sites and houses” (Ndinda 2003: 31). In other words, a pronounced system of patriarchy existed at the time, though undoubtedly it still exists in altered forms under post-apartheid conditions.

Access to natural resources, especially land, was an important marker of patriarchy’s prevalence for black women. Even in the reserve or homeland areas, which were supposed to be key sites for social reproduction for black households, the state’s land tenure system excluded women in large part from direct access to land. (Dlamini 2016, Pheko 2013, Smith 1992). Based on a skewed (or colonially-constructed) customary law, assisted by Bantu Commissioners and magistrates, “it was not customary for women to manage or inherit land” (Pheko 2014: 4). Women were often deprived of any right to security of rural tenure except through a male adult, and this sometimes compelled them to join the multitudes of cheap labourers on farms owned by whites, or in factories or as domestic workers in ‘white’ urban areas (Smith 1992, Pheko 2014). Under apartheid, dispossession of citizenship through erosion of property rights and constraints on access to particular places and spaces was enabled by denial of rights to land (and housing), but this was particularly so for black women.

During apartheid, legislation was enacted which limited the movement of “African women into urban areas, the type of work available to them, where they lived and with whom they interacted” (Walker 1982:186). In the end, they were “obliged to perform the tasks of production and reproduction to support the (male) urban workforce” (Lallo 1998:37). Although they played a positive role in the reproduction of male labour (for the apartheid regime), the challenges for black women (compared to black men) were particularly deep and pervasive. The pre-1994 social order in South Africa was clearly not only a racist social order but also a sexist one, with patriarchal discourses and traditions excluding women from certain work including within the mining industry. At times, though, women’s entry into the informal economic sector involved degrading activities such as prostitution.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined the political economy of pre-1994 South Africa, during both the segregation and apartheid periods, as a background to understanding state housing provision and urban livelihoods during this period. The political economy was highly racialised, such that it is at times referred to as a form of racial capitalism. In this context, significant forms of racial oppression and discrimination existed, with blacks in effect being considered as temporary sojourners in urban white South Africa; the quantity (and quality) of housing delivery took place accordingly (De Beer 2001). Such oppressive legislation and institutional discrimination, in conjunction with a whole slew of other discriminatory practices, led to a constant and daily struggle for social reproduction by urban blacks including in relation to livelihood activities. Housing served to reproduce the conditions of urban black poverty along with social, economic and spatial exclusion. Though, in the later years of apartheid, there were attempts to reform the social order and to deracialise it, it is clear that the new post-apartheid state inherited systemic social reproduction challenges with reference to the urban black population. The following chapter addresses this and the attempts by the new state (and urban blacks themselves) to overcome this racialised legacy so as to undercut the systemic crisis.

Chapter 4 Social Reproduction in Urban Human Settlements in Post-Apartheid South Africa

4.1 Introduction

The post-apartheid South African state has formulated, introduced and implemented nation-wide programmes pertaining to urban housing in order to address and tackle the challenges of social reproduction in and for poor urban black communities. Because of the history of segregation and apartheid, the post-apartheid state in South Africa was immediately faced with a number of challenges with regard to the social reproduction of poor black households. These included delivering the sheer quantity of houses needed to reduce the massive housing backlog (notably in black townships) and overcoming the problem of racially-based spatial separation (du Plessis and Landman 2002). Even though South African state policies and programmes have had a pronounced focus on questions of social reproduction over the past two decades, millions of urban black households around the country exist within a condition of social reproduction crisis including with reference specifically to housing. The depth of this contemporary systemic crisis of social reproduction is examined in this chapter, and is done so in the context of the political economy of contemporary South Africa and the seeming tensions which exist between the imperatives of economic growth and redistribution (Mullings 2009, Antrobus 1989, French 1994). The chapter thus discusses the following main topics: crisis of social reproduction in human settlements, post-apartheid economic policies and their implications for social reproduction, state housing programmes and social reproduction, and livelihood activities of poor black urban households.

4.2 Crisis of Social Reproduction in Human Settlements

From 1994 to 2015, annual state spending on housing has increased from R5 billion to R153 billion, with the ANC government delivering more than 2.5 million houses and 1.2 million serviced sites from 1994 (*Business Day News* 6 October, 2015). Despite this significant government effort to roll out houses for the urban poor, South Africa is still faced with a number of challenges in social reproduction. These challenges include mushrooming of informal settlements, housing backlogs and deficiencies in the structural quality of houses, to mention but a few.

4.2.1 Housing Backlog and Informal Settlements

The challenges of urban social reproduction in post-apartheid South Africa are taking place in the face of an increasing national population and significant in-migration from rural areas. South Africa's population was approximately 42.8 million in 1995 with an estimated annual growth rate of 2.27 per cent. There were approximately 8.3 million households in South Africa with an average household size of 4.97 persons. In the early 1990s, there were 3.4 million formal housing units and 1.5 million informal housing units (including shacks) (Department of Housing 1994: 27). The total housing backlog in 1995 was approximately 1.5 million units. A further 720,000 serviced sites were in need of improvement (Pottie 2003: 124; Rust and Rubenstein 1996: ix). In the light of the population growth rate, the national department of housing projected that 200,000 new houses would need to be built per year between 1995 and 2000 (with one million new housing units being the delivery target over a five-year period).

But the new government sought immediately to downplay the possibilities of tackling the massive housing backlogs in at least the short-term. The Department of Housing thus claimed that "while high expectations exist, it should be recognised that fundamental changes to government bureaucracies are a slow process and conditions on the ground will show little change in the short term" (Department of Housing 1994:1). In fact, financial constraints were also to become important in failing to overcome the huge housing backlog and in attaining the goal of universal housing access. According to a report from the Department of Housing in 1998, only 596,059 of the promised one million low-income houses in fact had been completed (Bond and Khosa 1999: 10). By early 2006, 1,877,958 housing units had been constructed or were under construction (Goebel 2007: 294, Rust 2008:61). By 2010, approximately 2.4 million houses had been built (RSA 2010:1). Yet, for 2008, the Department of Housing (DoH 2009) reported that the housing backlog was approximately 2.2 million units and the backlog was escalating. Another estimate is that the urban housing backlog increased from approximately 1.5 million in 1994 to over 2.1 million in 2010 (Tissington 2011: 33).

4.2.2 Structural Quality of Low Cost Housing

As well, despite the huge quantity of housing provided (RSA 2010), the quality of housing units falls far below acceptable standards for social reproduction and thus massive deficiencies exist. Not only are the houses small (which for instance minimises privacy within households) but the housing stock is sub-standard in its construction and unlikely to withstand adverse weather conditions for an extended period. In fact, a significant number of Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses (built in the 1990s) did not survive the first few years

of their existence. Housing structures in fact have been collapsing at an alarming rate due to poor workmanship with major cracks appearing along with leaking roofs and walls. Inadequacies with regard to the provision of water and sanitation are also rampant. These problems alone have negative impacts on the lives and social reproduction of households in urban areas, including with regard to the health of household members. The insufficient quality of low-cost houses in South Africa has become news headlines in local media and the media abroad, with the post-apartheid state seemingly emphasising the quantity of housing provision at the expense of quality standards.

In 2005 the Department of Housing reported that the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) identified a number of quality problems in the low income housing sector arising from construction methodologies and techniques. These problems included: inappropriate use of brick force; inappropriate or no brick bonding; poor sand and cement mix; poor workmanship; use of low quality building material; no on-site monitoring of housing projects; poor quality bricks; poor plaster use to exterior walls; and poor foundations (Emuze et al. 2012: 1394-1395). Combined, these issues resulted in major structural weaknesses and sometimes failures. New building contractors emerging after 1994 undoubtedly contributed to the problem of poor quality of housing stock. Contractors of course normally work out their profit margins in terms of scale which means that, the more houses they build, the more profit they generate. However, because of capacity, emerging contractors tended to construct only a small number of houses at any one time and they sought to maximise profits by cutting costs and thereby jeopardising the structural quality of the housing stock. In addition, larger and more experienced contractors soon withdrew from the low cost housing sector because they were not generating sufficient or any profit, thereby compelling the government to use emerging contractors on an expanding basis (Nobrega 2007: 26).

Officially, housing accounting officers at provincial level are responsible for controlling, supervising and administering the housing subsidy which is available for low cost housing. This includes the provision of reports by contractors to provincial housing departments and their development managers, specifically when contractors claim payment for work they have completed. The departments' inspectors should examine each housing unit to guarantee that the work has been done according to the minimum requirements. Reports by inspectors are then used by the provincial department to decide if payment should be processed or not. This process however is not always closely followed such that contractors have often been paid for work below minimum standards. In general, monitoring of public housing projects has been

inadequate leading to serious gaps in the quality control process and in some instances building quality was “sacrificed for quantity with those responsible for quality control turning a blind eye to defects in the rush to finalise projects or in the rush to enrich themselves and others” (*City Press* 22 November, 2009).

4.3 Post-Apartheid Economic Policies, Housing and Social Reproduction

In the light of the housing challenges existing in South Africa from the year 1994, the post-apartheid government adopted policies, including macro-economic ones, which were meant to address the crisis of social reproduction centred on housing inherited from the apartheid regime. The macro-economic policy (and programmatic) context is important for understanding what has happened on the ground at the more micro-levels, including in relation to individual, household and community livelihoods. This section discusses various post-apartheid economic policies which have shaped the kinds of livelihoods in existence and livelihood activities pursued in post-apartheid South Africa, particular with reference to urban black households. These policies have both addressed and perpetuated the challenges in social reproduction. From the start though it can be noted that, despite any economic expansion and growth which may have occurred since 1994, massive deficits with regard to the redistribution of wealth continue to exist (Siqwana-Ndulo 2013: 2), with negative implications for the social reproduction of households in places such as eZamokuhle.

The African National Congress (ANC) initially structured its economic approach under the influence of the Freedom Charter (from the 1950s). This approach was ultimately embraced in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) base document (Van Niekerk 2010:18). Under the seemingly progressive RDP housing policies and programmes of the ANC government, urban spaces however remained deeply racialised, with poor urban black populations continuing to live far from employment opportunities and major social facilities (Tissington 2011), resulting in ongoing burdens in the domain of social reproduction (Hassim 2005). Indeed, despite the massive RDP housing programme initiated and implemented (as witnessed by the increase in the public housing stock), questions were raised as to whether the RDP housing programme amounted to a clear “alternative vision of how a state should address questions of social reproduction” (Hunter 2009: 1113). Deeper and more troubling questions became even more evident with the replacement of RDP – which was a state-interventionist almost social democratic redistributive strategy (Hunter 2009) – by the more mainstream neo-liberal Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) in 1996 (Goodlad 1996). After a further ten years, GEAR was replaced by the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of

South Africa (ASGI-SA) (Chagunda 2006) and, subsequently, the New Growth Path (NGP) (Van Aardt et al. 2011) emerged in 2010 followed by the current National Development Plan (NDP) (RSA 2012a, 2012b).

The ANC used the RDP as its election manifesto in 1994. After the 1994 democratic elections, the ANC government adopted the RDP to address, amongst other apartheid legacies, the housing needs and aspirations of the poor, politically marginalised and economically exploited (Kallis and Nthite 2007: 3). The RDP saw an important role for public housing as it implied that housing is central to stimulating economic growth and development. According to the Macro-Economic Research Group (see Hansen 2003), housing for low-income groups plays a significant role in the economy by broadening employment and income. Under RDP, housing provision was designed to stimulate development by lessening inequalities (through the redistributive thrust of the RDP) as well as guide government spending. Due to this it could be concluded that housing is a “lead sector” (Hassen 2003: 117).

Housing in the RDP was part of a broader social service and assistance programme focusing also on health, education, poverty reduction and social grants. Central to the RDP mandate was to establish housing as a human right, which was formulated in a 1994 White Paper and, critically, recognised in the 1996 final Constitution (Bond and Khosa 1999: 10). The programme was based on the realisation that macro-economic challenges were interlinked with problems embedded in social infrastructure and services (including human settlement). It therefore proposed, amongst other actions, “job creation through public works – the building of houses and provision of services would be done in a way that created employment” (Knight 2001: 1). Effectively, RDP was based on the premise that economic growth would occur and be sustained as a consequence of redistribution and tackling the vast socio-economic inequalities which arose under apartheid (i.e. the notion of growth through redistribution).

Six basic principles underlay RDP’s aim of meeting the basic needs of the people of post-apartheid society. These are: democratisation; promoting peace and security; people-centred development; nation-building; integration and sustainability. These principles, some more than others, embody the concept of social sustainability as featured in government policy in 1994 (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 63). The RDP understood that linkages existed between human settlements and social reproduction in terms of housing delivery (and service delivery more broadly), and it promoted community participation and equitable opportunities specifically for

the poor and other vulnerable groups. The aim was to create socially sustainable communities by satisfying basic needs and promoting a reasonable quality of life for all citizens.

Although policies such as RDP clearly seek to address the crisis of social reproduction, there are crucial problems in pursuing the implementation of sustainable human settlements because of competing state imperatives. These problems for instance often emanate from privileging national economic growth over-and-against a critical mass of public spending on housing and other basic infrastructure for the poor. Even under the RDP, the South African state tended to prioritise economic goals and, in this way, social reproduction became sacrificed at the altar of economic sustainability. This was further reinforced by the shift from RDP to neo-liberal macro-economic policies starting with GEAR in 1996 and taking place subsequently.

GEAR is a classic example of a straightforward neo-liberal macro-economic policy (Goodlad 1996: 78). It was based on the claim that redistribution was contingent on sustained economic growth (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 64) – in other words, the trickle-down theory of redistribution, or redistribution through growth. This kind of macro-economic strategy is problematic with regard to its repercussions for social reproduction. Although economic sustainability is vital for sustainable human settlements, growth alone does not lead to broad-based development which addresses the crisis of social reproduction. The shift to GEAR therefore limited “policy maneuverability” and resulted in the “consequent neo-conservative straightjacketing of development policy deliberations” (Khan 2003: 5).

GEAR is driven by neo-liberal orthodoxy which promotes cutting social expenditure, privatisation, free trade, public/private partnerships and the increasing commodification of social services. The GEAR document emphasises integrating the South African national economy more fully into the global economy, attracting foreign investment, increasing the role of the private sector, and downsizing direct state involvement in the economy. Under neo-liberalism, housing became subject to processes of commodification in post-apartheid South Africa. As a result, GEAR undoubtedly had a negative impact on the quantity and quality of housing service delivery, in part because it required the government to spend less on public services while emphasising cost-recovery measures (Khanya College 2001: 47-48). In other words, a more market-oriented housing programme was put in place. Such a macro-economic policy tends to view markets as the main housing delivery mechanism and requires the state to cut its social expenditure because the latter is seen as an expense and not an investment. Limited

government involvement places an increased burden for housing provision on poor families themselves.

GEAR economic policy has impacted on human settlements in many other ways, of which only three are mentioned here. First of all, any privatisation of housing and service delivery favours richer people because they can afford market-driven prices. Such discriminatory actions against the poor “raises serious concerns in terms of upgrading of marginalised areas, and economic viability when large proportions of the populations cannot afford to pay for services” (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 65). Secondly, privatisation of urban space takes place. Government policies facilitating the involvement of private development companies and the finance industry in human settlements leads to the commodification of the management of built urban environments. This became reflected for instance in the formation of City Improvement Districts, which were to be responsible for security and maintenance of urban spaces. City Improvement Districts collect tariffs from taxpayers in a defined geographic area over and above the normal charges. Unlike the normal rates, the money collected is a tariff that is used to provide extra services according to an approved city’s business plan. For example, in upgrading abandoned inner cities. City Improvement Districts are often associated with neoliberalism as this involves transforming a publicly owned space into private space, hence leading to privatisation and outsourcing of public services. Thirdly, the spatial distribution of investments has taken on a particular form. The Spatial Development Initiative (SDI) programme sought to identify urban spaces with potential for economic investment and growth, and this entailed the utilisation of public resources for enhancing private sector investment: “The Spatial Development Initiative (SDI) program was conceived by the Cabinet in 1995 as an attempt to improve the functioning of government in targeted regions of the country, particularly in those areas where the greatest potential for growth exists (Jordan 1998: 717).

Overall, economic redistribution in large part has played second fiddle to economic growth in post-apartheid South Africa. In this regard, although claims are often made about major differences and contradictions between RDP and GEAR, neither programme fully articulated and pursued housing delivery as a basic human right. In other words, the difference may be one of degree or emphasis rather than of kind. But certainly GEAR in particular is questioned in terms of its repercussions for long-term housing settlement sustainability (Landman 2004: 6-7). Although, as indicated, economic viability is necessary for sustainable human settlements, social reproduction has regularly taken a back-seat vis-à-vis economic growth. The

drawbacks of both RDP and GEAR are particularly troublesome given the enormous human settlement tasks faced by the new democratic government in 1994. The principles in both (involving a difficult mix of growth and redistribution), to a greater or lesser extent, continue however to plot the direction of current South African housing policy. In other words, despite neo-liberalism, the ANC government does remain committed to a substantial public housing programme as part of a redistributive policy thrust.

Ten years later, GEAR was replaced by the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGI-SA) (Chagunda 2006, Van der Walt 2010). Like GEAR, ASGI-SA begins with a statement that promises to create jobs, halve unemployment, and reach sustained economic growth (approximately 6% per year by 2010) (Van der Walt 2010: 2). The government, labour, business and civil society agreed that poverty and unemployment are – at least indirectly – the greatest causes of social reproduction problems facing the country. ASGI-SA was introduced to improve economic growth and policy implementation by dealing with the following issues which, ultimately, generate challenges pertinent to social reproduction at household and community levels: lack of skilled and committed staff in the public service; lack of human resources to implement policies; inadequate financial resources; corruption and mismanagement of funds; lack of people-driven development; lack of proper co-ordination between institutions; barriers to entry, limits to competition and limited new investment opportunities (Chagunda 2006: 2). Importantly, ASGI-SA was also largely aimed at promoting and improving basic infrastructure. Acknowledging that a huge backlog in infrastructure developed in the first ten years of GEAR, ASGI-SA envisaged real and substantial increases in investment spending, growing at about 10% to 15% per annum, and leading off with R370 billion being spent from October 2005 to March 2008 (Van der Walt 2010: 3).

In 2010, the Ministry of Economic Development adopted the New Growth Path (NGP) as the agenda for economic policy and the guideline for the country's employment strategy. It was agreed that the public and private sectors should create decent work, reduce inequality and alleviate poverty through a new growth path founded on a reformed South African economy in order to increase economic performance in terms of labour absorption and rate of growth. The ANC government thus committed itself to identifying areas where employment creation is possible on a large scale as a result of substantial changes in conditions in South Africa and globally, including by mobilising domestic investment around activities which would create sustainable employment. In this respect, the NGP also spoke about pronounced social engagement by focusing all interested parties on encouraging growth in employment-creation

(Van Aardt et al. 2011: 1), thereby claiming that there needed to be shared responsibilities by all South Africans in creating conditions for enhanced economic activity. The specific objective of the NGP was to increase economic growth to sustainable rates of between 6% and 7% per annum in order to generate five million new jobs by 2020, thereby reducing the unemployment rate to 15%.

Only two years later, in 2012, the ANC government introduced the National Development Plan (NDP) as its strategic plan for future economic and socio-economic development for the country. The NDP involved a long-term master plan within which comprehensive planning can take place to eradicate poverty and reduce socio-economic disparities by 2030 (RSA 2012a, RSA 2012b). The Plan, which remains in effect, intends to guarantee that all South Africans realise a decent standard of living, with the core elements of such a standard of living identified as follows: housing, water, electricity and sanitation; safe and reliable public transport; quality education and skills development; safety and security; quality health care; social protection; employment; recreation and leisure; and clean environment and adequate nutrition (RSA 2012a, RSA 2012b).

Generally, in varying ways, an overarching trend in all the macro-economic policies from 1994 is that the state would holistically ensure that economic growth would occur simultaneously with addressing social reproduction challenges, as economic production and social reproduction are somehow mutually dependent. The linkages between economic growth and redistribution, as a basis for enhancing social reproduction, are articulated in specific ways by the ANC government. For instance, as the government provides housing to its less-privileged citizens, the demand for materials required in building of houses would increase. Consequently, employment opportunities in upstream industries supplying cement, bricks and other construction commodities would increase. In addition, with significant construction of public housing occurring, there would be greater employment in specifically the construction industry. Housing delivery, on this basis, is therefore seen by the ANC government as a catalyst for the alleviation of poverty. As well, the macro-economic policies are premised on the view that housing contributes positively to the social reproduction of households. The link between housing delivery and addressing social reproduction deficits stems from the belief that investing in infrastructure such as education, housing and health – though often seen as unproductive investment – is nevertheless critical for purposes of social and economic redistribution. Consequently, this became the basis for large-scale expenditure in public infrastructure and specifically human settlements (Charlton and Kihato 2006: 262).

However, all the policies starting from GEAR are marked by a neo-liberal macro-economic orientation which requires the state to spend less on social services including housing (Shivambu 2013, Goodlad 1996, Van Der Walt 2010). This might entail the state intervening strategically in specific economic sectors in order to stimulate them and thereby ensure that the overall goals of social redistribution and equity are achieved. But direct and intrusive intervention in the national economy by the state was to be kept to a minimum (as per neo-liberal logic), with the state acting as a mediator and regulator as well as welfare provider. Generally, this has also meant a shift from universal access to public goods such as housing as enshrined in the ANC's 1955 Freedom Charter (Van Niekerk 2007) and at least in part embodied in the RDP, to a more selective access to basic services by a reduction in state support for public infrastructural and social services. The South African state has tended to limit its investment in so-called 'unproductive' public goods and, as well, has compelled poor black citizens at times to rely on labour market access and commodified services to ensure social reproduction at household level. This marketisation of citizenship has therefore caused problems for enhancing conditions for social reproduction, including undercutting even survival strategies amongst the black urban poor (Randriamaro 2013).

This is not to claim that all challenges focusing on the state pertaining to housing, households and social reproduction in urban black South Africa are to be understood wholly in relation to neo-liberal restructuring. There are numerous state dispositions, rationalities and imperatives irreducible to the broader political economy, including the fact that the post-apartheid state does not have the fundamental characteristics of an authentic developmental state in terms of efficiency, capacity and quality in housing delivery (von Holdt 2010). For instance, despite the quantity of housing provided (RSA 2010), the quality of housing units falls far below acceptable standards for social reproduction. Public housing units are exceedingly small in size and the structures are of poor quality such that, in many instances, they do not withstand adverse weather conditions. In this regard, as Turner (1976:104) argues, "bureaucratic systems which offer mass housing" are regularly "concerned with the quantity and not with the quality of the houses". These quality challenges (including in relation to water and sanitation) invariably impact on the lives of housing occupants and on intra-household relations.

4.4 State Housing Programmes

To provide adequate housing to the urban poor in post-apartheid South Africa, local and national governments along with urban planners developed various housing policies, programmes and implementation strategies. However, these have not been successful in finding

an equitable and sustainable solution to tackling the crisis of social reproduction centring on urban human settlements. The ANC government thus continues to be faced with major policy and programmatic challenges with regard to urban social reproduction. These challenges focus on housing backlogs, inadequate service delivery, deep levels of poverty, high rates of unemployment and substantial inequalities including along racial lines, all of which together impact negatively on the quality of life for black urban township households. South Africa's housing policy is based on the understanding and recognition that housing is a fundamental right and a basic human need but, in the end, this recognition completely depends upon the availability of public funds for human settlements in the context of, as indicated earlier, a largely neo-liberal logic.

4.4.1 Early Housing Mandates

The new constitution, and the specific clauses on housing in it, was formulated and drafted during the transitional phase away from apartheid from 1990 to 1994. In this regard, the National Housing Forum (NHF), as a non-governmental negotiating body, was created before the first democratic elections in 1994 to formulate South Africa's housing policy. It was a representative forum consisting of nineteen members from the community, government, business and development organisations (National Department of Housing 2000: 3). Various possible institutional arrangements and legal interventions for housing provision were investigated and developed, which were then considered by the new democratic government in 1994 as the basis for moving forward.

Subsequently, a National Housing Accord was agreed upon and signed by numerous representatives of various stakeholders, including government, civil society, urban communities, emerging contractors and the established construction industry, employers, developers, financial sector, international community and building material suppliers. This Accord formed the fundamental platform for South Africa's post-apartheid housing policy. The National Housing Accord was soon followed by the White Paper on Housing, which was officially announced in December 1994. The White Paper specifies the framework for any national housing policy, and it clearly articulated that the "Government is under duty to take steps and create conditions which leads to an effective right to housing for all" (Liebenberg and Stewart 1997: 150). All housing guidelines, policies and programmes to follow were expected to fall within the framework stipulated in the White Paper.

The South African Constitution (of 1996) entails a commitment to ‘social citizenship’. This promotion of some measure of ‘social citizenship’ exists in addition to political and legal equality enshrined in the Bill of Rights (Seekings 2000: 386). More specifically, proper housing is a socio-economic right contained in Section 26 of the Constitution, and is articulated as follows:

Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing. The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right. No one may be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished, without an order of court made after considering all the relevant circumstances. No legislation may permit arbitrary evictions (RSA 1996:1255).

Effectively, the right to housing is a qualified right in South Africa. The government must ensure the progressive realisation of this right, but this realisation is made contingent on the availability of public resources. The statistics provided earlier in this chapter clearly show that, despite the constitution’s claim about housing as a right, and the seemingly progressive housing policies and programmes of the ANC government, poor urban blacks as a whole continue to experience extreme difficulties in sustaining a decent and dignified human settlement-based quality of life.

The Housing Act of 1997 (Act No. 107 of 1997) was subsequently enacted and this extended and broadened the provisions stipulated in the housing White Paper. The Housing Act was meant to assure that there was some degree of alignment and harmony between any national housing policy and the Constitution of South Africa in terms of the state’s broad housing commitments. In doing so, it identified (as discussed later) the roles and responsibilities of the three spheres of government in post-apartheid South Africa, namely, national, provincial and municipal tiers.

In terms of visualising the character of post-apartheid human settlements, the White Paper on Housing indicated that the government’s aim was to:

Create viable integrated settlements where households could access opportunities, infrastructure and services, within which all South Africa’s people will have access on a progressive basis [to]

- A permanent residential structure with secure tenure, ensuring privacy and providing adequate protection against the elements; and
- Potable water, adequate sanitary facilities including waste disposal and domestic electricity supply (National Department of Housing 1994: section 4.3).

In covering aspects such as infrastructure, housing delivery strategies and institutional arrangements for housing provision, as well as housing finance, the White Paper and the resulting Housing Act are in large part consistent with the government's constitutional obligations. Additionally, to pursue this further, the Housing Act set out the administrative procedures for the development of a national housing policy (Hopkins 2004: 4).

The White Paper on Housing demonstrates the ways in which the government's entire programmatic approach to housing problems is first and foremost designed to harness and organise the joint resources, efforts and initiatives of communities, the state and the private sector (Tissington 2011: 59). On this basis, a key objective of any housing policy was to maximise the allocation of national budget allocations to housing (up to five percent). This would facilitate the delivery of housing on an ongoing and hopefully sustainable basis, including the initial official government target of one million houses in five years. This and later targets were to be pursued vigourously until the housing backlog was overcome (National Department of Housing 2000: 5). The government's housing policy (discussed below) though had no plans to upgrade informal settlements in urban spaces which were the legacy of segregationist and apartheid policies. Rather, it was anticipated that informal settlements would be substituted by standardised housing units with freehold title (Mamba 2008: 62).

The National Housing Policy emerged in 1998. It is founded on seven main strategies, namely "stabilising the housing environment, mobilising housing credit, providing subsidy assistance, supporting the People's Housing Process, rationalising institutional capacity, facilitating speedy release and servicing of land and coordinating government investment in development" (National Department of Housing 2000:7). The policy also implies that housing provision is not only about the final (material) product (or physical housing stock) as housing (more broadly defined as human settlement) is seen as vital for addressing issues of social reproduction and sustainability (Tomlinson 2007: 6-10). Although the sitting government is not expected to directly build housing for each and every citizen of South Africa, its duty is to make sure that all citizens enjoy the right to housing by creating at least an enabling environment which facilitates institutional arrangements for housing provision; in this sense, specific programmatic interventions should in no way "hinder access to housing rights" (Ismail 2005: 28). The South African housing policy lays out, amongst other things, the government's commitment to delivering houses, its financial obligations as articulated in annual national budgets, and clear indicators of the objectives to be accomplished and the resources and the time-frames for delivery.

The government sought to activate the provision of low-cost housing for urban black townships by extending housing credit to beneficiaries and builders through two processes. The first mechanism was the National Housing Finance Corporation (NHFC), which offered capital to intermediary bodies such as private companies or municipal entities established by municipalities to execute their housing mandate (see below), which in turn would lend funds to the housing beneficiary. The second was the National Reconstruction and Housing Agency (NURCHA), which provided funding for established contractors and estate developers to build low-cost housing for poor South Africans. Historically, banks in South Africa (as elsewhere) have been unwilling to provide loans for low-cost housing projects because the profit generated was considered extremely low on such housing developments, and hence the above arrangements were seen as crucial (Department of Housing 2004: 3). Furthermore, in order not to compromise the quality of low-cost housing stock, the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) was expected to manage an assurance scheme which formulates norms and standards for the building of low-cost housing. All low-cost houses constructed were to meet the standards set by the assurance scheme as part of the overall housing construction programme (Department of Housing 2004: 3).

In the end, the housing policy and associated initiatives sought to provide low-income groups with subsidy assistance in order to become home owners in their own right, thereby hopefully improving the quality of human settlements in black urban townships and rural areas as well. In this light, the Housing Subsidy Scheme (HSS) was introduced in March 1994. The household-based subsidy was initially for households earning R3,500 and less a month to help them to obtain secure tenure, a roof over one's head (house) and basic services. Subsidy applicants had to meet certain stipulated requirements, namely, they had to be South African residents, married or cohabit continually, lawfully eligible to enter into a contract, over 21 years of age and not be an owner of a house anywhere in South Africa (Pottie 2004, National Department of Housing 2000, Ndinda 2003, Adler and Oelofse 1996).

4.4.2 Government Housing Structures

All three tiers of government (national, provincial and municipal) are involved in low-cost housing provision. These joint responsibilities on housing would necessitate good communication and cooperation between the different levels of government (McCarthy and di Lollo 2010: 1). The key central state department contributing in particular to housing as a site of social reproduction is the Department of Housing, known as the Department of Sustainable Human Settlements as from 2009. It offers support for housing development to municipalities

in particular. It also approves housing projects and subsidies, assesses municipalities' applications for accreditation to oversee national housing programmes, and monitors the performance of municipalities (Kallis and Nthite 2007). At the local level, municipalities (considered as the crucial development agencies in South Africa's governance system) have been delegated and assigned the responsibility of ensuring that residents receive proper housing. In fact, Section 153 (a) of the Constitution clearly indicates that local governments must give priority to the basic needs of communities (Pottie 2004). However, in part because of lack of financial resources and problems with capacity, municipalities have regularly overlooked (or even ignored) the issue of social reproduction and the quality of houses they provide in urban centres (Mafukidze and Hoosen 2009, du Plessis and Landman 2002). Other national government institutions involved in processes of social reproduction at local levels, in different forms and degrees, are the Department of Social Development, Department of Health, Department of Basic Education and Department of Public Works, all of which work in collaboration with the housing department. Together, if the housing statistics outlined earlier in the chapter are a good indication, the Department of Housing along with other departments have underperformed in terms of ensuring dignified forms of social reproduction in urban black settlements.

The role of municipalities is seen as critical to an inclusive housing programme, and to local social and economic development more generally. Overall, in terms of Section 152 (1) of the Constitution, municipalities are required to carry out such functions as: (a) promote democratic and accountable government vis-à-vis local communities, (b) guarantee the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, (c) encourage a safe and healthy environment, and (d) promote the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government matters (RSA 1996). Further, Section 9 (1) of the National Housing Act stipulates the responsibilities of local government with regard to housing service delivery.

In performing their roles, municipalities are entitled to an equitable share of revenues accumulated at national level, as well as grants received from the revenues allocated to national government (Mamba 2008: 66). Both central revenue shares and grants are add-ons to a municipality's own sources of (often inadequate) revenues which are intended for the provision of basic services and the accomplishment of functions assigned to the local government sphere. Financing local housing provision is processed mainly through government's housing subsidy scheme (as discussed above) and the Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programme (Department of Housing 2003: 172). The Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programme

(CMIP) is designed to provide community services, infrastructure and facilities to support poor South Africans. It also seeks to foster the developmental impact of the service delivery process. The programme offers capital grants to municipalities to deliver services and facilities such as cemeteries, sports facilities, water, roads and solid waste disposal. Besides this national level support, provincial governments also offer support for housing development to municipalities. (Kallis and Nthite 2007: 7-8).

Municipalities, as indicated, are conceptualised and designated as the country's key developmental agents. They are supposed to provide and indeed accelerate housing delivery by ensuring the availability of bulk infrastructure as well as land and services for low-cost housing units. In addition, they are supposed to play a primary role in upgrading formal settlements, relocating informal settlements, managing rental stock, redeveloping hostels and providing high density housing units (including apartment blocks) falling under their area of jurisdiction. Through implementing the (often-lofty) Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) which all municipalities are expected to produce (and in fact must produce), municipalities are to ensure that – within the relevant framework of national and provincial legislation – there is access to adequate and decent housing for all (Mamba 2008: 67). This includes the delivery of many basic services without which it is not possible to deliver housing, such as infrastructure and water.

If municipalities though are to realise their role as the country's key developmental agents, it seems clear that they would need much further back up and strengthening by both national and provincial departments (Mamba 2008: 67). Despite existing national and provincial support, local municipality authorities (as the agents for housing delivery service) are faced with many problems in the provision of low-cost housing. These include accessing funding for housing and infrastructure development; building local government capacity to administer development; meeting housing needs to redress the housing backlog; and “co-ordinating housing development in the light of other development needs and limited state resources” (Pottie 2003: 21). In particular, it would appear that municipalities have been given major developmental responsibilities without the necessary revenue sources to live up to these responsibilities.

4.4.3 Breaking New Ground on Sustainable Settlements

During the first decade of post-apartheid society, the ANC government introduced and implemented a number of policies, laws and programmes (such as the Housing Act 107 of

1997) with regard to housing delivery. The housing stock constructed during this period is normally referred to, at least colloquially, as RDP housing. More recently, a new housing initiative emerged, called “Breaking New Ground (BNG): A Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements” (Tissington 2011; Department of Human Settlements (DoH) 2004), in a quest to overcome the crisis of social reproduction.

The Breaking New Ground (BNG) document was published by the Department of Human Settlements (the then Department of Housing) in 2004, and it recognises the limitations of the existing housing policy and programmes, notably providing houses only (without focusing on human settlements broadly) and the emphasis on quantity of houses delivered instead of quality (Mthembi-Mahanyele 2002: 8). According to the Department of Housing (2005), the existing housing programmes did not offer choices in meeting the diversity of housing needs, including managing the pervasive informal settlements. Although progress can be seen in the delivery of low-cost housing since 1994, South Africa has failed to overcome the past race-based differences in housing provision as well as associated municipality service delivery failures (Rust 2008: 32).

It was in response to these ongoing concerns about social reproduction that BNG arose as the main national policy document for housing delivery (Goss et al. 2010: 3). The BNG marked a significant shift in housing policy, with an emphasis now not simply on housing and associated physical infrastructure but on developing sustainable human settlements. Pursuing BNG would entail all spheres of government becoming cognisant of the notion of human settlement and bringing about in practice the right to human settlements (Victor 2009: 52). It therefore entailed a re-assessment of housing delivery processes and mechanisms, and it set out the following objectives, amongst others:

- Facilitating the delivery of housing as a main strategy for poverty reduction;
- Using the provision of housing as an employment creation strategy;
- Fighting crime, promoting social cohesion and improving the quality of life for the poor;
- Using housing as the foundation for the development of sustainable human settlements, including spatial restructuring;
- Supporting and facilitating an affordable rental and social housing market;
- Promoting upgrading of informal settlements; and
- Providing community support services through housing delivery (Hopkins 2004: 8).

The concept of human settlements, and the viewpoint that these need to be sustainable, is significant in the BNG document. Although the notion of sustainability is mentioned many times in government housing documents from 1994 to 2003, the notion of sustainable human settlement is never articulated. The more focused stress on human settlements is a clear reflection of the – now – Department of Human Settlements’ close relationship with United Nations (UN) Habitat and its commitment to the goals, principles and commitments of the Habitat Agenda (signed at the UN conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul in 1996) in relation to urban sustainability. As a result: “The new human settlements plan reinforces the vision of the department of human settlements, to promote the achievement of non-racial, integrated society through the development of sustainable settlements and quality housing” (Department of Housing 2004: 1). Clearly, the concept of ‘human settlement’ is significantly more embracing than ‘housing’ and it entails a mode of living and not simply habitation of a physical structure through for example ‘promoting social cohesion and improving the quality of life for the poor’.

Thus the key concepts found in the BNG document regarding the formation of sustainable human settlements are as follows:

- Social and economic infrastructure: The vision is to develop sustainable human settlements, and BNG seeks to move towards the development of social and economic infrastructure as an essential component of settlements instead of the “housing only approach” (Department of Housing 2004: 9).
- Spatial restructuring: BNG identifies the vital role played by housing in spatial restructuring by for instance supporting integration and densification (making more efficient use of limited urban space or finding place for more people to live and work) of urban residential areas.
- Demand-responsive differentiated housing delivery: The BNG suggests shifting from a “commoditised focus of housing delivery toward more responsive mechanisms which addressed the multi-dimensional needs of sustainable human settlements” (Department of Housing 2004: 11).
- Holistic view of housing market: The BNG intended to increase the scope of the state’s housing mandate, and it highlights the role of the state in promoting the whole residential property market, for instance support the housing subsidies (Goss et al. 2010: 3).

Besides trying to maximise housing quality, the BNG found it essential to develop appropriate and varied settlement designs and housing products. For example, an alternative available to

certain groups of people in need of housing under BNG is social housing. Social housing refers to housing available for “low-to-medium income persons that is provided by housing institutions, and that excludes immediate individual ownership” (Ramashamole 2011: 40). This housing option is not for the very poor. In this respect, beneficiaries accessing accommodation from housing institutions under this scheme would have to earn a guaranteed income or salary, formally or informally, and be able to pay for the rental or other forms of payment for accommodation (Ramashamole 2011: 40). Social housing could take on different forms (for instance, hostels, room accommodation and multi-level apartments) and have various tenure options (for instance, rent-to-buy, rental and co-operative housing) to meet different spatial and affordability requirements. The building of institutional capacity within the social housing sector and the promotion of private sector investment in social housing are said though to need greater attention in order to support the delivery of social housing (Hopkins 2004: 10).

The BNG perspective on informal settlements, which differs from the pre-BNG era, highlights that these settlements should be upgraded if possible. This would result in the incorporation of these settlement areas into the broader urban spatial structure, leading to an overall stabilisation of urban public housing stock. The overall approach is two-pronged, that is, either phased *in-situ* upgrading where feasible or the relocation of households where human settlement development is impossible or undesirable. Well-situated public land or land held by parastatal organisations could be accessed for this purpose through an acquisition grant and provided to municipalities at no cost. At times, though, financing for purchasing private land (in relocating informal settlements) would be made available (Hopkins 2004: 9).

BNG provides a clear policy direction towards a more all-inclusive approach to the role-out of housing in the context of sustainable human settlements, including on paper a forceful spatial component or restructuring of urban spaces involving deracialisation (Goss et al. 2010: 3). This is an admirable pursuit. For example, in the context of black townships on the peripheries of cities and towns: “Bringing people close to the city is widely recognised as a positive move, not only on account of its ability to open up opportunities for the poor, but also because of the potential to utilise already existing infrastructure, and to use costly land optimally” (Adebayo and Adebayo 2000: 9). However, BNG supports implicitly, or at least works broadly within, a framework which presupposes unequal access to housing and amenities by maintaining the racially-segregated pattern of the apartheid city and town. Furthermore, there are new forms of urban segregation emerging (often class-based) in post-apartheid South Africa, such as gated communities, which strengthen or reconfigure apartheid’s spatial and social divisions (Du

Plessis and Landman 2002: 55). Therefore, although the BNG plan is to build sustainable communities in close proximity to areas of social and economic amenities (RSA 2009: 1), it is highly questionable whether this would be possible considering the ongoing segregated pattern of South African towns and cities. In this light, the potential to utilise housing policy to develop access to place, and to decrease present spatial inequalities and inefficiencies, has not been adequately explored by the South African government. Thus, the placement (and displacement) of poor black households in the urban peripheries continues to haunt South Africa and reproduces apartheid-style problems.

Ongoing challenges hinder the realisation of sustainable human settlements (Goss et al. 2010: 2). Some of the social reproduction challenges, which represent ongoing racially-based spatial dynamics, are as follows: houses in urban townships (both RDP and now BNG houses) are far from the urban centres where important economic activities take place; owners of low-cost houses often sell or rent out their houses and return to informal settlements which are closer to economic opportunities; and the cost of transport from newly-built townships (again either involving RDP or BNG housing stock) to places of work are exceedingly high (Goss et al. 2010: 2). Clearly, houses which are nearer to places of employment or economic opportunities will have better access to a number of (even informal) economic activities to increase income and decrease transport costs (Farrington et al. 2002: 24). Those informal settlement households which are forced to vacate their settlement and move to public housing may end up being far away from their stable sources of livelihoods. Overall, in urban areas in South Africa, access to affordable transport is very important to allow people to move from one place to another in order to carry out various livelihood strategies (Chirau 2012: 17). Insofar as BNG is an advance on the RDP era, this might simply entail providing adequate housing in existing segregated communities (notably racially-segregated living spaces) in a way which might bring about more thriving and cohesive communities (Nobrega 2007: 6). Nevertheless, the fact that social relationships matter (in the BNG framework) is at least an important starting point in thinking about new ways of providing housing in a deeply segregated and contested society like post-apartheid South Africa.

Thus, though spatial restructuring of urban spaces seems unlikely under BNG, the BNG policy rightfully acknowledges that social reproduction is part and parcel of sustainable human settlements. The policy document states that:

Poverty manifests itself in different ways. Poverty is understood to involve three critical dimensions: income, human capital (services and opportunity) and assets. A composite

analysis of indicators in these three categories assists in compiling a broad picture of the experience of poverty in terms of deprivation of basic needs and the vulnerability, powerlessness and experience of exclusion which accompanies lived poverty. Housing primarily contributes towards the alleviation of asset poverty. This contribution is to be strengthened in the new human settlements plan through supporting the development of sustainable human settlements and the development of housing assets (Department of Housing 2004: 11).

This suggests that the satisfaction of basic human needs, including the eradication of poverty, is vital for social reproduction in achieving sustainable human settlements, with housing seen as a crucial asset for poor urban black households. Housing is not only used for accommodation and as the immediate site for social reproduction activities, but is also used potentially for income generation activities (Moser 1998:13). Of course, unless there are suitable national macro-economic policies which centre on the need for redistribution (for instance, through generating formal employment opportunities), then even the best human settlement programme will have only minimal effects.

In addition, in the spirit of the original RDP programme, the BNG document argues that it is vital for communities and the beneficiaries of government housing programmes to be organised to partner with government in the implementation of new or upgraded human settlements. This suggests that government institutions, and particularly at municipal level, should promote social cohesion in such a way that citizens work with government towards common goals. Importantly, the *Letsema* campaign was to be introduced to encourage communities and households to work in unity to address the crisis of social reproduction (Department of Housing 2004: 29). The *Letsema* campaign, as an initiative of the Department of Human Settlements, seeks to encourage citizens to assist the department to achieve its effort of building sustainable human settlements. This, along with the points discussed above, suggests that the Department recognises that there is a link (at least potentially) between social reproduction, households, livelihood activities, social capital and human settlements. In this sense, the BNG policy is aimed at producing and maintaining bridging and linking social capital to achieve a 'better life for all'. In this context, sustainable social reproduction in human settlements is seen as depending quite fundamentally on the positive qualities generated in and through social capital which is also partly determined by the physical design (or built environment) of such settlements.

4.5 Urban Livelihoods of Households

South Africa's prospects for broad-based development remain problematic, as it has "an economy in which social exclusion and poverty continue to interact in a mutually self-sustaining fashion" (Adato et al. 2006: 227). Poor South Africans suffer from for example educational and skills shortages, high levels of unemployment and spatial segregation, which lead to significant levels of exclusion from society and economy (Seekings and Nattrass 2006, Chagunda and Taylor 2012, Fonteneau and Develtere 2009). The development agenda of the post-apartheid state has therefore failed, amongst other things, to provide far-reaching skills-development programmes, employment creation and other income-earning opportunities (Brand et al. 2012, du Toit 2008). It is unclear whether the recently-introduced National Development Plan (entitled "Vision 2030") will make any significant difference in this regard and, in fact, it does not differ in any major way from earlier national macro-economic strategies. In the meantime, the current situation is characterised by a systemic crisis of social reproduction on a national scale, entailing an extremely detrimental impact on poor people's life choices and opportunities (Giddens 1979, Sen 1999/2000).

Housing, as part of a broader state-driven human settlement programme for urban black townships (as discussed so far in this chapter) is a critically-important site for social reproduction. Additionally, though, households as living in state housing (or often in informal settlements) engage in household-based strategies of social reproduction which also at times involve social reproduction activities at inter-household and community levels. These diverse livelihood activities, expressing forms of human agency, must be understood in the context of the systemic crisis of social reproduction in post-apartheid South Africa, as they are a reflection of this crisis and a means of coping with it at household level. As well, household livelihood options are shaped by the kinds and levels of access to resources and services which are often controlled and distributed by the state.

The relative absence of formal employment in post-apartheid South Africa has meant that poor urban blacks turn to other forms of – often erratic – income generation and livelihood strategies and rely significantly on the state's social assistance programmes, notably the old age pension and child support grant. Some of these alternative strategies are directly or indirectly based in the house such that poor blacks regularly use the place of residence also as a site of income generation. In this regard, Charlton (2004: 3) notes that "a key issue is the role that the house can play in supporting livelihoods – through, for example, a prime location in the inner city that reduces commuting time and allows a hawking and vending business to flourish". In short,

housing is important not only for what it is designed to be (a place of residence) with a particular use value, as it can take on other functions as well including becoming a source of financial assets (through, for example, renting rooms).

Poor black urban households, in ‘eating from the same pot’, pursue a multiplicity of livelihood activities including those which are not always acknowledged in the literature, such as informal forms of reciprocity and cutting down on food consumption (Mosoetsa 2011: 35). In an important study conducted in Enhlalakahle and Mpumalanga townships in KwaZulu-Natal Province, Mosoetsa (2011) describes the ways in which poor black people respond to their declining social and economic conditions. She highlights that the households of the poor “are fragile; they lack resources and are characterised by unequal power dynamics based on gender and age” (Mosoetsa: 2011: 147) and that “many of the livelihood activities” pursued “are survivalist and unsustainable in the long run” (Mosoetsa 2011: 53). In this section, I examine some of the household livelihood sources and strategies in post-apartheid South Africa amongst poor urban blacks, starting with urban agriculture.

4.5.1 Urban Agriculture

As Mougeot (2005:1) notes, mainly programmatically,

Urban populations are setting new standards and cities must re-invent themselves with new references if the needs of urban residents are to be met. There is a need to broaden our view of ensuring food security and income generation for urban residents, an aim that can be easily achieved using an urban agriculture approach.

Urban agriculture as a practice is able to provide food, employment and incomes.

Through its benefits to food availability and security, nutritional status and even income generation through market sales on an informal trading basis (Battersby-Lennard 2011, Foeken 2006, Kruger et al. 2008:3, Pett 2005:68), urban agriculture has become relevant in post-apartheid urban townships to varying degrees. The crops produced are normally various forms of vegetables but also small stock (for example chickens and goats) or even large stock such as cattle. Depending on what is farmed, this might entail crops grown at the household property (such as vegetable gardens) or the use of public land or commonage around cities and towns in the case of cattle. Also, incomes generated by self-production and sales of food can contribute to household diets by allowing for the purchase of other essential nutritious foods such as fish and fruits (Bryld 2003, Small 2007). This means that urban agriculture contributes to food variation through for example availability of household disposable revenue (Kekana 2006; Zezza and Tasciotti 2010, Swindale and Bilinsky 2006, Landon-Lane 2004:16). In the process,

this reduces reliance on the market for food purchases, which is critical given the absence of substantial household financial resources in black townships. In this respect, it has been suggested that poor households in Johannesburg may spend up to 80 per cent of their incomes on buying food and, even then, the quantity and nutritional value of the food is insufficient (Onyango 2010: 9).

The main reason for engaging in urban agriculture is poverty, as low household incomes linked to recurring household expenditure leads households to seek alternative means to meet their basic food requirements. Farming then is expected to be advantageous in terms of food security and income generation (Mougeot 2005:2). At times, households are compelled to sell some of the food grown to meet other expenditures, even if they do not have sufficient food to eat. At the same time, urban agriculture may involve minimal financial investment (for example, perhaps only seeds) and a small amount of unpaid household labour, with possibly a quick return from sales of leafy vegetables within six to eight weeks. But of course a reliable and inexpensive supply of water is crucial.

The case of the informal settlement of Orange Farm, which is approximately 42 kilometres from Johannesburg, where levels of poverty are extremely high, illustrates such points (Beall Crankshaw and Parnell 1999, GJMC Report 2000, City of Johannesburg 2005/6). Most households in Orange Farm are dependent upon monthly social grants which fall far short of meeting their basic household needs. People at Orange Farm engage in both livestock farming and crop farming. For them, urban agriculture for own consumption of crops grown releases money that would otherwise be spent on buying certain foods. Availability of land suitable for agriculture is an element which encourages urban agriculture, with shortages of such land being a key constraint in this regard (Reuther and Dewar 2005:101). In the case of Orange Farm, there is plenty of land available inside and around Orange Farm which can be converted for purposes of urban agriculture activities. Many open spaces of land exist adjacent to the railway and electricity lines which are used for urban farming, with land under electrical poles and lines commonly utilised for urban farming practices in other places in and beyond South Africa such as Soshanguve near Pretoria (Kekana 2006), Harare (Mbiba 2005), and Kampala (Maxwell and Zziwa 1992). There is also land available along storm water management systems in the Orange Farm area (Onyango 2010). However, most of the households farming at Orange Farm complain about the small size of their plots for farming, with some vacant land available but simply too far from the informal settlement. In this regard, most households have to use tap water for their crops and long distances carrying water inhibits land use. As it stands, plots are

often at a distance from household units, and this leads to stealing of matured crops and destruction by livestock particularly where there is no fencing (Onyango 2010: 173-174).

In Cape Town, there seems to be a rising movement of micro-farmers in the townships who are farming vegetables not only to feed their families but also to generate income from surplus produced. A micro-farming civil society organisation known as Abalimi Bezekhaya is assisting many unemployed Cape Town residents in feeding their families and generating self-help employment opportunities in order to reduce poverty (Small 2007:2, Arku et al. 2012: 7). This organisation provides interested individuals with seeds, seedlings and fertiliser as well as the required training and support to cultivate their own food. Together, these farmers cultivate a number of organic vegetables including cauliflower, beetroot, broad beans, carrots, peas, cabbage, spinach and other vegetables depending on the season. Approximately 3,000 farmers and mostly women were engaged in this at the time of the study by Small (2007), with 2,500 of them cultivating crops in home gardens to provide for household consumption and 500 others moving beyond the merely survivalist level to make a living from the fresh vegetables they produce in community vegetable gardens. Vegetables are often sold to individuals walking by, but about 50% of the crops are reaped and sold to individuals in wealthy areas of the city through the organisation's marketing department, Harvest of Hope (Small 2007:3). As a result of these successes, some farmers were earning as much as R1,500 a month after expenses (or as profit), and it was hoped the level of profit would double in the years ahead. The intention in fact was to assist all the farmers in moving from survivalist agriculture to market-orientated commodity agriculture (or at least semi-commercial farming). In another study of Cape Town, Reuther and Dewar (2005:101) reveal that – with specific reference to Khayelitsha township – food gardens have been established in church grounds because of lack of farming land and to avoid theft of matured crops.

4.5.2 Informal Trading

South Africa's high unemployment level remains one of the government's most critical challenges (Fleetwood 2009: 34), with estimates of around 25 per cent of the nation's labour force being unemployed (Statistics South Africa 2011: VI) in terms of just the narrow definition of those people actively seeking work. Because of this, the number of informal vendors or traders has escalated significantly since the end of apartheid (Skinner 2008: 229). The informal economy more broadly contributes considerably to the South African economy with about 2.2 million people involved in informal businesses in 2010 (Quantec Research 2011).

Street business is one of the major sectors of the informal economy. Thus, this economy has become a visible feature in all urban spaces in post-apartheid South Africa in “both major cities and smaller towns and wherever there is traffic such as at bus stops, train stations, truck stops and, of course, the streets” (Siqwana-Ndulo 2013: 2). But the spatial setup in South Africa, with its history of segregation and apartheid, has led to racially-segregated residential spaces which currently place the black poor at the periphery of cities and towns far away from the black and white affluent or middle classes which may purchase goods sold from street vendors. As a result, street vendors often operate within the black townships and, for those traders who work in the central business districts (including at bus depots) in order to capture a larger walk-by market, significant transport costs are incurred on a daily basis. And often, the urban setup (including the streets and pavements) of these districts are not designed in such a way to facilitate informal trading.

Streets though are critical to human settlements and in fact are multipurpose spaces where the elements of “city life are combined: contact, public social life, people-watching, promenading, transacting, natural surveillance and culture”. In short, “streets bring together people who do not know each other in an intimate, private social sense, including strangers” (Montgomery 1998: 109, 110). However, the streets of urban South Africa are deeply differentiated, with black informal traders needing to make important decisions about which streets are most viable in generating financial capital. In this respect, it is important to note that many street vendors in South Africa are unskilled poor black women who trade in a number of goods including clothing, cigarettes, knick knacks, sweets, and most importantly in vegetables often homegrown and fruit (often purchased from retail outlets for resale). Their direct social reproductive and domestic responsibilities at household level may inhibit venturing far beyond their house in seeking customers for their goods.

Trading informally on the streets can function as a survival or coping strategy for the poor to escape hunger by producing some level of income (Fonchingong 2005:249). Income accumulated is used to add-on to other forms of family income; develop businesses; make transfers to relatives; cloth, feed and educate children; and save money (Akinboade 2005: 263, Neves 2010: 17, Skinner 2008: 25). But informal traders in South Africa encounter a number of interrelated challenges. Generally, there are four common challenges: economic pressures, sociocultural challenges such as around gender, adverse political conditions and policies, and operational challenges (Tambunan 2009: 46).

Economic barriers are the major obstacles people face in seeking to enter informal (including street) business in the first place. A number of people have no choice but to enter informal street trading because they cannot find formal employment, or they earn inadequate income elsewhere, or they have big households to sustain, or a mixture of the above (Akinboade 2005: 257, Cohen 2010: 279, Fleetwood 2009: 23, Fonchingong 2005: 243, Onyenechere 2009: 85, Skinner 2006: 130). Finding any capital to start the business through loans is a serious challenge for the poor (Ligthelm and Masuku 2003: 37), as ownership rights are needed as surety for bank loans. If informal street traders cannot provide surety, they cannot access formal credit from banks. As a result, they have to find other ways to access capital to start their informal businesses (Cichello 2005: 19, Fonchingong 2005: 247). Another financing possibility occurs through savings (though poor households have limited if no savings) or loans from informal sources, including family or moneylenders. High interest rates are usually charged on loans from moneylenders operating in black townships which the informal vendors struggle to pay back thereby increasing their debt (Fonchingong 2005: 247, Hansenne 1991: 28-29). When starting informal trading activities, it is not unusual for the capital base to be very minimal.

Sociocultural constraints are faced in particular by women who experience gender-specific barriers to engaging in informal street business, including access to funds (to kick-start informal trading) not controlled by the senior male of the household (Akharuzzaman and Deguchi 2010: 47, Akinboade 2005: 257, Bhowmik 2005: 2261, Fleetwood 2009: 1, Fonchingong 2005: 247, Onyenechere 2009: 86). But, under the social grant system of the post-apartheid state, women often can access funds through the child support grant and this is particularly important for single mothers. At times, constraints may in fact compel women to enter into informal trading activities. Poor black women in general are often excluded from the labour market, resources, income and education (Fonchingong, 2005: 245, Ligthelm and Masuku 2003: 21), and hence they seek out alternative income sources. Thus, according to Chirau (2012: 32), in his study of Harare women traders, “gender-based marginalisation (in production) and confinement (to reproduction work) lead women to engage – or find refuge – in livelihood activities in the informal sector which gives them a sense of dignity, responsibility and autonomy” (see also Wield and Chataway 2001: 5). This more autonomous financial existence (including in relation to the male spouse) often allows women access to funds which they then use specifically for the basic needs of children in the household. However, Mosoetsa (2011) cautions that any reversed role of women as breadwinners for their households has not

necessarily changed or shifted their intra-household bargaining power with men. At the same time, low-cost, state-provided housing has offered the growing number of single – including never married, divorced and widowed – women in South Africa’s urban areas the chance of not only possessing a house, but utilising it to generate some access to resources independently of a male figure.

Political conditions and policies often present complications for informal vendors. Skinner (1999: 17) reported that South African policies tend to constrain informal business operations rather than aiding them, especially though during the years of apartheid. The lack of suitable policies can restrict trading operations and participation as well as increase income vulnerability for informal traders (Canagarajah and Sethuraman 2001: 5; Skinner 1999: 17). But the promotion of livelihood strategies for its citizens is found in the South African Constitution, as Section 22 of the Constitution guarantees freedom of trade, occupation and profession, such that those individuals who see themselves as having no alternative other than street business are protected by the Constitution. Although the government constitutionally supports street trading, there are no clear measures put in place by the post-apartheid state to properly facilitate and support street trading, despite the positive role it plays in addressing the crisis of social reproduction at household level.

4.5.3 Social Networks and Grants

Social networks beyond the households and kin are very crucial in black urban townships, including the well-known informal rotating investments known as *stokvels* in South Africa. *Stokvels* are brought to the fore in a recent study conducted by Mukorombindo (2012) on the opportunities arising from, and challenges, of social networks and social cohesion in recently developed human settlements in black townships of Grahamstown. Significant social security networks amongst neighbours existed, including *stokvels*. Hence, local residents “expressed strong family like connections with fellow members and neighbours and acknowledged receiving some assistance from these local networks when in need” (Mukorombindo 2012: 143). Besides *stokvels* (or savings clubs), community networks in the form of burial societies and churches were said to be facilitating the building of social capital. While social networks in black Grahamstown made positive contributions to the financial sustainability of poor households, the overall burdens of unemployment and poverty over-shadowed and dented the effects of social networks. The study concluded that “linking capital, networks between residents and decision makers as well as other actors in these study areas are inadequate to create a sustainable and interdependent community” (Mukorombindo 2012: 150-151).

In a study conducted by Cross (2006) in Johannesburg, the importance of social networks is in fact downplayed, with questions raised about possible linkages between the breakdown of South African black households and government provision of low-cost housing. The study revealed that young single black women living in state housing with their families rejected any option to study further in the hope of formal employment. Instead they believed in living on their own resources through transactional sex and other income sources. Without a guaranteed or reliable source of income, these formally unemployed young women would delay marriage and forego the establishment of their own households (Cross 2006: 19), thus seemingly undermining the formation of marriage-based nuclear-family households. Further, they would often leave their own household without pursuing the acquisition of public housing even if they qualified for such housing. They would instead prefer to move to a nearby shack community or informal settlement. In doing so, they often left behind well-established household support systems and wider social networks focusing on their household of origin. The study concluded that, at least in the case of young single women, social networking (even where it exists) may not be the preferred option (Cross 2010: 5-6).

South Africa has a very strong social welfare system and a large amount of the post-apartheid state's social spending goes towards social grants. Thus, "South Africa's formal social welfare system is the only one in Africa ... that includes non-contributory grants and the country, proportionally speaking, has one of the largest welfare budgets in the world" (Mosoetsa 2011: 86). Sections 24 through 29 of the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution stipulate that citizens have a right to social security though the extent of this is contingent on state capacity and resources. Social grants are managed by the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). The social grants available in South Africa are the Child Support Grant, Older Person's Grant, Disability Grant, Grant-in-Aid, Care Dependency Grant, War Veteran's Grant and Foster Child Grant.

The main aim of social grants is to improve standards of living and redistribute wealth to create a more equitable society (Kelly 2016: 1). In pursuing this, approximately 16 million South Africans are recipients of social grants, with the child support grant being the largest programme in terms of the sheer number of beneficiaries. Though the monthly child grant remains less than R400, research has shown that the grant does make some kind of difference to household-based livelihoods by for instance assisting "in overcoming the financial barriers to school attendance" (Leatt, 2003: 5) and enhancing the nutritional status of children. In a study conducted by the Poverty and Inequality Institute (2013) in Evaton in Gauteng Province,

it was revealed that 36% of the households relied on social grants as their main source of income. In the end, though, grants allow for a mainly survivalist mode of existence.

4.5.4 Community Struggles for Service Delivery

Over the years, municipalities have not engaged with communities in a pronounced participatory manner, despite the fact that they are expected to do so as development agents. They have also failed to provide sufficient housing and related services to the satisfaction of black township households. The combination of these deficits has led to massive levels of so-called delivery protests throughout urban South Africa for a number of years, including people of all ages but with a significant presence of unemployed youth. They are regularly labelled as “so-called” because many of the concerns raised during the protests relate to uncaring, self-serving and corrupt municipal municipalities. South Africa has in fact witnessed a nation-wide movement of local township demonstrations and protests resulting in what has been called ‘a rebellion of the poor’ (Alexander 2010), though not regularly coordinated at inter-local levels. The service delivery struggles in urban South Africa are a clear indicator of marked inequalities in the urban housing and service delivery system. These inequalities are remnants of the apartheid system which was characterised by racially-discriminatory service delivery policies and practices. At the same time, neoliberalisation under post-apartheid conditions is also viewed as an important contributing factor to inadequate service delivery (Bond 2000, Ruiters 2005, McDonald and Pape 2002).

In this section, I do not focus on the seemingly spontaneous or at least highly-decentralised service delivery protests but on more organised struggles around water as well as developments with reference to informal settlements. It should be noted that service delivery protests along with more organised struggles are a highly-politicised form of social capital which at one level can be characterised as community-wide coping strategies in the face of the crisis in social reproduction.

4.5.4.1 Struggles Around Access to Water

One critical focus of the protests is access to water, but it epitomises other problems such as sanitation and is related to the overall challenges of dignified human settlements in black urban spaces in the country. The relatively limited state intervention in public infrastructure, facilities and services under the neoliberal orthodoxy of the post-apartheid state (as advocated by international institutions like the World Bank and IMF) has had far-reaching detrimental impacts on social reproduction in black townships. The South African government has in recent

years significantly reduced grants and subsidies to local municipalities and city councils and simultaneously reinforced the development of apparatuses for privatised delivery. This compelled some municipalities to turn towards commercialisation and privatisation of basic services as a way of generating income which is no longer offered by the national government. Without any broad-based consultation let alone negotiation, many local municipalities began to corporatise and even privatise public water services by going into service and management “partnerships” with multinational water companies. This has also involved short-term management contracts and long-term concessions with the private sector in relation to for example wastewater treatment (McKinley 2005: 1).

Clearly, when private companies seek to maximise profits through unsubsidised water prices, the poor are denied the absolute right to the most basic substance (that is, water) for life (Shava 2002). The commodification of water in South Africa has given rise to the implementation of a policy of “cost recovery” (McDonald 2002:18), which makes water more unaffordable for black township households. Although the government provides 6,000 litres of free water per household per month, this has proven to be insufficient for many larger households. Plus, disconnections of water sometimes occur because of delayed or non-payment, thereby infringing on basic constitutional rights to basic services (Bond 2006). Consequently, nationally, about 500,000 residents were cut off for failure to pay water bills in 2001 alone. Further, as a result of water commodification, there was a rash of disconnections affecting 275,000 households in 2003. Additionally, significant numbers of township residents do not have access to an ongoing and dependable supply of water at their house due to maintenance problems and crumbling infrastructure, while others use communal taps for accessing water. All this has also contributed to the outbreak and spreading of specific health problems including cholera in South Africa (Dawson 2008:78).

In reaction to water privatisation processes, poor populations in metropolitan areas such as Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town and various smaller cities, towns and peri-urban areas across South Africa have engaged in active resistance (McKinley 2005). This gave rise to water social movements such Anti Privatisation Forum (AFP) and Coalition against Water Privatisation (CAWP). The AFP, when it was at its strongest, was a very active and significant social movement generally situated in the Gauteng Province (which includes Johannesburg and Pretoria). Formed in 2000, the APF’s guiding principle was that basic needs, such as water, should be understood as a fundamental human right, and thus not a privilege to be enjoyed in

abundance only by those groups which can afford it. The APF (together with other social movements in South Africa and, to a lesser extent, the trade union movement) mobilised and organised poor communities in opposition to water privatisation. Together with educational and legal programmes, this involved systematic mass struggle intended at empowering poor South African citizens to reclaim the right to water, as well as to other basic services such as electricity and housing. These struggles soon incorporated progressive non-governmental organisations and consequently led to the formation of the CAWP near the end of 2003. With the support of the APF and CAWP, poor township households introduced a campaign called Operation Vulamanzi (“water for all”). This involved assisting township residents to literally evade certain privatised water control mechanisms by for example redirecting water piping in order to access water without restrictions and thereby decommodifying water supplies. In some townships, residents destroyed pre-paid metres as an overt act of defiance against privatised water provision (McKinley 2005). Similar actions have taken place with regard to other services such as electricity, with houses being connected illegally from the national power grid.

Throughout all this, social togetherness and bonding arose through community-wide struggles which simultaneously empowered poor black households. Various collective strategies, whether around water, electricity or other services, point to the fact that community solidarity assisted in absorbing shocks that came about as a result of lack of access to basic services. This was no doubt facilitated by the presence of pre-existing social networks which were then intensified and deepened during the course of struggles.

4.5.4.2 Self-Provision of Housing

Urban South Africa is characterised by significant numbers of sprawling informal settlements which exist outside formally-designated townships and in which shackdwellers reside. For households living in informal settlements, the post-apartheid promises of housing for all as a guarantee enshrined within the country’s constitution has proven to be an empty promise. The mere building of houses on non-designated land (which is rampant in and around Cape Town for example) is in itself a strategy by the urban poor for coping with the nation-wide housing shortages and ultimately it is act of resistance to state urban planning.

Reliable statistics on informal settlements in South Africa is difficult to come by. Statistics South Africa (Stats SA 2007a) reported that, in 2007, there were about 1.2 million people living within these settlements in South Africa (which amounted to 9.7% of South Africa’s estimated 12.5 million households) (Misselhorn 2008: 14). In 1994, about 1.06 million households

consisting of 7.7 million people lived in such settlements (Department of Housing 1994: 9). It is claimed that the relative number of households living in these settlements declined from 16,4% of the overall housing stock in South Africa in 2001 to 14,4% in 2007 (Stats SA 2007b). At the same time, the number of informal settlements have shockingly increased from 300 to 2,225 informal settlements, an increase of 650% (Tomlinson 2015: 1). Stats SA (2007a) estimated that there were 65,113 households in informal settlements in Cape Town in 2004 but the City of Cape Town claimed that there were approximately 94,972 households (Misselhorn 2008: 15). Statistics South Africa, it should be noted, does not take into consideration the high rates of illegal migration into South Africa from neighbouring countries like Zimbabwe and Mozambique. It is clearly difficult to count foreign nationals accurately as they are afraid of being identified and subsequently deported (Stats SA 2007a). There could in fact be up to four million households residing in informal settlements countrywide, without any clear indication that – in absolute terms – any decline is taking place.

The linkages between housing stock and instabilities in social reproduction is also seen in, and exacerbated by, mushrooming informal settlements and squatter camps in urban South Africa (Saff 1993: 235–255), with the vast majority of these residents living in abject poverty. Despite the extensive government-subsidised housing delivery since 1994, informal settlements have it seems become pervasive at a shocking rate (Huchzermeyer 2008: 41). As Misselhorn (2008: 14) notes:

Close to half of South Africa's 44 million people live in urban centres. A quarter of those in the major urban centres live in informal settlements. Despite considerable government efforts to transform urban environments and deal with developmental challenges such as education and health, many people continue to live in poverty and suffer a lack of access to basic services. This has been aggravated by unemployment at 50% or more within many of the largest urban informal settlements.

Compared to households living in townships, people living in informal settlements build their own houses and normally have less access to basic services. Broadly speaking, they live in undignifying and inhumane conditions as if they are unworthy of social citizenship (Fobosi 2012). Informal settlements are often built, but certainly not always, at the periphery of the cities where land is abandoned or available (Mahanga 2002: 28). In constructing their houses, shackdwellers normally use salvaged materials like wood, tin and corrugated iron. Generally, these crude dwellings lack an appropriate water supply, sanitation, drainage, waste disposal and proper road access, and such conditions compromise the health and safety of residents

(Cairncross et al. 1990: 67, Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1990: 121). This is largely because these informal settlements are considered illegal and are rarely serviced by local municipalities. However, under the BNG programme on informal settlements, these settlements should be upgraded if possible.

The extent of the prevalence of informal settlements in urban post-apartheid South Africa is aggravated by the constraints pertaining to costs for land deemed appropriate for housing the urban poor and low-income groups (Khan 2003: 53). The crux of the matter is that informal settlements are likely “here to stay” (Mosha 1995: 353), a claim from the 1990s which still appears relevant twenty years later. In this context, self-provisioning of housing in informal settlements is an attempt by the urban poor to solve the current housing challenges by themselves (Yuen 2007: 5, Schlyter 1995: 123), thereby circumventing official urban human settlement programmes of the ANC government. These settlements, as an expression of extreme poverty, provide cheap housing for the urban poor. In short, “they are economically useful, sometimes extremely useful, because they offer low cost housing options for the poor” (Biau 2011: 8). This of course in turn also potentially entails cheap labour for urban businesses because the costs of social reproduction of workers and their families are significantly reduced.

Clearly, then, even though urban shackdwellers are victims of poverty and vulnerability, as well as of exclusion from the formal housing stock and under threat of evictions at times, they are also agents who adopt their own strategies of social reproduction through the practice of constructing informal settlements. And once constructed, and normally without access to state-provided clean piped water, proper sanitation and healthcare services, these residents seek ways of ensuring such access and sometimes illegally (Gukurume 2012: 6-7). In this way, and in spite of the indignity and degradation of their material conditions of existence, informal settlement inhabitants manifest amongst themselves significant forms of social capital and cohesion (with almost at times a human face so to speak to these communities) and perhaps more so than state-planned townships (Huchzermeyer 2006: 3). This has been expressed most vividly in the emergence of shackdweller movements, notably Abahlali Basemjondolo based in KwaZulu-Natal Province. These movements have “questioned local municipalities and the housing delivery process through obstruction, confrontation and non-cooperation” (Pieterse and Oldfield 2002: 6).

Many of the shackdweller movements’ struggles relate to questions around evictions as against *in situ* upgrading. Informal settlements are sometimes better located than the designated

townships to which the government seeks to relocate shackdwellers, in large part because well-established employment opportunities exist nearby. For this reason, and despite the harsh living conditions in informal settlements, shackdwellers “prefer to live ... in low-to-zero serviced areas with reproductive opportunities for survival” (Marx 2003: 75) and may resist any state attempts to remove them elsewhere. In this sense, they prefer *in situ* upgrading of the informal settlement particularly when they are being forced to relocate to a place over which they have no choice. There are some cases, including in Cape Town, where inhabitants of informal settlements prefer relocation to a state-arranged township site because of the unhealthy conditions (for example, regular flooding) existing in the informal settlement. But, even in these cases, shackdwellers may resist being removed to a distant place (far from employment opportunities and schools) in which they are in effect being dumped by the state. When resistance occurs, the ANC government has tended to claim that shackdwellers are against development, that they are criminals or that they are being used by a Third Force. But shackdwellers have “very good reasons for not wanting to agree to forced removal to human dumping” lands in the urban periphery (Zikode 2013: 2).

Eradication of these settlements through relocation creates a host of problems for relocated households, including municipal site development charges which are often unaffordable for households (Aldrich and Sandhu 1995: 86). Further, it disrupts existing, sometimes cohesive, living communities. In this respect, Lalloo (1999) cautions that the eradication of informal settlements is problematic because relocated people often hold special attachments to the places they were compelled to leave, particularly because self-provisioning of housing through these settlements involves households in developing their physical and social environment and hence attaining a sense of ownership and identity. Formal public housing sites are “often planned and produced by state bureaucracy; hence, they do not have meanings and no sense of belonging to the beneficiaries” (Victor 2009: 57). In particular, relocation entails the loss of valuable social networks which were created (with considerable time and energy) in the previous settlement and this has negative impacts on social capital, with former shackdwellers now finding themselves living with strangers. For these reasons relocation can be a tragedy for shackdwellers despite the fact that the government will view it as housing delivery.

4.6 Conclusion

The ANC democratic government has introduced a number of initiatives at national, provincial and local level pertaining to urban housing in order to address and tackle the challenges of social reproduction in and for poor urban black communities. Significant advances have been made, including pronounced levels of public housing provision and a shift from housing narrowly defined to human settlement as a more all-embracing notion. However, serious housing backlogs continue to exist, as well as problems relating to state incapacities and the state's neo-liberal overreliance on the market to remedy past injustices (Hunter 2011). In this context, within urban communities in post-apartheid South Africa, poor black households devise and pursue their own livelihood activities in seeking to minimise the crisis of social reproduction. In this light, the following three (empirical) chapters discuss social reproduction with specific relation to eZamokuhle, with the first chapter (chapter 5) considering the built environment and housing programmes in eZamokuhle.

Chapter 5 Built Environment and Housing Programmes in eZamokuhle

5.1 Introduction

This chapter and the following two chapters discuss more specifically the research findings about the ongoing systemic crisis of social reproduction which exists in eZamokuhle in the context of state housing programmes and the social reproduction activities of black households in the township. Chapter 5 provides an overview of the built environment and housing programmes in eZamokuhle, including its spatial qualities, the structural quality of houses, and water, sanitation and sewerage. It also offers a brief overview of the local municipality as well as of the study participants. The depth of the social reproduction challenges in eZamokuhle, despite state interventions in the form of housing in the different sections of the township, already becomes evident from this introductory empirical chapter.

5.2 Overview of Local Municipality

Amersfoort is a very small town in Mpumalanga Province in South Africa. The town was established in 1888 around a Dutch Reformed Church which was constructed in 1876. Lying at 1,664m above sea level in the upper reaches of the Vaal River basin on the banks of the Schulpsspruit River, the area was first settled in 1876 when two farmers in the area contributed land to the church, after which Reverend Frans Lion Cachet proceeded to construct a Dutch Reformed church. The new (then) village was named after the hometown (in the Netherlands) of the Dutch farmers. When the land area became too small for the growing village, more land was acquired from one of the original donors and the town was proclaimed officially in 1888. The township of eZamokuhle (meaning ‘to make it beautiful’) lies adjacent to the town and contributes significantly to its economy. Dr Pixley ka Isaka Seme, one of the founders of the African National Congress, had law offices in Amersfoort and spent time there doing legal and political work for the community at Daggakraal, the Native Farmers Association, and the Swazi royal family in Swaziland. The current Dr. Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality (which includes the towns of Amersfoort, Volksrust, Wakkerstroom, Perdekop and Daggakraal) was named after him.

Amersfoort is situated approximately 42km north of Volksrust at the intersection of the N11 and the R35 from Bethal. It is a small service centre with some community and educational facilities and limited retail facilities. It seems to have development potential given its spatial location at a highway interaction and the railway line traversing the area, but the line is

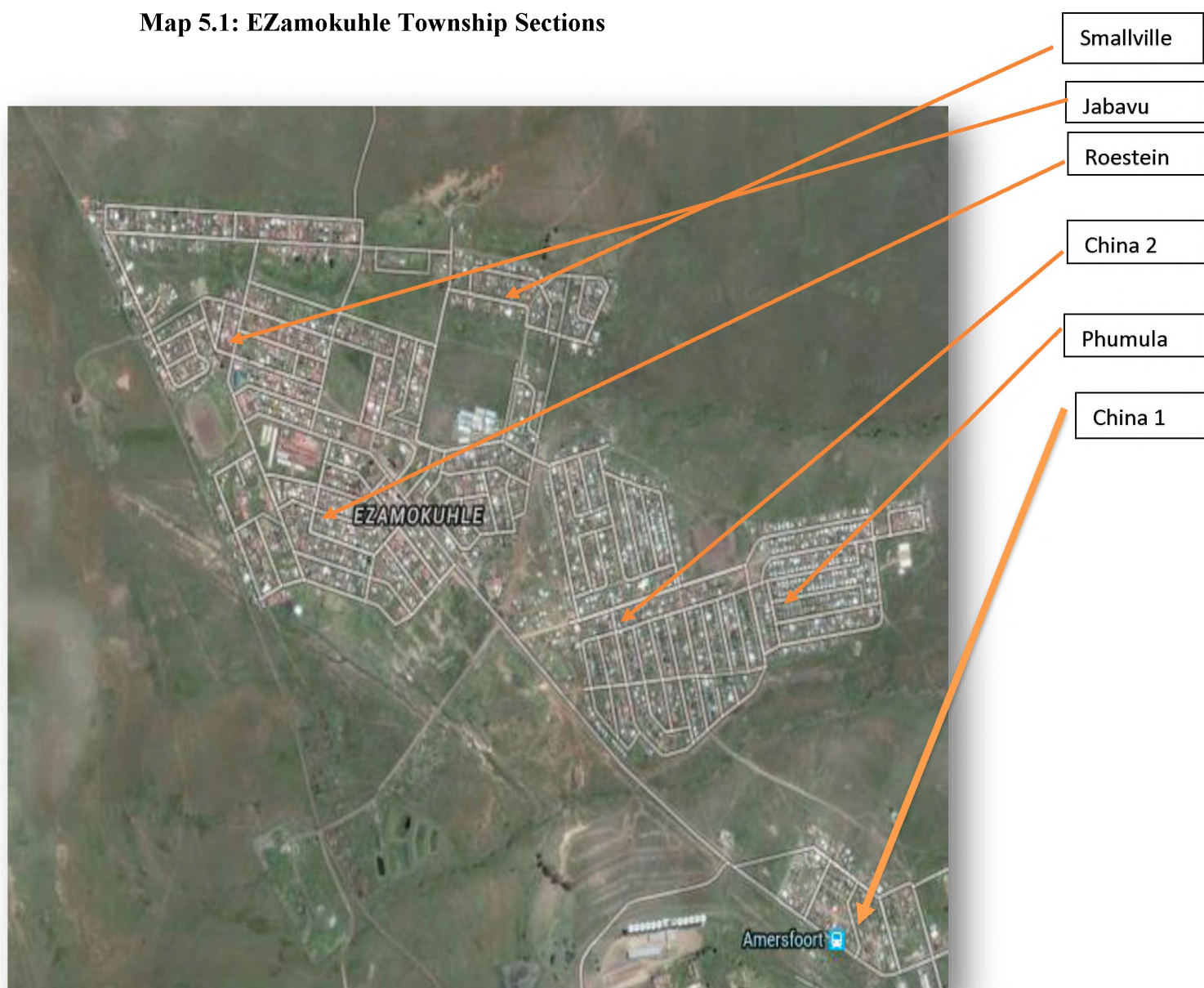
currently not utilised. eZamokuhle is situated northwest of Amersfoort town with Bree Street as the only connecting road between the two areas. The town is characterised by higher density development for the medium to low income groups, including those living in eZamokuhle. There are about 2,228 households in eZamokuhle (Malatsi 2013:116).

The dominance of Africans under the jurisdiction of the local municipal authority is clear, as they are approximately 92.9% of the population. The African population is followed by the White population at 4.4% with Asians and Coloureds only making up 2.7% together. The proportionally large African population in the area can be attributed in part to the presence of the Eskom Majuba Power Station which has led to in-migration amongst Africans as employment seekers (Malatsi 2013: 120). Of the total population, females make up 52% and males make up 48%. It seems that the life expectancy is lower for men than for women (Malatsi 2013: 122). Further, 53% of the population falls in the 15-35 age cohort. Such a concentration in this age grouping is also partially explainable by in-migration of young persons in search of work.

In eZamokuhle, there are four main land uses as observed by the researcher. Residential stands make up the biggest percentage of land use in the study area. In this regard, most people in eZamokuhle live on officially allocated stands. In short, they have secure land tenure and are protected from evictions which arise in urban South Africa because of occupying land illegally. The second major land use are public amenities like schools, clinics and recreational facilities. The third major land use involves civil works like roads and electricity which include the main taxi rank. Lastly, commercial amenities constitute a portion of the land use. There is a significant amount of unused land on the peripheries of eZamokuhle, as well as a small mountain with grass only and no trees. The unused land is grazed by cattle, sheep and goats while some people also hunt for antelopes and hare on this land. In the following sections, I discuss eZamokuhle more specifically, particularly by drawing upon my fieldwork.

eZamokuhle Township is a poverty stricken area with serious economic challenges and a high level of unemployment. The map below (Map 5.1) shows the different sections surveyed in eZamokuhle for the purposes of this thesis.

Map 5.1: eZamokuhle Township Sections



Source: AfriGIS (Pty) Ltd., <https://maps.afrigis.co.za>.

5.3 Profile of Study Sample

For the survey undertaken in eZamokuhle of 100 households, 36% of the respondents were male and 64% of the participants were female. In fact, most of the households which participated in the survey are female-headed households. In the households surveyed, there were 516 people living in all the households or an average household size of 5.16. China 1, China 2 and Phumula followed by Jabavu section are characterised by overcrowding. The age breakdown of the participants is as follows: between the ages of 18 and 30 (45%), between 31 and 40 (31%), between 41 and 50 (10%) and over fifty – including pensioners – 10% (see Table

5.1). 4% of the respondents were uncomfortable in revealing their age and all of them were female. One female respondent estimated to be between the ages of 30 and 35 reported that:

A woman does not tell her age, it is a taboo. It is culture; you should know these things. Hahahahahahaha [laughing] (December 14, 2014).

Table 5.1: Ages of Participants

Ages	No. of Participants	Percentages
18-30	45	45%
31-40	31	31%
41-50	10	10%
50+	10	10%

Regarding the marital status of participants, 52% of the respondents were single and had never married, 31% of the respondents were married, 11% were divorced, 4% were widowed and 2% were not comfortable to reveal their marital status. In terms of highest educational level attained, 25% of the respondents have a primary level education, 15% have a lower secondary level education, 46% a higher secondary level education and 7% have tertiary education; while 7% of the respondents have no formal education whatsoever. A significant number of school dropouts in the study area were females and this is because of pregnancies and the difficulties of returning to school after giving birth to a child.

5.4 Spatial Qualities of the Settlement

Public infrastructure and utility services contribute, at least potentially, to the livelihoods and social networking of local residents. This is important given the argument by the UN Centre for Housing, Building and Planning (1974: 9-10) that such public goods are part of “the territorial habitat within which man [and woman] lives, works, raises his [or her] family and seeks his [or her] physical, spiritual and intellectual well-being”. The quality of these public goods, their spatial arrangement and the kinds of access to them available, influence quite significantly the effective functioning of human settlements and the quality of social reproduction for residents (UN Human Settlements 1976: 154). In this regard, residents in eZamokuhle experience significant problems. Deep dissatisfaction in fact prevails.

In the study area only the main roads, which are few in number comparatively speaking, are tarred. Most of the roads (the minor roads) in eZamokuhle are gravel roads but they are all

generally well-maintained and there is road access to each and every stand. The transport system involving public transport (namely, kombi taxis) enables the movement of residents to town and from places in town back to eZamokuhle along the main route called Bree Street. This transport service, involving connections as well within eZamokuhle, represents a significant way of integrating the local spatial environment with the surrounding transport routes to areas such as Eskom Majuba Power Station, Volktrust and Emerlo. The main taxi rank is along Bree Street behind KwaSimelane shopping complex. The rank is an open parking area for waiting taxis during peak and off peak periods. It rests on unpaved ground, with no shelters for taxis and passengers, and no administration offices for the local taxi association. Despite the fact that there is road transport infrastructure, many people in the study area walk in order to save money. Most study participants were satisfied with the distance from eZamokuhle township to Amersfoort (town). It was reported that to walk from the study area to town takes approximately 35 to 45 minutes. In contrast, a taxi takes approximately 5 to 8 minutes to town. Though the distance to Amersfoort town is short, the taxi services – if used extensively – would form a significant part of the average household budget in eZamokuhle. Only a few people have access to a private vehicle for transport purposes.

The absence of footpaths also means that pedestrians share the roads with cars and taxis and there have been reported incidences of accidents despite speed bumps on the main roads. A woman aged 33 indicated:

We had a few incidents whereby pedestrians were knocked down by cars as motorists were speeding. We as residents requested the municipality to install humps to make our roads safe for us and our children (December 10, 2014).

The quality of the streets in terms of walking is generally poor as there are no footpaths or pavements. Study participants also reported that when it rains it is hard to walk around because the untarred roads become very muddy. And when it is dry, there is severe dust under windy conditions which aggravates sicknesses. As one female respondent aged 35 reported:

Our roads need to be tarred; when it rains it becomes very muddy ... You have to wear gumboots because normal shoes easily get damaged. Some of us are suffering from TB and when its windy [when the roads are dusty] we get affected, we cough a lot (December 14, 2014).

Additionally, in China 1 and China 2 specifically, the research found that some streets are extremely dirty with papers and plastics all along these streets. Some corners of streets, along with shops and taverns, have the stinking smell of urine. In China 1, China 2 and Jabavu

sections, the absence of proper drainage systems adds to the problem, as well as resulting in soil erosion. This is not in line with the National Housing Programme's building norms and standards for standalone houses.

The supply of electricity in Ezamokuhle is generally overhead and no streetlights are installed, which is of major concern amongst residents with regard to public safety. Streets lights are only found in the main road called Bree Street which runs from Amersfoort to eZamokuhle. High mast lighting was only installed in Roestein, Jabavu and Smallville. However, Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) funding now has been secured for the installation of streetlights. No other network upgrades are currently proposed. EZamokuhle shares the 500 kVA capacity with Amersfoort and therefore no capacity backlog is recorded for the town (Malatsi 2013: 120). In China 1, China 2 and Phumula sections, residents reported a high level of crime in the absence of streetlights. Some study participants indicated that they relied on their own lights (installed on the exterior of their houses) in order to protect their belongings. A man aged 29 stressed:

This place is not safe; in order to protect my car, I bought two big lights and I installed one in front of the house and the other one at the back. This makes it hard for the hooligans to tamper with my car or any other property (December 21, 2014).

However, some participants noted that external lights are expensive to purchase and install; as well, the lights consume considerable electricity. These residents rely on the indirect lighting coming from their neighbours' lights and/or the inadequate light from high mast lighting from other sections which reach them. Respondents also pointed out that the crime rate increases when there is load shedding by the Electricity Supply Commission (ESKOM).

There is only one clinic in eZamokuhle township and a hospital which is found in Amersfoort town called Elliot Ballot Hospital. As well, one private medical centre is in town called Van Zyl Surgery but this is beyond the financial reach of a typical eZamokuhle resident. At the same time, the clinic is under-resourced such that, quite often, there is no medication available. This means that people suffering from even basic health problems, for instance cold and flu, are simply turned away without any medical attention. Indeed, it has been officially announced that the clinic does not provide medication for flu. A woman aged 29 reported that:

Our clinic here should be closed because if you are sick they tell you there is no medication. So now you are forced to go to the private doctor which is very expensive and some of us are not working. Sometimes I have to borrow money to take my child to the doctor especially during winter season (December 13, 2014).

Hence, the absence of medication at the local clinic compels residents to consult more expensive private medical doctors who are also some distance away from eZamokuhle. The cost of access to private medical doctors excludes many households who cannot afford to pay for the service. In the end, because of the inadequacies of the public clinic, healthcare by default becomes commodified for eZamokuhle residents as health access is contingent upon payments being made. This of course severely disadvantages poorer households, and it is not consistent with the South African Constitution which stipulates that everyone has equal access to basic healthcare regardless of social background and circumstances.

Most respondents from Smallville, Jabavu and Roestien sections reported that the clinic is reasonably close to their houses. In contrast, respondents from China 1, Phumlani and China 2 (especially those in Phumlani) reported that the clinic was far away. Some respondents from the latter three sections reported that sometimes they have to take a taxi to the clinic. Regarding the location of the clinic, respondents from Phumlani, and China 1 and 2, stressed that it is deeply problematic for a sick person to walk a long distance because he or she may collapse and die on the way to the clinic. Another problem reported by these study participants is that, since they stay far from the clinic and spend considerable time reaching it, there is a long queue when they arrive and additionally they have to stay there without food for the entire day.

At Ezamokuhle there are three schools. There is one primary school called Amersfoort Combined Primary School (from grade 1 to grade 7), another primary school which is not yet opened (called Phumula Primary School for grade 1 to grade 4) and a high school called Hlelimfundo High School for grade 8 to grade 12. In terms of schools, the same difference in terms of proximity existed as with the clinic, with residents in China 1, Phumlani and China 2 being most disadvantaged. Sometimes, and especially on rainy days, school children from these sections have to take a taxi to school and this then increases household expenditure when the household budget is already under severe strain. As indicated earlier, there is a very high dropout rate from school in eZamokuhle and this has led to a negative view amongst residents of the current role of education in facilitating any improvement in socio-economic status. A number of residents in eZamokuhle continue to live in abject poverty (more especially in China 1 and China 2) and this is associated with minimal levels of educational attainment. For those who attain higher levels of education, the absence of a technical and vocational FET college within the jurisdiction of the local municipality inhibits the prospects of more advanced education. At the same time, the municipality is presently faced with high levels of unemployment and, together with key sector departments and stakeholders, it seeks to offer

skills development opportunities through initiatives such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) (Malatsi 2013: 126).

Other pertinent public facilities are telecommunications, community halls, sports and recreations, and cemeteries. I end this section by discussing these. In the study area, there are telecommunication network cables from Telkom connected to some houses, as well as Telkom public phones found by the road side. There are also telecommunication infrastructures for mobile cellphones for private companies notably Vodacom, Cell C and MTN. Further, there are public phones for these three cellphone network companies in Jabavu, Roestein, China 1 and China 2. All households that were surveyed have electricity connected to their houses and have prepaid electricity metres, and thus payment for electricity is made in advance.

There is one community hall which is next to the local taxi rank in Bree Street, and which is used for public meetings and public events such as weddings and entertainment. Importantly, it is also used as a social grant payment point including for child support grants and old age pensions. The community hall is fenced with razor wires and there is a gate which is always locked when there are no activities going on. There is a well-known shopping complex called kwaSimelane next to Bree Street. It comprises a bottle store, night club, tavern, fast food restaurant and a grocery store. Besides buying groceries here, residents also use the complex as a place for socialising. There are other bottle stores, taverns and spaza shops in different sections of eZamokuhle. There are two local cemeteries. One is an old cemetery at the corner of Tladi Street which is fenced but is no longer in use. The second cemetery, which is managed and maintained by the municipality and is also fenced to avoid vandalism, is found behind Smallville at one end of the township. Cemeteries are viewed by some residents as places of worship and for communicating with ancestors. A man aged 56 stressed that:

Cemeteries are holy places of worshipping our ancestors. Sometimes when things in my life are not going my way I take African beer and I go there and speak to my father. After that I will receive blessings from my ancestors (December 17, 2014).

There are only two playgrounds found in the study area. One is found between Roestein and Jabavu sections adjacent to the railway line and the mountain. This playground used to be fenced and there were change rooms and toilets, but all these have been vandalised. The other playground is in China 2 next to the taxis' main stop. The playground is not covered with grass; such that when it is windy there is dust and when it is raining the field becomes muddy. Both playgrounds are not maintained properly by the municipality despite its obligation to do so.

The study participants highlighted that, in the early 2000s, there was a tennis court opposite Roestein section and close to the old bottle store there. This tennis court was also vandalised. The municipality clearly has a challenge in enabling mainly the local youth to participate actively in sports (as well as in arts and cultural activities). A young man aged 21 expressed deep concern in this regard:

The government is not interested to assist us in any way. Most of us in the township are unemployed and the municipality does not encourage or supply us with things like soccer kits just to preoccupy our minds since we are not working (December 15, 2014).

But parks for children and adults, to interact and relax, are also important but these are absent in eZamokuhle. A woman aged 25 complained:

We do need parks just to interact with other people, have braais, and take our children to play. The absence of a park in the area sometimes forces us to go to taverns to relax and interact with other people and many times we end up drinking alcohol (December 12, 2014).

The statement suggests that parks can create a vibrant life in the community and their absence may lead to more socially problematic activities.

5.5 Housing in eZamokuhle

According to UN Human Settlements (1976), adequate housing must deliver more than four walls and a roof. Various standards must be complied with before a particular shelter can be regarded as “adequate housing”. For housing to be regarded as adequate, it must meet the following standards: security of tenure; availability of services; materials, facilities and infrastructure; affordability; habitability; accessibility; location and cultural adequacy. In this respect, South Africa is currently a signatory to various international agreements on human settlements such as the UN Agenda 21 (1992) and the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements (1996). The standard of what is referred to as adequate housing in South Africa is not the same in urban and rural areas. In rural areas, a house built with cement bricks with the following services, namely, electricity, communal standpipe or yard tap (or yard tanks or roof tanks) and a pit latrine (Ventilation Improved Pit (VIP) latrine) is regarded as adequate. In urban areas, the standards are higher, as a cement brick house with electricity, piped water connected to the house and waterborne sanitation is regarded as adequate (Mufamadi 2005: 1).

eZamokuhle township comprises mainly formal housing which accounts for approximately 97% of the entire housing stock, and are detached houses made of brick and cement. Backyard

shacks come a distant second while, at the far extreme, there are very few traditional housing structures. In this study, when I speak of RDP houses I refer to houses which were built under the Reconstruction and Development Programme from 1994 to 2004 and, when I speak of BNG houses, I refer to houses that were built from September 2004 up to the present under the Breaking New Ground programme. In short, BNG is the current version of RDP in terms of government housing.

Formal housing in eZamokuhle was built at different points in time with different building materials. Generally, there are four kinds of housing found in the study area. The first houses arose pre-1994 (and thus were built by the apartheid regime). In particular, these are four roomed houses (in Roestein section) which were built with red face brick. Most people living in the Roestein section are well-educated and/or civil servants, including teachers, nurses, police officers, prison wardens and municipal workers. Asbestos sheets were used for roofing for all the houses. In fact, there is no house, including those built by the post-apartheid government, which is roofed with tiles. The second type of housing is found in Madala site (which is part of Jabavu section), and these houses are built out of stones and cement. These houses were also built pre-1994 but by the residents themselves. While the Madala houses are usually big and the structures are very strong, the designs of the houses are ugly.

The third kind of housing was built just after the democratic elections in 1994. The first RDP housing built in eZamokuhle was generally a two-room brickwork structure with corrugated iron roof sheeting. In Jabavu section, there are houses built under the RDP programme, all with the same design. These houses in fact ended up as one room structures (with flushing toilets) as they were not finished according to the original plan, and it is believed that government officials squandered the building funds designated for Jabavu. However, some of the better-off households have been able to add a second room. Below (Photo 5.1) is a photo of an RDP house found in Jabavu section.

Photo 5.1 Jabavu RDP House



In China 1 and 2, houses have two rooms with toilets. These houses were also built under the RDP programme, in the mid-1990s. The housing designs in China 1 and China 2 are all the same. Many of the RDP houses provided before 1997, in eZamokuhle and elsewhere, do not comply with the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) because the NHBRC was only established after 1997. The picture below (Photo 5.2) shows the housing structure in China 1 and China 2.

Photo 5.2: China 1 and China 2 RDP House



Over the years, since 1994, the design of government housing has improved significantly. In Phumula, for example, the houses consist of a four-room brickwork structure with corrugated

iron roof sheeting, which were built under the BNG programme (see Photo 5.3) and can be identified as the fourth kind of housing design locally.

Photo 5:3: Phumula BNG House



Currently there is a new housing project which is still under way. The project started in March 2015 and involves the building of 25 BNG houses by the local municipality. Some of the houses have been finished but not yet allocated to the beneficiaries. These houses are built opposite Roestein section adjacent to the mountain and railway line. This section is still not yet named. The photo below (Photo 5.4) shows a currently built house in this section.

Photo 5.4: New Section BNG House



5.5.1 Informal Settlement Upgrading and Backyard Shacks

The Upgrading of Informal Settlement Programme is intended to deal with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals on “improving the lives of slum dwellers, and providing essential services such as water, sanitation and refuse collection, as well as emergency interventions, as a first step” (RSA 2009: 1). In 1997 the South African government introduced an informal settlements upgrading programme to reduce the number of people living in slums by building them public housing.

Amersfoort has seen remarkable progress in the eradication of informal settlements in eZamokuhle township. The Phumula section used to be an informal settlement until 2013, which was called *eMavarhini*, meaning “in the shacks”. There are now no informal settlements in eZamokuhle. While these former *eMavarhini* residents have now moved from informal settlement housing into BNG housing which they formally own, many of them remain trapped in conditions of poverty because of unemployment and no other sources of income. But the settlement upgrading is seen by the respondents in a focus group discussion as a positive stride towards providing decent and good quality houses. Phumula houses have four rooms with toilets. A woman aged 43 emphasised that:

Our houses here in Phumula are different from others built by the government. Ours are very nice, bigger with durable structures. It is unlike RDP houses in China 1, China 2 and Jabavu. We were very lucky to receive such houses but we had to wait for a very long time to receive them (December 12, 2014).

Houses in Phumula have two bedrooms, a sitting room and a kitchen. They are seemingly more durable structures than the RDP housing stock, and considerably larger and more pleasant to reside within.

The presence of backyard shacks in urban centres has been an abiding concern of the post-apartheid government since 1994, with the available literature on backyard shacks focusing on their function as a source of rent for the occupants of the main house on whose property the backyard shack exists (Turok 2015, Rubin and Gardner 2013). The study in eZamokuhle found that backyard shacks are used for two purposes, namely, shelter and generation income through rent. For my purposes in this chapter, I discuss backyard shacks as a form of shelter. Backyard shacks are informal structures which are usually built at the backyard of a formal house hence the name ‘backyard’ shacks and, in eZamokuhle, they exist in the backyards of some public housing units. The backyard shacks are generally made of corrugated iron but there are also some made of stick, mud and plastic. Self-provisioning of shelter through backyard shacks is

an attempt in the study area to solve the problem of privacy and living space since some residents have large families, at least compared to the size of their houses and number of rooms in the houses. Thus the main occupants (for instance in a RDP house) may use backyard shacks as an extension to minimise the relative absence of space for the entire family in the main house. In this regard, most households in eZamokuhle are marked by overcrowding more especially in China 1, China 2, Phumula and Jabavu sections.

Overcrowding is viewed to be symptomatic of housing poverty which sometimes leads to anxiety and conflicts among family members. Such housing conditions are considered by the United Nations as uninhabitable if they do not provide both sufficient space and protection from threats to health, dangers and disease (Graydon 2001: 1). Overall, 58% of the participants in the study area had backyard shacks on their property, with occupants of the shacks primarily being male. Some individuals from the households built their own backyard shacks while others were assisted by parents or breadwinners in the households. One male respondent aged 35 thus highlighted:

After I worked for Steimuller at Majuba Eskom Power Station ... I built my backyard shack because I am a grown up man. Sometimes when I am stressed I prefer to be in solitude in order to think properly. Sometimes when you are a man you need privacy because if you have a girlfriend it is hard to take her to the main house (January 15, 2015).

There is little evidence however to draw a negative correlation between overcrowding and social cohesion, namely, that overcrowding inhibits social cohesion or creates intra-household conflict. Social cohesion in this context is defined as strengthening social connectedness and decreasing social distance between individuals or groups of people (Stone and Hulse 2007: vii). The eZamokuhle study found that, although respondents were concerned about privacy and overcrowding, they actually enjoyed the company of other household members. This was confirmed by one respondent aged 30:

Although sometimes I need privacy to pray and have a good time with the father of my child, the number of family members is not a problem. Actually I enjoy when we are many in the household because sometimes we tease each other and crack jokes (January 18, 2015).

In this sense, overcrowding is generally not seen by residents as a problem and it seems to cement relationships. Admittedly, at times individuals from households in eZamokuhle have conflicts but these do not tear households apart. This, as indicated, goes contrary to some

literature which brings to the fore the negative implications of overcrowding such as stress and social problems (Chan et al. 2006, Graydon 2001). But living separately in a backyard shack may lead to isolation and distance from family members in the main house with, for instance, shack dwellers regularly having their own televisions and music systems for entertainment purposes. In this way, personal interaction between shack dwellers and the main occupants tends to decrease over time.

The study also found that backyard shacks are used to accommodate visitors or guests. They are used as well as a store room for, for example, tools and old furniture. Sometimes they function as a kind of traditional homestead for the brewing of African beer (*umqombothi*), and they become a cultural shelter where residents communicate with their ancestors. During traditional ceremonies, it is used to accommodate the elders of the family. Some respondents reported that it where important family issues are discussed. One older woman aged 50 put it this way:

We use a backyard shack for traditional purposes; it where we communicate with our ancestors, and we also use it to discuss family issues. For example, if there is a boy who has impregnated a girl we discuss that in the backyard shack (January 18, 2015).

In using the backyard shack as a space for communicating and connecting spiritually with ancestors, it takes on the role of a sacred site, with at times goats slaughtered for their ancestors. As a holy place, it is where problems are raised with their ancestors to provide solutions to their problems. Because of this, it is a highly respected place and a house of blessings where in fact ancestors are said to reside.

5.5.2 Structural Quality of Houses

In this section, I focus on the structural quality of public housing in eZamokuhle. Despite the current government's substantial rolling out of housing service delivery since it came to power in 1994, it has been become clear that housing remains a serious challenge not only in terms of quantity of provision but also quality of the housing stock. In many ways, housing service delivery represents one of the squashed expectations of the majority of the poorest sections of South Africa and a blow to the promise of a "better life for all". For example, despite the quantity of housing provided (RSA 2010), the quality of housing units falls far below acceptable quality and standards for social reproduction. Many government houses are exceedingly small in size and the structures are of poor quality such that, in many instances, they do not survive the first few years of their existence.

But housing quality does not necessarily refer only to the structural dimension of the housing stock, as this notion (at least in the minds of eZamokuhle residents) conjures up questions around the location of housing as well as broader infrastructure and facilities accessible to residents. For instance, it is broadly recognised in the South African housing literature that, historically, poor urban black working class populations have lived far from employment opportunities. In the case of eZamokuhle, the study in fact found that residents are not staying exceedingly far from employment opportunities except those who work at Eskom Majuba Power Station. This relative nearness to employment in Amersfoort town did not however undercut the fact that residents experienced extreme difficulties in sustaining a decent and dignified quality of life (as reflected in the housing stock). Therefore, locational quality does not translate into prestige of a dwelling due to its spatial position.

Further, the BNG policy seeks to promote an integrated and non-racial society to achieve sustainable human settlements (Goss et al. 2010: 3). In short, it seeks to create a community whereby people from different racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds live in the same space and share resources. Although eZamokuhle public housing is in reasonably close proximity to social and economic amenities centred in Amersfoort, it is highly questionable whether the BNG policy will encourage White and Indian people to live in traditional black townships considering the ongoing rigid segregated pattern in the study area. It became clear that a few local white people (notably white men married to black females) were willing to live with black people but they feared how black people would react to this. In an informal interview conducted in Amersfoort with three White males, one male aged 33 reported that:

Not all of us benefited or supported the apartheid regime although the laws and policies supported us as white people but we never liked them. Some of us have black female spouses but it is hard for us to live with them in the township (December 13, 2014).

In examining questions of quality more specifically (of the public housing stock itself), the study found that some houses in Jabavu, China 1 and China 2 (all built under the RDP programme) had cracks in their walls. The cracks indicated that the building material was of very poor quality and that this also meant poor workmanship. The houses provided are frequently exceedingly hot in summer and very cold in winter because the building construction was compromised in order not to escalate building costs due to insufficient resources (with the use of metal sheets compounding the problem). This inclines people to try to keep themselves warm or cook with coal and wood in the cold winter months, which sometimes results in

chronic lung disease, heart disease, and acute respiratory infections. A number of respondents who were able to afford the repairing of their houses (such as plastering the interior and/or exterior of the outside walls) cited various reasons for doing so. These included trying to avoid dust and water from coming through windows, doors and walls as this was seen as important to inhibit the aggravation of sicknesses such as tuberculosis and AIDS. When I asked many residents why they were not fixing their houses, many simply stated that government should come and fix them. Although it is not the fault of housing beneficiaries that their houses are having cracks, it is the responsibility of beneficiaries to mend the cracks. Other respondents reported they were willing to fix the houses but they did not have financial resources to do so.

Study participants also reported that household possessions including furniture were moved around when it rained in order to avoid being damaged by water. To minimise leakages, affected residents placed tires, wood, stones or any other heavy objects on top of the roof sheeting. Additionally, some outside doors did not fit securely into their frames and residents had to stuff clothes and newspapers around the frames to protect themselves from adverse weather (rain and wind). Further materials were stuffed at the bottom of doors to prevent rain water from entering the house. In the end, though, the metal door frames bent over time and rusted. As well, the doors were not glossed and began to bend because of this, and some doors had wide enough slits in them to see through. Some residents resolved the problem by for instance filling the slits in the door or, in the case of richer households, removing the original doors and frames altogether and replacing them with new ones (at their expense).

Cracks and other problems mentioned developed in Jabavu and China 1 and 2 immediately after the recipients occupied the houses, and they progressively became worse. Some houses in fact had cracks all the way from the foundation up to the top structure or roofing. When it became excessively windy, residents would leave their houses temporarily because they feared that the walls might fall in and kill them. This problem was deepened because the houses have no gutters. The result of a house without gutters is that the runoff rainwater falls straight onto the ground surrounding the house and causes the ground to erode. Further, based on the fieldwork, it was found that roofs for the houses provided by the post-apartheid government (particularly the RDP houses) were not firmly secured to the walls which resulted in them rattling heavily or sometimes even blowing off in heavy storms. The strong wind loosened the bricks in the walls and cracks grew even bigger, which emanated from the inappropriate mixture of cement and sand. In such cases, the municipality only provided residents with heavy plastic sheets to cover the house. Evidence from the research reveals clearly that eZamokuhle

beneficiaries of RDP houses have serious and different problems with regards to poor quality houses. A male aged 28 articulated his thoughts as follows:

These people who built these houses did not mix cement and sand properly. Some of the cement bags were stolen by the people who were building these houses. Secondly they were instructed by the owners of the construction company not to mix the cement and sand with the required mix. I used to have a friend who was working there so he told me all these things (January 14, 2015).

The appalling conditions of houses built by the government, at least RDP houses, have clearly caused serious frustration amongst residents.

Although the government apparently has the will and funds to build houses on a reasonably large scale, the poor quality of the structures built in Jabavu, China 1 and China 2 sections speak to the existence of inadequate mechanisms for monitoring the construction process. Monitoring of the housing projects in the three sections was very weak with many important stages in the planning and building process (such as rock and soil conditions) being neglected, seemingly because of haste or lack of experience. There were key gaps in the quality control process and, in some instances, constructing for quality was sacrificed for quantity with those in charge of quality control turning a blind eye to faults in the haste to finalise projects or in the rush to enrich themselves and others. This was especially evident in the case of Jabavu section. This is consistent with the argument by Turner (1976: 94) that “bureaucratic systems which offer mass housing would only be concerned with the quantity and not with the quality of the houses”. This problem has been deepened further by the presence of emerging (African) building contractors who received priority in the granting of tenders. In building houses in eZamokuhle, they used cost-cutting measures.

In order to enhance the quality of the public housing stock in eZamokuhle, a rectification programme has been implemented. It is first important to note that, when asked if they had complained to the municipality about problems with housing and infrastructure, most residents replied in the negative, citing that there was no reason to do so because municipal officials hardly responded to their complaints. Officials only became more active when they introduced to the beneficiaries a rectification programme for poor quality housing, which was part of a broader national programme introduced in 2008. After pursuing an investigation, the national government concluded that the housing programme had been problematic particularly in relation to housing quality, as evidenced locally mainly in Jabavu section, China 1 and China 2.

As part of the rectification programme, inspectors visited RDP houses in 2010 at eZamokuhle to identify faults such as leaking roofs and cracking walls. Those houses which were found to be of poor quality were either supposed to be repaired, or demolished and new houses built. This process started in 2011. The study revealed that there were few houses which were rectified or repaired, as most of them were demolished and rebuilt. Those houses which were rebuilt were reported by residents as of good quality. However, study participants also reported that some poor quality houses were neither rectified nor demolished and rebuilt. In fact, some interviewees indicated that they refused to allow their houses to be demolished. As one man aged 45 stressed, which relates to concerns about trusting the municipality:

I refused that the municipality rectify my house because I did not trust them that they will build a good quality house. I will wait until I have enough money to build my own and demolish this RDP house (December 14, 2014).

A municipality official, quoted below, admitted that the poor quality housing and municipal failure to monitor housing projects reflected badly on the municipality and led to a negative image of it.

The rectification programme took into consideration the ways in which poor quality houses affects the lives of beneficiaries specifically their safety, health and dignity. At the same time, even though the rectification programme benefited many local households, other municipal programmes were delayed or put on hold during the rectification programme. Further, even though the local municipality addressed many problems pertaining to the structural quality of housing, it became clear that preventative measures are needed in the future to prevent such problems from re-occurring. The results of the rectification programme brought home to the municipality the realisation that it is of utmost importance that proper monitoring systems should be implemented and that responsible housing authorities should report fully for their performance against set performance standards. This in part is evidenced in the houses which have been built under the BNG programme which are of good structural quality as compared to the previous RDP ones. A municipal official aged 42 reported that:

As a municipality we admit we have made many mistakes in building of the RDP houses. We then came with new strategies to deliver good quality housing as you can see those houses built in Phumula are of good quality, design and bigger than the previous ones (February 3, 2015).

Overall, the beneficiaries of the houses that were built under the BNG programme in Phumula are generally satisfied with their houses.

Although there seems to be some progress from the local municipality in building better quality houses and being more rigorous in terms of monitoring mechanisms, it is premature to ascertain fully whether the BNG programme is addressing the issue of poor quality housing in eZamokuhle. Officially, though, the local municipality in Amersfoort is committed to improving housing service delivery specifically in seeking to provide sustainable human settlements. But, overall, the experiences reported by residents in eZamokuhle about the structural quality of their houses is highly negative. Most participants in China 1, China 2 and Jabavu sections in fact were not satisfied both with the external and internal features of their houses. As indicated, they indicated that the houses were unsafe and insecure because the roofs were leaking, windows and doors were not securely fitted, plastering was not done properly, toilets were faulty, rooms were small and ventilation was insufficient. The building materials which were used to build the RDP (and BNG) houses were standard materials of steel, cement, sand and wood. Despite the fact that these houses were constructed of such durable materials, the building quality was poor because of inadequate construction procedures and monitoring mechanisms. As a result, beneficiaries in China 1, China 2 and Jabavu are ashamed of their houses and experience an undignified existence on a daily basis.

5.5.3 Water, Sanitation and Sewerage

In this context, there were certain problems with sanitation, water and sewerage for eZamokuhle residents. A basic water supply service is described as “the infrastructure necessary to supply 25 litres of potable water per person per day supplied within 200 metres of a household and with a minimum flow of 10 litres per minute (in the case of communal water points) or 6 000 litres of potable water supplied per formal connection per month” (Mufamadi 2005: 7). There is a large water reservoir in a local mountain adjacent to the railway line which supplies the whole of eZamokuhle with clean water, and the whole population of eZamokuhle has access to clean piped water connected to the house. Study participants used water for several reasons such as washing, gardening and cooking.

Most respondents in China 1 and 2 indicated that the quality of the sewerage system was very poor, because sometimes the pipes leaked and it took a while for the local municipality to fix the problem, and this was seen as a health hazard to the residents. A woman aged 32 reported that:

Most often the sewerage drain next to my house leaks and when I go and report it to the municipal officers they take a long time to fix it. The stinking smell has a negative

impact on our health. I have complained many times but seemingly no one is willing to listen because it does not affect them (December 13, 2014).

All the households that were surveyed had access to toilet facilities and were linked to the local municipality sewer system. The type of sanitation in the study area is full water-borne sanitation. Toilets in Jabavu, China 1 and China 2 though were reported to be faulty. Most of these toilets were not flushing and residents were required to use a bucket of water in order to flush properly. As with housing defects more broadly, some respondents reported that they fixed their own toilets. However, other respondents said that, although they were willing to fix their toilets, they had no funds to do so. Still others indicated that it is the duty of the local municipality to fix the toilets.

In the study area there is garbage removal once a week. In some sections of eZamokuhle, as indicated earlier, waste dumping causes unpleasant garbage to pile up in the community. This includes throwing away any kind of waste, be it trash, appliances, and garden and domestic litter, all in areas not designed for garbage. The municipality faces a great problem in terms of having an effective waste management programme due to the absence of an Integrated Waste Management Plan (Malatsi 2013:154). In this regard, the municipality is mired with the challenge of ensuring that waste management is systematically done in accordance with the best possible methods, effectively, efficiently and at an affordable cost by the municipality. It does seek to decrease waste which comes to local landfill sites by encouraging reuse, recycling and prevention of waste generation (Malatsi 2013:120). But this has not been particularly effective to date.

Through the indigent policy, the local municipality provides free basic services such as electricity, refuse removal, water and sanitation to numerous residential properties. Most people in the study area are unemployed and some do not have any source of income to sustain themselves. The indigent policy provides basic services for people with an income less than R3,500 per month, such that very poor households are able to access basic services like others who can afford to pay for the services.

5.6 The Municipality – Housing and Human Settlements

Participants in the study indicated that the poor quality of housing can be attributed to their lack of input and involvement in the planning and delivery of housing which, amongst other things, led to corruption. A man aged 45 highlighted that:

When the RDP housing programme started after 1994 the municipality told us we should come and register for houses and we were never involved in anything. They did this because they wanted to squander the money with their buddies within the municipalities and also contractors. The municipality did not bother to monitor the houses. Here in Jabavu the contractors after building the one room they disappeared and the municipality did nothing about that. I suspect that the municipal officials benefitted [in the form of money] in the tendering process of these contractors as they failed to do something, like making them repay the money (December 15, 2014).

From the above statement, it would appear that municipality officials have contributed to the poor quality of RDP houses in the study area either intentionally or unintentionally (due to lack of certain skills in housing delivery or outright corruption). As well, this reflects the failure of the post-apartheid government (at both local and national levels) to observe the right to housing for all its citizens.

In this respect, the National Housing Forum in 1995 argued that, although the apartheid government had built many houses in the townships, they were of poor quality (Pottie 2003:129). This though may be a problematic claim. Admittedly, the apartheid state did not allow for any participatory modes of engagement in housing construction by township dwellers (a situation though which occurs as well in eZamokuhle post-1994). But apartheid housing built in the study area was apparently of good quality with these structures still standing strong even today. In general, apartheid housing in eZamokuhle is sounder structurally compared to the houses built by the democratic government especially those constructed under the RDP programme. This of course does not entail advocating a return to apartheid or undermining the significant work which has been done by the ANC government regarding service delivery. Nevertheless, four-roomed houses built in Roestien from red face bricks and other four-roomed houses sitting next to the old cemetery built from big block cement bricks remain structurally sound and are considerably larger than RDP housing. The study thus found that beneficiaries of the houses built during apartheid were satisfied with their houses as compared with the houses built under the democratic government (particularly those found in Jabavu, China 1 and China 2). This was confirmed by one male respondent aged 68 in a focus group discussion:

The apartheid government had committed a lot of atrocities to black people in South Africa but when it comes to quality of structural housing they are better than those who were built than the democratic government. You see right now housing beneficiaries from Jabavu, China 1 and China 2 are complaining about their houses.

As I speak they have cracks but our houses built by the apartheid government are still standing strong with no structural defects (December 17, 2014).

The quality and size of apartheid houses in the Roestein section is shown in Photo 5.5.

Photo 5:5 Roestein Section House



Municipalities are considered to be the country's key developmental agents. The local municipality has specific development projects designed to improve the lived experiences of eZamokuhle residents. The development projects are divided into two programmes. On the one hand, there are community-based projects focusing on human capital such as skills development which are funded by central government. On the other hand, in terms specifically of the built environment, there are infrastructural projects. During the time of the fieldwork for this thesis, there were three projects that the local municipality was involved in, all of which focused on upgrading the sewerage system, water and sanitation. Despite these initiatives, multiple challenges remain, as this chapter clearly demonstrates.

If municipalities, including the one for eZamokuhle, are to realise their role as the country's key developmental agents, they would need much further back up and strengthening by both national and provincial departments (Mamba 2008: 67). Despite the prevailing national and provincial support, local municipality authorities (as the conduits for housing delivery service) are faced with many issues in addressing the provision of low-cost housing and related services: accessing funding for housing and infrastructural development; building local government capacity to administer development; meeting housing needs to redress the housing backlog; and "co-ordinating housing development in the light of other development needs and limited state resources" (Pottie 2003: 21).

One male local municipality official involved in service delivery (who wanted to remain anonymous) reported that the municipality was bogged down by numerous challenges. This is what he stated:

We are faced with a number of problems here. It is undisputable truth that there is lack of finance in our municipality. However, there is also corruption in awarding of tenders in building of houses and development of infrastructure such as water, sanitation and sewerage system. A tender is awarded to a “comrade”, family member, or person who will bribe with a better price. It does not matter how good or experienced the contractor is; if it does not bribe the tender, it will not be awarded. Also a number of employees in the municipality are not qualified for the positions and you cannot utter a word because if you do so they will frustrate you until you leave. You know in the position I am in, I report to two people who have no clue what is going on because they are not qualified (December 15, 2014).

From the statement above, it is obvious that some municipal officials responsible for service delivery in the study area are simply incompetent or at least unqualified. This municipal official in fact described the municipality as a feeding ranch whereby municipal officials make quick cash (including through nepotism) and ignore the concerns of poor people in eZamokuhle; yet these people were the ones who elected the members of the local council. Also from the above interview it came out that the local municipality needs to capacitate the human capital of its officials in order to carry out their duties effectively, and so as to not overburden those officials who have skills suitable for their position in the municipality.

The failure of the Amersfoort municipality to keep its promises regarding service delivery and other issues resulted in the reluctance of some residents, including those staying in Roestein section, to accept the presence of researchers. As a result, there were feelings of mistrust and bitterness towards researchers. These often manifested themselves during the interviewing process. The residents often asked me the following, “what are we going to benefit out of the study?”. The depth of residents’ complaints about the failings of the municipality are aptly expressed by the following thoughts of a young man aged 26:

On several occasions we have discussed a number of issues with our ward councilors regarding employment, houses and so on but up until today these issues have not been resolved. In most cases our municipality will come to us with false promises because they want us to vote for their party (December 17, 2014).

Clearly, the local municipality does not operate in line with section 152 (1) of the Constitution, which stipulates that municipalities have to promote democratic and accountable government vis-à-vis local communities, and with section 153 (a) which clearly indicates that local governments must give priority to the basic needs of communities (Pottie 2004: 6).

Overall, it can be concluded that, although the local municipality has been mandated to improve the lives of eZamokuhle residents, it perpetuates – at least unintentionally – the systematic crisis of social reproduction found in the study area to a certain degree, either through sheer incapacity or wittingly failing to deliver within its existing capacity.

5.7 Conclusion

Housing is a critically important component of social reproduction in relation to both state-driven human settlement provision and household-based strategies of reproduction. In reference to the case of eZamokuhle, the South African state's involvement in public housing programmes does not seem to contribute meaningfully to the social reproduction of marginalised communities. Generally, residents are deeply dissatisfied with the built environment, the quality of housing and basic services such as water and sanitation. However, there is a marked improvement in BNG houses compared to the older RDP housing. Additionally, the residents identified corruption, incompetency, nepotism and favouritism in the Amersfoort Municipality as a crucial source of the municipality's poor service delivery. In the next chapter, I consider the ways in which eZamokuhle residents seek to minimise social reproduction challenges through a range of livelihood activities.

Chapter 6 Livelihood Strategies in eZamokuhle

6.1 Introduction

Urban household and community livelihoods are strongly shaped by broader economic and political conditions, with the state playing a role in controlling and distributing access to resources. Under post-apartheid circumstances, there has been a marked expectation that the state would address successfully the historically-rooted crisis of social reproduction amongst urban black households through a redistributive thrust around for instance housing, water and health. Despite advances made on this front, a multi-dimensional crisis of social reproduction continues including high levels of unemployment and poverty. As well, the depth of the systemic crisis of social reproduction is evident amongst eZamokuhle households with reference to housing and human settlement.

In living in and through this crisis of social reproduction, eZamokuhle households are not without agency. Though their options are limited, they nevertheless seek ways of handling the crisis through a range of – at best – coping strategies. In this chapter, I focus on such strategies - at least those of an economic-financial kind. The following chapter considers more specifically the question of social capital and networks as further strategies. The current chapter therefore examines such activities as employment in the formal sector, informal sector activities, urban agriculture, rentals, social grants, remittances and savings groups. These activities, in large part, involve short-term strategies which in no way guarantee long-term household sustainability.

6.2 Employment and Wage Income

Households as sites of social reproduction in poor urban black communities like Ezamokuhle engage in a range of productive activities often in a desperate bid to maintain a semblance of sustainability. Though Ezamokuhle is a growing township, there is no visible formal industrial activity in the area. Because of this, widespread unemployment exists, resulting in disturbing conditions of poverty and daily hardships for the residents. Household incomes are only derived in part from paid formal employment, along with informal employment such as ‘piece jobs’ in the neighbouring towns of Standerton, Emerlo, Volkrust and on nearby farms. Employment on nearby farms include unskilled work such as herding cows, harvesting fields and weeding. Additionally, there are basic income grants from the government (including old age grants, child care and foster grants) and informal economic activities (as discussed later).

In large part, being poor in Ezamokuhle was regularly conceptualised in relative and not absolute terms. Many respondents in the study thus indicated that, although they were unemployed and had no valuable assets or cash reserves, they were not poor (or did not identify themselves as poor) because there were people who are worse off than them. A man 27 reported that:

Although I am not working and I do not have any source of income, but I am not poor. There are people who you can tell that they are poor; as long as I still have shelter although sometimes I skip some meals, I am not poor (December 16, 2014).

Yet, it was also a matter of pride (and patriarchal pride particularly for men) not to admit to oneself or to others that they exist and live in conditions of extreme poverty and hence are unable to care for one's family.

The study found that 39% of the participants were employed and 61% were unemployed. Of those employed, just over half were full-time workers, while the others were either seasonal workers or part-time workers. The full-workers were located in diverse occupation categories, including professionals (such as electricians, teachers and police officers), farm and domestic workers, taxi drivers and store assistants. The seasonal workers consisted of general workers and farm labourers, and the part-time workers were domestic workers, car washers and merchandisers.

Many of the people who are employed on a formal basis are working in the nearby Eskom Power Station called Amajuba. Eskom is state parastatal providing electricity. Most jobs there however are not permanent as they are part time, temporal and seasonal. During the "shutdown" (a period when the machines and cooling towers used to generate electricity are being serviced) different specialised contractors employ people from Ezamokuhle township on a temporary basis in cleaning and servicing the machines at Amajuba. Some of these contractors are Stefanutti and Steinmuller. Steinmuller for example provides the following services to its clients like Eskom: welding and environmental technology, manufacturing, maintenance, lifetime extension plans and project management. The company provides a wide range of cranes, lifting gear, welding equipment and mobile offices. Stefanutti provides the following services: piling and geotechnical services, roads and earthworks, building works and mechanical assistance, and electrical and power line transmission and distribution construction.

Although urban areas present more opportunities for cash incomes from formal employment than do rural areas, the high unemployment rate in Ezamokuhle means that, as is often the case

(Benjamin and Amis 1999: 41), people tend to rely more heavily on informal sector activities as a source of livelihoods. Even those households with at least one member in some kind of formal employment struggle financially. One female respondent aged 34 summarised her views in the following words:

I can't afford maintaining the house since the money I'm earning is very little. I would like to improve this house if I can get enough money. I'm struggling but I'm working; sometimes I have to go to the loan sharks to supplement my salary but now I'm totally dependent on debts (December 12, 2014).

Most men and women who work on the farms (for instance weeding), and women who are employed as domestic workers, complain that they face extremely exploitative and discriminatory employment conditions because they work long hours at low pay. They in fact reported that they earn between R1,500 and R1,800 per month. In travelling to and from work, they walk every day in order to minimise expenditure on the limited income they earn. The taxi fare one way to Amersfoort was R7.00 at the time of the study (late 2014 and early 2015), or R70.00 for a five-day work week. For this reason, low-income workers prefer to walk to town. One man aged 34 reported that:

The taxis were very expensive from the township [eZamokuhle] to town [Amersfoort]. The taxi to town is R7.00 and the return is R14.00. We do not have money. I can use this money to do other things. That is why most residents prefer to walk and save money (February 3, 2015).

The study also indicated that even people who are employed are heavily indebted. Sometimes they take on loans during the month in order to sustain themselves. It was reported that some supermarkets and construction companies loan their employees money, who are then expected to repay it within 30 days (actually, it is deducted from their salary/wage). Loans were often used to purchase groceries or to pay for taxi fares (or even entertainment). A male Pakistan shop owner aged 36 reported that:

My employees, they always borrow money and I deduct it from their salaries. Sometimes you find that they end up getting something like R100 or nothing at the end of the month. Some of them they borrow money for useless things such as alcohol (December 16, 2014).

The research also revealed that women are quite important in terms of earning income through employment. For instance, they work as teachers, bank tellers, cleaners, in the police, and as hairstylists. Simultaneously, without any remuneration, these women are involved in the

reproduction of human capital and labour power by nurturing children and caring for male household members as part of their assigned domestic responsibilities. They thus carry a double load. In an in-depth interview, a working female aged 37 reported that:

I have to wake up at 04:00 am and prepare for my children to go to school. At 05:00 or 05:10 am I have to be out of my house because I walk to work and it is quite a distance. At work I have to stand the whole day and I knock-off at 03:00 pm then walk back home. When I arrive home I have to do house chores such as cleaning the house, cooking, and washing clothes and dishes (December 13, 2014).

Non-working women appear to spend less hours carrying out domestic duties compared to working women and they are also at liberty to take breaks as they wish. However, women who were unemployed were not able to afford entertainment or leisure as compared to employed women. But, because of the prevalence of patriarchy, all women are invariably engaged at home in washing, house cleaning, cooking, and the care of children, the sick and elderly members of the family.

There is competition for scarcity of resources among residents including employment opportunities. Local residents (born and bred in the area) claim that both South African migrants and foreign nationals take their jobs. In an in-depth interview, a man aged 31 asserted:

People from outside take our jobs and we locals, we are left with nothing. If you take a closer look most people working at Eskom Majuba Power Station are not from Amersfoort; they are from elsewhere. These people need to go back to their places of origin because they make us suffer in our own place (December 20, 2014).

There were in fact protests in the area in 2013 against this alleged unfair labour market competition, with foreign nationals bearing the brunt of the local anger as their shops were vandalised and looted.

The scarcity of employment opportunities means further that local social relations become important, at least potentially, in securing livelihoods. Thus, in the absence of viable employment opportunities and in struggling to generate some level of income to look after a household, resources (including financial capital) attained in and through active social networks become vital as a basis for survival. A lady aged 46 reported that:

As I speak my son is working for Roschcon at Eskom Majuba Power Station through a church member. It was in the evening he [the church member] came and asked my son to give him his identity document; two days later was called to start at work (December 17, 2014).

In this sense, social networks in the study area may act as insurance against crisis situations and contribute to the reduction but certainly not alleviation of household poverty.

One readily apparent way of generating income by some local residents involved engagement in taxi related activities. They drive taxis, wash taxis and also work as taxi assistants called queue marshals. This is a male dominated industry with few women involved in any aspect of it. The research found that taxi drivers worked on commission and that they are given a target to meet weekly. On average they earn R300 to R600 per week depending on how many trips the driver makes per week. Queue marshals control the taxi queues and also call for passengers for taxis; once a taxi is full, the taxi driver of that taxi will pay the marshal R2. Those who wash taxis are paid between R20 to R30 for each taxi. With the income they generate, respondents in the taxi industry reported that they buy food, clothes and furniture for their family and, additionally, pay any outstanding debts. However, queue marshals and taxi washers did not save any money due to the fact that the money they earned was simply too little. Some taxi drivers however reported that they saved money for cases of emergency.

Some local residents migrate to towns or cities in search of employment. It was reported that most people migrate to Johannesburg followed by Secunda and Pretoria, while others look for work in Nelspruit, Volksrust, Ermelo and Standerton. All these towns are in Mpumalanga Province except for Johannesburg and Pretoria which are in Gauteng Province. The ongoing existence of social connections between household members on the move and households in the study area is essential particularly in terms of remittances received from household members living in other cities or towns. There are many reasons for migrating including seeking education but the most common reason is employment or possibilities of income generating activities as a means of reducing household poverty. The household members looking for work include both men and women, with some females migrating to seek income through sex work in cities like Johannesburg and Secunda.

Participants in the study indicated that workers' remittances are becomingly increasingly significant, as a kind of externally-derived source of financial capital for households in eZamokuhle. The remittances are mainly in the form of cash. The money is transferred through bank automated transmission machines or ATMs, via the Post Office or even by means of public transport such as taxis. Respondents mentioned a number of expenditures covered at least in part by remittances, including food, education, furniture, clothes for children and at times housing construction or maintenance. As well, if possible, some respondents sought to

save portions of the cash remittances for times of shock and stress marked by unexpected expenditures such as on health. Besides cash remittances, physical commodities were sent home including clothes, duvets, blankets, sheets and other assets.

Household members who leave the study area in search of 'greener pastures' elsewhere usually benefit from existing and effective social networks in the areas to where they travel. One man aged 28 indicated that:

I went to Johannesburg to search for a job because one of my friends was staying there. When I arrived there he provided me with shelter, food, money and toiletry. I stayed with him unemployed for five months and the sixth month there was a job opening in his workplace; he told me and they hired me (January 10, 2015).

A similar situation arises in the case of young people who move to other places for schooling purposes. Social networks in places of destination facilitate access to accommodation, the payment of school fees and even the search for work after completing schooling or sometimes higher education. In this way, social capital across localities provides a basis for enhancing the human capital of household members in eZamokuhle. It also at times leads to employment outside of eZamokuhle, particularly for those with higher education, and hence becomes an up-and-coming source of remittances – a point which Rakodi (2000) notes under different circumstances.

But there are also problematic trends arising from unemployment particularly amongst the youth in eZamokuhle. When some of the households are faced with financial constraints, it is common for both boys and girls to stop attending school. There were a number of reasons cited for this, but the main ones were dirty school uniforms because there would be no soap or washing powder to wash uniforms; un-ironed uniforms because there is no electricity or any source of energy like coal to iron uniforms; and hunger because there will be no food to eat and the student is thus unable to concentrate in class. In this context, as well as because of the broader problem of youth unemployment locally, drugs, sex work and delinquency are prevalent. Common drugs of choice include marijuana or dagga, and *wunga*. A knock-on effect of this has been the mushrooming of gangs in most sections of eZamokuhle and, furthermore, high rates of crime, significant levels of AIDS and unplanned pregnancies.

6.3 Social Grants as a Safety Net

The South African state has a massive social grant system, including the two most common grants, namely, the child support grant and the old age pension. Out of the sampled population, 34% of households receive a child support grant, followed by an old age pension at 12% and

the foster care grant at 2%. Numerous households in eZamokuhle are recipients of multiple grants and of different kinds. But, overall, nearly half of the households have access to at least one grant. At the time of the research, the monthly child support grant stood at R330, the old age pension grant was R1350 and the foster care grant was R830. In the case of the child support grant, insofar as the caregiver of the child meets the financial criteria, all children up to the age of 18 receive a grant.

Social grants are very important as a source of income for eZamokuhle households and they are used not only to benefit the registered recipient (for instance, the child recipient) but often the entire household as well. The use of social grants in relation to expenditure is in part dependent upon the socio-economic circumstances of a particular household and other income streams available. Most respondents though reported that they spent the social grant money on the critical needs of the households. Generally, grants are used to purchase groceries such as rice, mealie meal, cooking oil and vegetables (like potatoes, spinach, tomatoes and onion) as well as being used for other basic household needs such as transport, electricity and school fees. Most respondents also reported that social grants are used in times of illness and death. A 44-year old female noted that:

We use my grandmother's pension to buy groceries every month. When my sister was sick we used my grandmother's pension grant to take her to the doctor. When she passed away we were able to claim on a funeral policy which is being paid by my grandmother's pension grant (December 7, 2014).

Though the monthly grants with regard to value are not significant, particularly the child support grant, respondents expressed appreciation for the grant system. Recipients of the old age pension (during in-depth interviews) highlighted that, since they started receiving an old age pension, their lives had changed for the better because they now had the ability to provide financially for their households. They indicated that before receiving old age pensions, they could not make any financial contribution to their households because they were unemployed, including even food expenditure. A woman aged 66 revealed that:

I thank the government for introducing the pension grants because in the past I was really struggling but now when I receive my grant I buy whatever we need in the household, including food. The other money I keep it just in case we need something like ... transport (December 20, 2014).

However, there was some evidence that certain pension recipients purchased alcohol with the grant money including at shebeens and taverns. Although the care givers of children with grants

– in the main, women – were in large part highly responsible in terms of caring for the immediate needs of the child or children under their care, they would not ignore their own personal needs. This was particularly the case with young women who bought clothes for themselves and had their hair done. In this respect, a woman aged 25 reported:

As a mother of the child I know what exactly the child needs. After buying the necessities [for the child] I do my hair, clothes and buy myself cold drinks. You understand what I mean? This is a way of paying myself as I am the one who takes care of the child (December 17, 2014).

Criticisms have been made in the public sphere in South Africa that girls intentionally and consistently fall pregnant to access government social welfare through child grants. In this regard, one woman aged 24 reported that:

Sometimes because there are limited job opportunities we fall pregnant in order to get the child support in order to survive. For example, I have three children I receive R330 that money adds up to R990 which I am able buy food and survive with my children (December 17, 2014).

It is unclear if such a statement indicates conscious intent to become pregnant for child grant purposes, or is simply a reflection on her status of a recipient of multiple child grants and her mode of survival. Although some women may fall pregnant to access child support grants, this would hardly be considered as generating a sustainable livelihood given the minimal monthly value of the grant. In fact, it would simply entail an ongoing cycle of poverty and social reproduction challenges, and across generations.

Social grants, both the old age pension and child support grant, were also used sometimes to pay debts. However, some households receiving social grants accumulated many debts which caused these households to be totally dependent upon loans largely received from informal lenders or loan sharks. This became a vicious cycle of further loans and repayments which served to compound poverty in these households. Multiple loans were acquired from these informal lenders (at high interest rates) with at times a complete reliance on social grants for repayment. So, while the grants did provide households with some degree of financial independence and self-reliance and were in this sense enabling, the grants also put certain households in the precarious situation of ongoing debt. In an in-depth interview, an old woman aged 62 indicated that:

Although I receive a pension from the government I do not enjoy it because I have lots of debts. In times of need I go to the loan sharks to borrow money and whenever I receive

my pension I have to settle first the previous debt and then take another loan in order to pay things like funeral policies and groceries. The loan that we receive has a high interest rate. For example, if you borrow R100 you have to return R140. If you do not pay within one month the interest for this R100 will end up R80 meaning now you have to pay R180 if you pay at the end of the second month (December 13, 2014).

The study found that these money lenders are not regulated by the government and they charge any interest they like. For example, some money lenders charge more than 40 per cent interest on the money borrowed.

Some respondents indicated serious challenges in accessing the social grants and this negatively affected the livelihoods of individuals and households. These challenges arose from delays in accessing grants (or even the refusal to approve a grant) as well as the application process itself which was reportedly based on a complicated system of policy regulations and procedures. There were technicalities of having to prove that the applicant is impoverished and unable to obtain any basic income independently of the grant, as well as the need to submit various documents, and this caused difficulties for eZamokuhle residents in attaining grants. The system is supposedly designed to reduce the misuse of government funds broadly and grant funds specifically but it simultaneously becomes frustrating for grant applicants. Residents also spoke though of the existence of inefficiencies at the Department of Social Development, which is responsible for the grant system. Numerous participants mentioned experiences of criminal activity and corruption in the Department. A woman aged 34 argued that:

I know some people in this township who are connected with the Social Development officials who receive grants for children they do not have. They bribe them and thereafter they receive a birth certificate for children who do not exist. From there they apply for a child support grant. They receive it every month (December 11, 2014).

Participants further reported that corrupt local people accessed other people's social grants illegally.

Another critical issue in eZamokuhle, which is also related to the grant process challenges, is the prevalence of the AIDS pandemic. In the research, I came across three child-headed households with parents who had died from AIDS, and they all had difficulties in accessing grants due to the lack of necessary supporting documentation. They did eventually receive foster care grants but, prior to this, they survived on begging from neighbours as they had no access to any form of income. One young woman aged 19 narrated how she used to fend for her siblings:

At first it was very hard for me to look after my siblings. Before we received a foster care grant I survived by begging from neighbours; sometimes I did house chores for them so that they give us food. Sometimes I was afraid to beg from neighbours (December 12, 2014).

These child-headed households, in addition, received assistance from a social worker in Amersfoort who provided them with the basic needs of food, health care and education. The social worker also facilitated the application process for their foster care grants. Even receivers of child support grants turned to the social worker for assistance. A participant aged 20 reported that:

It was not easy for us to access grants; they required documents such as death certificates. We went to the department again and again until we gave up. It was only after one social worker who works in Amersfoort assisted us [that we received the grant] (December 13, 2014).

6.4 Informal Economic Activities

The most common informal sector activities in Ezamokuhle can be divided into home-based enterprises and those carried out in the street and next to transport nodes in town (for example in Marabastad). Research participants highlighted that seeking to make a living through formal employment was near impossible and, given the cost of living, some kind of income-generating activity needed to be pursued. A woman aged 31 reported that:

This is quite a good place but it does not really provide residents with economic opportunities. Even if you try to start a business it is not guaranteed that it will prosper and become a big business. In general, we are a good community; we take care of each other but you cannot really depend on other people for the rest of your life. They can help you now, but what about tomorrow? At some point one has to provide for herself without depending on other people (December 13, 2014).

According to the study, over the past few years, many local jobs have disappeared and the cost of living has continued to outpace stagnant earnings for low-wage workers, such that many of the remaining jobs do not pay enough for families to meet their basic needs. A woman aged 35 thus stressed:

Over the past five years nothing much has changed; we are still suffering because there are no jobs and another thing is that even the existing ones are mainly seasonal and the wages are very low. The little money received only covers food and

sometimes we have to get some loans to pay other expenses for the household
(December 11, 2014).

In such a context, informal economic activities become important either to complement other sources of household income or as the main income stream. Hence, though residents in eZamokuhle are victims of unemployment and marginalisation, they do not sit idly as dependents of government largesse but use their own agency, ingenuity and creativity in constructing and pursuing livelihoods. As well, the informal businesses not only generate profit for owners but at times are a source of employment for others, no matter how unstable and precarious. The study revealed that the activities of many informal businesses and the income generated varies over time. Usually during mid-month and month's end, small informal enterprises generate more sales and profit because employed people in the area get paid during these periods. Though profit margins are often low, any profit generated from businesses allow for the payment of debts, as well of groceries and clothes for household members and education fees for children. Business operators at times save money they generate from their business and use it when they are in dire economic distress.

Many of the local entrepreneurs are not South Africans but are foreign nationals, a point raised previously. In an in-depth interview, a man aged 55 from Somalia explained why he started his business:

Since my country Somalia is troubled by wars, I was forced to enter into this kind of business. I had to enter into this business in order for me to survive because life is hard. I used to sell blankets, pots, curtains, shoes, brooms, washing basins, duvets, sheets and pillows. I used to go from door to door. But because of expensive petrol I decided to stop that business because I had to drive around Amersfoort, Perdekop, Daggarkraal, Wakkerstroom and also neighbouring farms. Since petrol is expensive I have ceased engaging in that kind of business because I will be running a loss. I now own a shop. However, the shop business is not doing well. The previous business was better than this one (December 5, 2014).

The reasons cited by the shop owner for his business not doing well was the rent he paid for the shop as well as the wages for two employees who also eat at the shop. Furthermore, he revealed that he has numerous family responsibilities which includes paying rental accommodation for members of his extended family (who, at times, assist him in his business). Additionally, he sells some of his products on credit and has cash flow problems arising from this. In comparison with his previous business of blankets he reported that:

You know that the blanket business was better because if a blanket is R150 I would sell it for R350 or R400 on credit; if a customer decides to pay R300 and disappears I would still get a profit. But with the shop business I lose a lot of money. Sometimes I will give customers credit for R1000 and they will refuse to repay my money. I have tried to take them to court but I have never been successful in getting my money back. Ever since I started the business in 2012, debtors' money has accumulated to over R50,000. If I go to court, debtors will claim that they were unemployed and they can only pay a very small portion of the credit. For instance, a debtor paying R50 per month for a credit of R1000, it is a loss from my side. I ask myself: How long is this person going to take to repay the money in full? I will get the whole amount after so many years (December 6, 2014).

This entails writing-off significant debt as bad debt which undermines any possible profit margins.

Overall, as indicated, it was the force of circumstances (unemployment, temporary work and low wages) which compelled people to engage in informal economic activities. Most of those involved thus were not well-educated and had only limited marketable and business skills. But some eZamokuhle residents are well-established in the trading sector (in effect, almost entering the formal economic sector) and had been able to diversify over the years. When asked what businesses he has run, one local male entrepreneur aged 44 reported that:

I started Adult Basic Education and Training in 1993; in 1995 I opened a pre-school; in 2004 I opened a computer literacy college. Now I own a bottle store in this shopping complex known as kwaSimelane. At some point I had to give up adult education in order to focus on other projects. I have also a newly opened Bed and Breakfast in town which is a hospitality business (December 6, 2014).

He went on to indicate that the bed and breakfast generated considerably more profit than the bottle store, where profit margins were quite low (except for items such as whisky and ciders which were not really in demand). The other projects (for example a computer literacy college) were in fact non-profit arrangements from which he was able to obtain some funding from National Lottery and also the government Department of Social Development (for 2014, approximately R1.3 million was received). He initially accumulated capital for starting his trading businesses by working for community development organisations (notably the South African National Civic Organisation) from which he received a stipend, and obtained certain skills in managing funds. He highlighted though:

However, I am lacking in a way. I have recently started to use Standard Bank financial advisers (December 6, 2014).

Some small business owners in fact reported that, because they do not have formal skills to run a business, this sometimes hinders them in running their businesses effectively. For example, the issue of record keeping was raised as a challenge for some small businesses.

Very common in eZamokuhle are bottle stores and taverns, as well as tuck shops and spazas where basic foodstuffs and other small items are sold. Taverns exist in every section of Ezamokuhle. Some operate openly, but most are discreet and are only known to those living in close proximity. Taverns are not only a source of livelihoods for their owners living amidst urban poverty, as they play a key role in the social life of residents in fostering social relations in the community (in an area noticeably lacking adequate recreational facilities). The taverns of Ezamokuhle differ widely in terms of the type and quality of liquor sold, and in the kind of clientele they cater for and the nature of facilities provided to their customers. Taverns sell beers such as Amstel, Hansa, Castle, Castle Lite, and Castle milk stout. They also sell ciders such as Brutal fruit, Savanna, Smirnoff Storm, and hard liquor such as Fish Eagle, Smirnoff 1818, Jack Daniel, Oudemeester, and Jameson. In taverns like Kwa Power, Kwa Khanyile and eMzingwenya, generally you find youth. There is one bottle store found at the KwaSimelane Shopping Complex. In bottle stores, people are legally only allowed to purchase takeaways and are not allowed to drink on the premises; however, this particular bottle store sometimes makes exceptions in order to increase its sales. The owner of this bottle store thus said:

People like sitting here and drinking with friends. I allow them to sit here although it is illegal so that I make more profits. The take away for me means a loss. This business is my source of income so I have to devise some strategies sometimes to increase sales and profit (December 6, 2014).

There are also many shebeens. The products sold in shebeens include “*Ijuba*” which is a factory produced sorghum beer, “*Umqomboti*” (which is very popular but takes time and effort to prepare), and “*Imbamba*”, a home brewed concoction made from bread, water, pineapple, yeast and battery acid (it is readily available because it can be made in one day). A one litre container of *imbamba* costs R5. It was observed that shebeens tend to be owned by women, with most of the clientele at shebeens being old and pensioners. The pensioners sometimes buy on credit and pay later with interest charged. Conditions around the shebeens and taverns are extremely unhygienic, regularly with no toilet facilities and running water such that they are foul smelling.

Spaza shops are a common income-generating activity in Ezamokuhle, as they are found on almost every street. Rogerson (1991: 337) describes spazas as a form of retailing institution undertaken from a domestic residence in the lower income areas of South Africa. A spaza is basically a small neighbourhood convenience shop serving the community in its immediate vicinity. Spazas in China 1, 2, Smallville and Phumula sections generally operate from RDP houses, a room of a house, backyard shacks and garages. The businesses of spaza shops in Ezamokuhle vary in the scope of their operations, with some selling only a small range of household groceries. Goods sold include snacks, fruits and vegetables, soft drinks, bakery and confectionary products, milk, mealie meal and rice, as well as cell phone air time. They thus tend to act as small general dealers while some incorporate shebeen activities in their operations. Sale of sandwiches popularly known as “*amakota*” is a profitable side line of most of these spazas. These consist of a quarter loaf of bread with Russians (a kind of sausage) inside, and sometimes with potato chips and fried eggs. Other spazas sell cooked pap with chicken pieces or chicken heads and feet. A business woman aged 25 noted that:

From these sandwiches, Russians, potato chips and/or fried eggs I make a lot of profit. The advantage is that I own this building. I do not pay rent so the money I generate I use it to run the business and cover household expenses (December 12, 2014).

As indicated, these are home-based businesses such that no additional rent for the business premise is required.

Through observation and interviews, it became quite clear that most small businesses are not generating significant levels of profit or sustainable income for people in the study area. Certainly, as a general tendency, the business owners are literally eking out a living and are operating in a survivalist mode. Because of this, people operating from within the informal economic sector tend to be trapped in deprivation and it is extremely difficult for them to break free of this trap. Another specific informal activity which is quite prevalent in eZamokuhle, and specifically amongst women, is prostitution or sex work.

6.4.1 Prostitution

Prostitution in South Africa is illegal though police action against sex workers is not pervasive. It often leads to community, social and health problems such as danger to (and exploitation of) teenage girls and the high risk of contracting sexually-transmitted diseases (like gonorrhea, hepatitis and HIV). Prostitution is a form of survival strategy in the study area, with sex workers operating very discreetly. Due to the fact that many young women in the study area do not have

any source of alternative income, they deviate from societal norms by engaging in prostitution. One woman aged 33 highlighted that:

I am not educated. I have been searching for a job for a long time but I had no choice to join prostitution. I know prostitution is not a good thing in the society but sometimes in life you are forced to do things that you don't like and also what your family don't like (December 5, 2014).

Most local sex workers are uneducated or illiterate and this, along with lack of working experience and vocational skills, have prevented them from securing jobs such as cashiers, waiters, police officers, clerks and house maids (for White and Indian people in Amersfoort). At the same time, some sex workers indicated that they were influenced by other sex workers (including friends) to enter the trade because of the potential income they could earn; and hence it was an active choice as a livelihood strategy. Whatever the reason though for first entering the sex work industry, eZamokuhle prostitutes were not proud to be engaged in sex work. In informal interviews, all of them reported that if they could obtain a decent job then they would no longer engage in sex work.

The research found that most female prostitutes search for clients around town. Their clients include truck drivers, people working in the construction industry, taxi drivers and some police officers. They usually operate or offer their services in clients' cars or trucks, a local hotel and in nearby bushes. The sex workers charge prices according to the level and kind of service they offer to their clients. The respondents reported that sex only is R50 while sex and a blow job is R100. All night sex, which starts at 12:00 midnight and lasts until 6 o'clock in the morning, is between R350 to R500 depending upon the arrangement made with their customers. On average, sex workers reported that they generate between R500 to R1000 per day with busiest days usually at the end of each month. During off peak times of the month, they may not generate any income and, during these times, they in fact drop their prices in trying to acquire more customers and generate more income. They tend to use alcohol and drugs because, they claim, this stimulates their sex drive and also boosts their confidence when doing business with their clients. Furthermore, participants reported that, particularly during slow times, the competition for clients becomes very fierce and sometimes results in conflicts. Sex workers use *muthi* (voodoo) to make their competitors unattractive to clients thereby ensuring that they increase their client base. As well, some sex workers are said to use charms to attract more clients.

Some sex workers, particularly those who feel unable to compete successfully with others, work in collaboration with male gangsters which are usually paid in 'kind'. A sex worker aged 27 reported that:

When our business is slow we sometimes fight for customers so you have to be strong to be ready to fight and as for me I have a group of gangsters who protects me. The other girls know that if they touch me my boys will come and fix them. I usually thank them by buying them cigarettes, alcohol, drugs or offer them sex (December 3, 2014).

Other sex workers highlighted superior customer service as crucial to surviving in the prostitution industry. It acts as a kind of shock absorber notably when business is slow. A 24 sex worker thus claimed that:

Brother, superior customer service is what made me succeed in my job. I treat all my customers nicely so that they come back and look for me. For example, sometimes if a customer is a regular, I give him some of the rounds for free. Those kinds of thing make them to always come look for me and when the business is slow I don't really feel it that much because I have my customers who are loyal through my superior customer service (December 12, 2014).

Some respondents revealed that they provide their services on credit to their regular and reliable clients who then pay them at a later stage. However, others reported that at times this arrangement is simply too risky as even some regular clients do not pay them in the end.

Sex workers reported some challenges that they encounter during their business dealings. These include clients who do not want to use condoms, being raped by customers, and clients who refuse to pay or pay in full. Respondents do not report crimes against them – including rape – to the police as prostitution is illegal. Although they are all aware of the risks related to unprotected sex such as contracting sexually transmitted diseases, the sex workers stressed that they had no choice as this is their only survival strategy. Plus, because of the pressure for generating income and the prevalence of patriarchy, they often do not have sufficient power to negotiate safe sex. The income they do generate is used in the main for buying food and clothing for themselves and their children, parents and siblings.

The research also found that there is another category of prostitutes which does not really fit into the group of 'professional' sex worker. These are women who use sex in terms of complementing their existing income. They have a source of income but this is not sufficient for their survival. The respondents reported that they offer sex to their 'boyfriends' in order for them to be able to buy food, clothes and alcohol, and to pay tertiary school fees and rent. Their

relationships were purely transactional and there was no love involved. Respondents reported that this was an irregular arrangement which usually took place when women were experiencing financial shocks. In short, some women revert on occasion to sex work as a temporary alternative and not as an ongoing livelihood strategy as such; certainly such women do not perceive themselves as sex workers. As a form of survival strategy, some women cohabit in order to provide sex to their boyfriends and also to assist in things like washing their clothes in return for money or for goods like clothes. These are steady boyfriends insofar as the man provides for the woman's basic material needs. In a focus group discussion, a woman aged 26 reported that:

We are facing a lot of challenges; we are all unemployed and we need to organise something to eat, so because we are girls we need to have working boyfriends. Besides the fact that we do not have any source of income, the houses we are staying in are small and we are many at home. That, in its own, forces us to search for working men (December 5, 2014).

6.4.2 Other Informal Activities

There are a range of other informal activities in which eZamokuhle residents engage, including housing rentals. People who are renting accommodation are labour migrants from other parts of South Africa, as well as foreign nationals and some local people from eZamokuhle. There were two main kinds of rentals found in the study area, namely backyard shacks and RDP houses, with rentals providing a constant and reliable income per month. However, there were incidences in which tenants did not pay on time. In an in-depth interview a women aged 47 reported that:

Renting out rooms is a good business because one receives a stable income every month. However, some tenants are not reliable; they do not want to pay on time or sometimes they want to dodge us and not pay rent. I have found that this is common with local people. Most people from outside Amersfoort are reliable (December 4, 2014).

Because of the absence of employment opportunities locally, backyard shacks and RDP houses become an important income generator for many residents due to the comparative ease of entry into the sector. Therefore, backyard shacks are not just a sign of poverty but are economically advantageous as well because they offer low cost housing alternatives for the poor and also generate income for local residents. Generally, rentals range from R200 to R500 per month, with 8% of sampled households providing accommodation as a source of income.

Collecting scrap metals is another survival mechanism. The collectors search for used and discarded metals around the township and also in town, and then go to a scrapyards called BKB to sell their scrap metals. Participants reported that they carry some of their scrap metals from the township to BKB in town using wheel barrows. When they get to the BKB scrapyards, their metals are weighted and they are paid according to the weight of the metals. However, the money they get is very limited compared to the weight of the metals. It is tiresome work as they move and carry very heavy metals. A man aged 46 indicated that:

I go around the township and collect some metals and then I will go sell the metals at BKB. Sometimes I use a wheel barrow and sometimes I use an old bag. However, the money they pay me is too little compared to the heaviness of the metals. Sometimes I get R40, sometimes R50 and sometimes R100 (January 10, 2015).

Scrap collectors reported that the money derived from this activity is used to buy food, cigarettes and sometimes alcohol. However, respondents reported that it is very hard finding used metals now and, further, the payment for kilogramme of metal has been reducing in recent years. In the past, it was a good business for survival but this is no longer the case. Even at the best of times, though, it was an insecure and unreliable source of income, as is often the case with respect to other informal economic activities.

In this context, begging in the local town of Amersfoort is a livelihood strategy for some residents. Most of the beggars are found begging outside a big supermarket called Schulspruit. They usually beg for bread, other food and money. Most often they wear ragged and dirty clothes to ensure that passersby sympathise with them through an emotional response. Even those who do sympathise often indicate that ‘I don’t have anything today’. A man aged 31 highlighted that:

You cannot dress nicely and yet you are a beggar otherwise you will starve; people will not give you money. You should make people see that you do actually need assistance. Some people get touched by how you have dressed up and they end up giving you something (December 4, 2014).

Sometimes beggars experience hostile and harsh responses from people passing by; however, this does not discourage them because begging in town is their way of living. It was not possible to ascertain how much income is generated per day through begging because any money received is immediately used for basic consumption needs. Most beggars in Amersfoort are male and there were not many of them. Indeed, many local residents frown upon begging as they consider it as a ‘taboo’ in their culture.

A similar activity is the searching and collection by some people of food from garbage bins. The scavengers are usually females, and many of them undertake scavenging on a discrete basis as they are ashamed of their survival strategy. A woman aged 39 reported that:

I have no choice but to search for food from the bin as I have to feed my children; however I don't let people know especially those who know me because they will go around talking about this. I usually do this in the evening when it not busy in town so that people don't see me (January 10, 2015).

Respondents engaging in this activity believe that food from garbage bins is healthy.

Another survival strategy, which is an illegal one, is pickpocketing, stealing and shoplifting including of cellphones and handbags. This is undertaken both in the local town (Amersfoort) and in the township (eZamokuhle). This also involves activities of gangs, whose members attack residents and take cellphones, money and sometimes clothes in taverns and in streets during the nights. Those who are involved in this kind of criminal activity also include drug addicts. Many young men in fact reported that they were involved in drugs because they were not working and that using drugs was a way of releasing stress. A young men aged 28 reported that:

In this area there are no job opportunities and that's why every day we meet just to chat and keep time going. Some of us we started smoking as a way of de-stressing so that we do not think too much (December 4, 2014).

This drug dependency often feeds into such criminal activity. Respondents reported that, in order to protect themselves from being prosecuted and to generate income through robbery, they use charms. A male gangster aged 25 noted that:

I have a charm which makes me sense a person who is carrying cash and if there is something bad about to happen to me it also alerts me. This protects me from being caught by the police or the residents (December 4, 2014).

The goods that are stolen are sold at a cheap price in order for the robbers to get quick cash. With the money they generate from selling the stolen goods, they buy food, clothes, alcohol and drugs. Participants also reported that sometimes they look after their families through this illegal activity. Due to this, when they have been prosecuted, family members bail them out. A man aged 24 noted:

Some of our family members know that we are robbers and we make money out of it. For instance, if at home they are broke, my mother approaches me and asks for money

to buy groceries or she will ask me to buy them the groceries. When police are looking for me she hides me. When I am in jail she pays bail for me (December 3, 2014).

A unique form of income generation in eZamokuhle is playing dice in which money is betted (as a gambling game). This is played by male residents in hidden places because, if they are caught by police playing it, they are prosecuted. It attracts many players who can be observed mainly in the afternoons, weekends and at month end. Some respondents reported that, with the money they gain from this game, they buy food for their families. A man aged 40 stressed that:

I play the dice game because I am unemployed. This is how I generate income to look after my family. I have been doing it for years now even my wife knows. I have been prosecuted many times even some of the police officers know me. Unfortunately, I will not stop playing it (December 3, 2014).

Players of this gambling game, during the end of the month, may generate over R1,000 in a single day. However, it was reported that it is also possible to suffer the loss of all available cash on hand and even assets like televisions which are used for betting purposes. Hence, potentially, the game can either be highly lucrative or highly devastating as a livelihood activity.

In the light of livelihood uncertainty and unreliable employment opportunities in the study area, access to credit facilities becomes an essential asset for urban livelihood security. In fact, most residents accrue and maintain a certain level of debt both for immediate household consumption such as food and clothing as well as for acquiring assets such as furniture, buying building material for extension of houses and for starting small businesses.

Some respondents prefer to borrow from relatives and friends, as the loans are interest-free and have no repayment conditions. But they also purchasing items on credit. It was worrying to observe that households are indebted with multiple loans, which they constantly reshuffle, and have no coherent and sustainable repayment plan. The vast majority of households interviewed thus have outstanding loans (including purchases on credit), and a significant portion of them are caught up in a debt spiral with multiple loans. What differentiates those who are debt free from those who were heavily indebted is in part financial literacy and the habit of saving. A woman aged 30 argued that:

The reason I am not in debt is that before I get my income I budget for it; for example I will buy groceries, buy clothes or pay accounts. Then I will keep some in

the bank in order to use it in case of emergency and another I will deposit in my fixed deposit account and that one I usually use during December period to buy clothes for my children (January 9, 2015).

The issue of credit highlights the condition of vulnerability for many eZamokuhle residents, with some certainly more vulnerable than others.

Credit also shows the vicious cycle of debt and poverty that can result from an initial shock, such as illness or unemployment, or from getting married. Irregular incomes including from formal employment and informal economic activities force vulnerable households to use credit and build up debt with friends, peers, shopkeepers, moneylenders and employers in order to buy even basic foodstuffs.

In this respect, residents lack access to formal credit facilities such as through banks and, in the end, they have to wheel and deal in terms of accessing credit in more informal ways and negotiating repayment plans. It is notable though that some respondents who are unemployed or destitute simply cannot even access credit from informal sources as they have no repayment capacity whatsoever. Overall, though, credit is an important livelihood mechanism for local residents, despite the negative impact that uncontrolled debts have in terms of producing and maintaining poverty.

6.5 Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture in eZamokuhle is of some significance and contributes to improved food availability, nutritional status and also generation of income. Residents in the study area engage in livestock farming and crop farming.

Livestock farming is an aspect of urban farming which is not very common in eZamokuhle, with only 35 per cent of respondents engaged in this kind of farming. Nearly one-fifth or 18 per cent keep chickens, mainly for consumption in times of scarcity of food or when there is a visitor from afar. Chickens especially white and black ones are sold to residents for slaughter during ceremonies and rituals, or for household consumption, at a cost of R40 per chicken. Only 2 per cent of residents reared sheep which are usually sold when rapid cash is needed to cover urgent expenses. Approximately 5 per cent keep goats and, like chickens, these are often sold to residents for slaughter during ceremonies and rituals. Additionally, 2 per cent of households rear pigs; they slaughtered and sold pigs in times of financial need and food scarcity. Importantly, 8 per cent reared cattle and mainly for dairy products such as milk. Cattle were sold in times of financial trouble. The cattle are left to roam freely in the small mountain

and land adjacent to eZamokuhle, grazing on whatever grass is available. Finally, about 3 per cent of respondents kept donkeys and horses for transporting goods by horse-drawn cart locally, and they are used as well to sell coal around the township.

Participants were asked why they engaged in livestock farming and most of them revealed that it secures their standard of living and provides a basis of food security. A man aged 44 revealed the diverse range of purposes for keeping cattle in particular:

I engage in livestock farming. Livestock especially cows are important in that one can sell cows if he urgently needs cash. Cows are also used to pay lobola [bride price] and at wedding ceremonies we slaughter ... a cow in order for guests to feast. We also get milk from the cows. Also if there is a traditional ceremony I just choose from the kraal and slaughter a cow for the ceremony. There is no need for me to waste money and buy meat elsewhere (December 23, 2014).

Other residents reported that cattle are slaughtered during a funeral when a member of a family dies, such that a beast does not need to be purchased for this purpose. They sell livestock (small and large) in order to pay school fees for children, as well as furniture and even cars.

However, livestock farmers face numerous challenges. These challenges have greatly limited the possible significance of livestock in reducing poverty and sustaining local livelihoods. The main challenge is that people steal livestock and especially cattle, selling them in neighbouring places like Standerton, Perdekop and Daggakraal. Sometimes their livestock are struck down by trucks and cars. They also end up in trouble with the law because they have failed to keep an eye on their livestock. If their livestock go astray, these are impounded and at times they have to pay a fine to get them back. Livestock farmers lament these many problems, as indicated by a man aged 55:

When livestock is stolen or hit down by a truck it is a loss to us because livestock is our source of life. Once we lose livestock we won't be able to get milk; it also means that we do not have any security because livestock rescue us when we don't have an answer. Livestock is a solution to our lives (January 12, 2015).

To prevent theft and loss through road accidents, owners try by all means to shepherd their livestock all the time. Certainly, if their livestock is not shepherded, animals are sometimes found around and along national roads where sometimes they cause motor vehicle accidents. Stock owners are working in collaboration with the police to curb incidents relating to stock theft. The police have urged them to be more responsible owners. As well, the police discourage the community from buying meat from unknown and unreliable street sellers because often this

meat was not slaughtered at abattoirs in terms of the law. The meat is likely to cause various hygiene-related diseases and creates the market for stock theft. Police have likewise encouraged livestock farmers to brand, mark or tattoo their stock, and not to transport and sell stock without permits.

Crop farming in the study area occurred in home gardens, open spaces and group gardens. Most participants in the study practiced home gardening on small pieces of land around their houses. Vegetables mostly found in the home gardens are spinach, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, tomatoes, *igusha* and *umfino* (which are green traditional African crops). Home gardens are watered using hosepipes that are linked to the stand pipes or by carrying water in buckets filled from stand taps. The main limitations to home gardening are inadequate access to land followed by restricted access to water. Most women respondents considered the production of food for their families as one of their key household duties. It was common for working men to provide their partners with a certain amount of money every fortnight or monthly. But women found crop farming to be a provider of extra income because sometimes the funds provided by men are very limited. A woman aged 45 reported that:

As a woman you have to do home gardening in order to produce fresh produce for the family and also sell some in order to get some extra income. My husband just gives me the money to buy the very basic things so, for the rest, I have to take it upon myself (January 21, 2015).

Some farmers practice crop farming in open spaces, in most cases on the outskirts of the township as it provides them with more farming space to grow their crops. The study also found that there is at least one garden in which some residents engage in crop farming as a collective. The name of one such group is Masibambisane (meaning ‘let’s work together’). In the process of farming, the responsibilities are equally shared and, when they sell the vegetables, any profit is equally shared. However, it was reported that group members are now reluctant to continue with their participation because profit levels are negligible.

Urban farmers use farming to build relationships and networks which in turn assist them in enhancing their livelihood security through such networks. Those households engaged in urban agriculture thus supported each other with both crop farming and livestock. This is what a 73-year old man highlighted:

As farmers in this area we support each other for example with what kind of medication is required if your goats, cattle, sheep are sick. We also assist each other

with looking after livestock. We also advice each other on how to crossbreed our livestock and its benefits. It does not end there; we also share vegetables and maize seeds. We also borrow each other money in times of troubles (December 12, 2014).

These people have created and are maintaining their own social capital as farmers and this contributes to knowledge sharing about how to improve farming.

6.5.1 Reasons for Urban Farming

There are mainly two reasons why especially disadvantaged communities engage in urban agriculture, namely, income generation and food security (Mougeot 2005:2). EZamokuhle residents were asked to state the reasons for pursuing urban agriculture. The key responses were as follows: to supplement purchased food because food is expensive, because of being unemployed, to generate income from sale of vegetables within a short six to eight weeks, to feed children, because of poverty, to diversify the range of food consumed, and for reasons of custom. Most of those involved in urban agriculture in fact gave a multiplicity of reasons.

In this regard, 82 per cent of the participants stated the need to complement their diets as the key reason for engaging in urban agriculture; while 58 per cent stated that food which is bought in the market, on the street or in supermarkets is too costly and thus simply unaffordable. As well, 16 percent of the participants stated that they are poor and that is why they engage in urban agriculture. Most of those involved in livestock farming were males and mainly females were involved in crop agriculture. Most of these females were single parents, heads of households and widows, and hence their need for a source of food was quite crucial. In some instances, households are compelled to sell some of the crops produced to settle their debts or meet other expenses, even if they have insufficient food to eat.

Another reason for urban agriculture was the fact that it provided households with an extra source of income which sometimes assisted them to cover miscellaneous expenses. This was indicated by 18 per cent of those involved in urban agriculture, with the hope that it might even become a stable source of income. Some of the respondents sold their produce to residents from door to door, while others sold to hawkers found in town. However, hawkers are very few and hence this is not a viable market channel. There is thus a very limited variety of green produce in the street or market for sale. Some vegetables found in rural areas are not available in the local markets or are not sold by hawkers, such that residents preferred growing some of these green vegetables such as *umfino* and for own consumption purposes.

Almost 12 per cent of the participants stated that they engage in urban agriculture as a custom or hobby which they have been practicing over the years since their childhood. An old man aged 65 therefore noted:

For us farming is like our tradition; we grew up farming and we were also working for white farmers who taught us how to farm. So for us farming is part of our nature, no one can separate us from farming (December 11, 2014).

This group of respondents was composed largely of retired males who were engaging in urban agriculture in order to provide for their families or simply to keep themselves busy.

All the above reasons provided by the respondents in the study area about why they carry out urban agriculture are consistent with arguments by Pett (2000) about why poor urbanites engage in agriculture. Pett categorised the factors behind carrying out urban agriculture as follows: boosting income; home consumption; costly market produce; and reaction to economic crises.

In this context, it is possible to outline the reasons for why other households in eZamokuhle are not engaged in urban agriculture. In summary, these reasons include: simply too busy to do so; did not have any farming knowledge; and that farming was too tiresome. Not engaging in urban agriculture was not necessarily a clear indicator of the level of poverty of a particular household. In other words, it could be a sign that a household does not require urban agricultural activity as an important livelihood strategy because of existing income streams, or it could be a sign that a household is poverty-stricken and is simply unable to farm for whatever reason. Interestingly, some participants stated that they have no substantive reason for not engaging in urban agriculture.

As well, 27 per cent of those not farming claimed that they had no knowledge of both livestock and crop farming. They were willing to learn the basics of farming but, in exhibiting a seeming absence of agency, they expected government to take the initiative and to offer training to them. Some people are eager to participate in farming practices; however, they need motivation and encouragement. This included claims that the municipality should provide them with bigger plots or a separate piece of land for farming, and also train them on how to farm. They believe this would enhance their knowledge and understanding on how urban agriculture could improve – at least potentially – the livelihoods of households currently not involved in farming. Approximately 17 per cent stated that they were too busy to be involved in urban agriculture as it required a major commitment of time. Some of these people have the knowledge of

farming and know the benefits of farming but they just do not have time to engage in it. A woman aged 42 thus said:

I like farming and I have knowledge of farming since I grew up in the rural areas. Farming saves money alot because you don't have to buy everything from the shop. The issue is I am working so I don't have time to do it. Regarding livestock, I used to keep it but my goats were all stolen and I have decided not to buy others (December 12, 2014).

Almost 28 percent stated that they had no interest in farming because it is too tiresome. Others went further to state that farming was for people who grew up in the rural areas or in the white farms, and not for people born in the township because they are not used to hard labour. And some people felt that such hard labour is not viable because the financial returns from urban agriculture are not significant enough to improve their current socio-economic status.

6.6 Expenditure and Consumption

In order for the social reproduction status of households to improve, it is imperative that the quality of human settlements is enhanced as the latter affects the lives and well-being of residents on a daily basis (Habitat Agenda 2003: 12). The study in eZamokuhle, as recorded in chapter five, shows that the government has built a significant number of houses since 1994 but that the quality of the housing stock particularly under RDP is hugely problematic, as are basic infrastructure and services. Added to this is the fact that the houses are occupied by households unable to sustain a decent standard of living because of significant shortfalls in income generation, such that poverty is very pervasive. To deepen an understanding of this, study participants were asked to estimate their monthly expenditure on items such as groceries and transport as well as to quantify their level of debt, if only based on credit at retail stores such as Lewis furnishers, PEP stores, Truworths and Mr Price. Credit payments to stores were quite easy for residents to approximate (with most participants paying between R150 and R450 per month), but estimates of expenditure on food and other daily household consumables was much more difficult to obtain as only very rough estimates were forthcoming.

The amount of money spent on groceries varied between households, from R750 per month to R2,000 per month. In general, households focused on basic food commodities like vegetables, sugar, salt, rice, mealie meal, cooking oil, and meat. For some households, the groceries do not last the entire month and they are compelled to buy on credit from local tuckshops in the township, or obtain loans from informal lenders. Besides basic groceries, households spend on

average R80 per month on electricity, R100 on wood or coal, and between R100 and R150 on clothes and furniture.

To highlight the degree of deprivation existing in eZamokuhle with regard to expenditure and consumption, I focus below on the ways in which households – both those which practice urban agriculture and those which do not – ensure that they have food on the table given problems experienced with access to food for whatever reason. Of significance is that 13 per cent of the participants reported decreasing the number of meals consumed per day to ensure that the limited food available would last the entire month. A number of households consume one main meal per day, and preferably in the evening. Any leftover food was stored in the fridge to be consumed by children the next day for breakfast. As well, 3 per cent of the participants reported cooking a reduced amount of food per meal which of course meant a reduction in the portions served to individual members. 31 per cent reported borrowing food from neighbours, while 39 per cent borrowed money from friends, neighbours, relatives or loan lenders to cover possible shortfalls in food. Residents who reported doing this complained of being perpetually indebted, particularly to the money lenders because of the excessive interest that they were being charged. Almost 15 per cent of the participants decide to take food on credit from neighbouring stores, spaza shops and food vendors. Or they purchase chicken heads, feet, intestines and skin from the chicken processing factories, along with cattle or sheep intestines (and pig or cattle heads which would otherwise be discarded by the food factories in the neighbouring town called Emerlo or in neighbouring farms). Approximately 7 per cent use their limited incomes to cover the whole month by not indulging in excessive expenditure on non-food items. About 21 per cent of the participants were reluctant to disclose their food coping strategies.

It was noted that some small shops in eZamokuhle purchase goods that are approaching their expiry date from supermarkets in town and sell these cheaply to the residents. These goods, which are largely packaged food items, thus become more affordable to the residents. A woman aged 47 highlighted this:

For my household food I buy cheap food from the Pakistan shops. I also go to kwa Mahlafuna a neighbouring farm to buy sheep intestines, cow heads and that food will last us for the whole month (January 21, 2015).

A number of residents stated that they adopt one or more of the above food coping strategies. This is consistent with the observation by Kruger et al. (2008:3) that poor households which face a problem of food shortages do not fold their arms in despair. To counter these shortages, local households are involved in food-acquiring processes or they alter their eating behaviour.

6.7 Conclusion

The evidence provided in this chapter reveals that the economic lives of eZamokuhle households are marked by significant levels of deprivation. Many residents rely on social grants rather than formal employment as the economic foundation of households. They are in constant search for non-standard forms of employment and sell an endless variety of goods; they rely on often erratic remittances and try to supplement any income through home gardens; and they often are in debt from stores and moneylenders long before month end. With stable forms of employment so limited, many are driven and drawn into livelihood activities that are in many ways dangerous, illegal and antisocial, including theft, drug dealing and sex work. These are clearly not the kind of economic conditions and ways of life which facilitate the emergence of dignified and humane human settlements. The question which arises in this context is whether, despite these challenges around social reproduction, eZamokuhle households somehow try to rise above the prevailing context by building social networks as a basis for belonging and thereby assert their human dignity.

Chapter 7 Social Networks and Social Capital in eZamokuhle

7.1 Introduction

In South Africa, social capital and social networks have emerged as an area of key interest to various government departments, including the Department of Human Settlement, in aiming to build viable urban communities. The aim is to create and maintain safe and strong, socially-cohesive communities which embrace community life and social connections, as evident from the Breaking New Ground housing policy. In this regard, the Department of Human Settlement speaks about the link between social capital and dignified human settlements, with implicit reference to bonding, bridging and linking social capital to achieve a 'better life for all'. The social networks and social capital existing in urban townships, and certainly in eZamokuhle, are however mainly driven by households themselves as they seek ways of handling the crisis of social reproduction in often mundane ways but also in innovative ways. This current chapter focuses specifically on the question of social capital by examining both intra-household and inter-household relations (and particularly the latter) within eZamokuhle.

7.2 Intra-Household Dynamics

Households in eZamokuhle, in terms of their internal dynamics and closeness, and intensity of relationships, are potentially an important kind of bonding capital, which may at times negatively affect bridging capital insofar as households are wholly inward-looking. In fact, intra-household relations in eZamokuhle tend to be guided by a strong sense of reciprocity and trust characterised by Ubuntu and unity, with household members helping each other out in times of need.

It should be noted that, within eZamokuhle households, a gendered component exists with regard to household and domestic responsibilities. Some of the daily chores of women reported in the study were cleaning the house, cooking, washing clothes, and looking after children. However, on the other side, men had very few responsibilities in the household. Their key responsibility was to provide financially for the family as often the main breadwinner.

Families of course are a structuring element within all communities and are regularly viewed as a source of social capital generation (Edwards et al. 2003:3). Family members in eZamokuhle clearly expressed a moral responsibility to support other members and even members of the broader kinship network outside their immediate household, based on historically-constructed social and cultural norms. The participants reported that the overall

ties within the family determined the quality of intra-household assistance provided, such that families with deeper personal bonds, and a pronounced sense of belonging, were better placed to ensure and secure long-term and regular assistance. It was considered socially improper not to assist a member of one's family, and to offer support and/or care. However, there was evidence from some households that, at times, certain members did not offer any kind of assistance to their household's wellbeing though they had the capacity to do so. A woman aged 27 from China 1 reported that:

My brother after completing matric he went to the college to study electrical engineering. After graduating he secured a job with Eskom. Now he does not send any money, he just looks after himself. He even does not send money for our parents. My mother used to do everything in her power to make sure that he studies but now he has neglected her (January 8, 2015).

This statement reveals that certain features of tradition with regard to family relationships, including responsibility to care for parents, have been eroded in eZamokuhle. It possibly shows that reciprocity, in this case a son caring for a mother who once cared for him, is not as pervasive as in the past. Thus, caring for a household member does not necessarily promote the establishment and consolidation of reciprocal relationships.

Overall, though, members of households seek to invest in the household because of emotional ties and the shared goal of ensuring household survival and success. Thus, broadly speaking, family relationships within households play a pivotal role in local networks of responsibility and reciprocity and derive normally by way of retaining close personal or intimate relationships over time, even when distance separates family members. In this context, a man aged 32 from Jabavu section noted:

A family is very important so from time to time you need to phone family members and check how they are doing. For example, I am the eldest brother and from time to time I call my younger brother who stays in Johannesburg to check on how he is doing. If my brother needs money I send him money; also if I need money or anything I call him and he gives me (December 14, 2014).

This kind of reciprocity, entailing bonding social capital, requires at least an implicit understanding amongst family members that help will be available, to the extent possible, during times of particularly dire need. But, when emotional ties and the incapacity to reciprocate financially are at loggerheads, it may be that emotional ties are insufficient to maintain reciprocity.

Some members of a household may be excluded partially or fully – if only temporarily – because they simply are incapable of reciprocating, which is different from an unwillingness to do so in the case of the Eskom employee noted above. In one of the focus group discussions, it came out that the main reason for being excluded by family members is not having any source of income. A 30-year old man from Jabavu section thus highlighted:

When I was working my family used to like me and I used to provide for my family. After I lost the job I have become an enemy to my family. My sisters do not greet me at all; when I greet them they do not respond but we have never had any conflict. My mother locks up food in her bedroom. My life has just become a nightmare. My mother is going around spreading news that I do not want work; I just want to eat (December 6, 2014).

Despite relational problems existing in some households compared to others in eZamokuhle, intra-household relationships and relationships within families across households tended to be characterised by trust, reciprocity and strong social ties. The next section discusses in some detail inter-household dynamics prevailing in eZamokuhle.

7.3 Inter-Household Dynamics

The balance of this chapter considers matters pertinent to inter-household relations or relations between households within the eZamokuhle community which are not familial. Theories around social capital as well as policy approaches both view social networks and arrangements as necessary and positive social goods. Social networks as bridging forms of social capital are seen as “social support systems” built upon trust which enhance well-being and security at household and community levels (Fischer 1982: 3). Households in low-income residential areas such as eZamokuhle rarely have the resources required to meet their day-to-day needs on an ongoing basis (Brisson and Usher 2005: 64) and, in the context of shocks such as the loss of a key breadwinner through death, they may find it difficult to sustain themselves as a viable unit. Because of this, households may even be compelled to search for assistance from other households locally. While households in eZamokuhle seem at first sight to be simply inward-looking, this is in fact complemented by a pronounced outward-looking perspective which entails being almost community-spirited. There is thus a symbiotic relationship between the inward- and outward-looking dimensions with residents preferring some kind of inter-household relationship which enhances the livelihoods and social reproduction status of all eZamokuhle households by means of strong community ties.

7.3.1 Neighbourliness

Localised social networks in eZamokuhle were studied in part by exploring how well residents know others in their neighbourhood and by the extent of their interactions. A sense of community, or at least of togetherness, was expected to be derived from the number of neighbours known reasonably intimately. The study revealed that neighbourliness involving close relations between neighbours is quite significant in eZamokuhle, with 96% of the respondents indicating that they know their neighbours personally. Only 4% reported that they did not know their neighbours and these were new residents in the area where they now reside. Households spoke about visiting their neighbours on a reasonably regular basis, and there were a number of reasons cited for such visits. The reasons included asking for assistance in times of trouble such as borrowing money during a major financial crisis. Other reasons for visiting included advising each other about overcoming challenges in life as well as to simply pass time.

The study found that 35% of the respondents visited their neighbours daily, 50% did so once a week on average, 10% visited their neighbours monthly and 5% reported that they rarely visit or do not visit at all. These results indicate strong ties or networks between many of the respondents and their neighbours, with these respondents highlighting that it was relatively easy to share personal problems with neighbours. However, some respondents were not comfortable sharing their personal problems because they feared that their neighbours would then gossip about them. One participant from Roestein section in an in-depth interview reported that:

I don't have friends in the neighbourhood. In the past I used to have but some neighbours gossiped about me and I was very hurt. So now I don't share my problems with them. I prefer sharing my problems with my close family members (December 8, 2014).

The closer the physical distance between houses, the more the likelihood that people knew each other by name and were close friends. A lady aged 35 indicated this as follows:

In most cases as neighbours we know each other very well. It is also easier to create strong friendships in nearby households because we see each other every day and a sense of sister or brotherhood is being created. I know almost all neighbours closer to my house. I know them by names but as you go further some of them I don't really know them by names (December 8, 2014).

The closer the relationship between neighbours, the more likely that relationships of reciprocity and mutual support (of a material or financial kind) would be established in the context of unexpected shocks impacting on household livelihoods. These kinds of neighbour-based relationships, involving the exchange of goods, are dependent upon investments in social capital networks. The extent of the exchange of goods was determined by the intensity of social interaction between neighbours. The lower the intensity of social interaction, the lower the exchange of goods and the higher the intensity of social interaction the higher the exchange of goods. In most cases, people borrowed things from their closest friends and neighbours. Residents exchanged commodities like sugar, mealie meal, rice, vegetables, salt, flour and coal. A woman aged 29 from Jabavu section stated:

It is easy for me to go to maMdlalose to borrow anything because we are very close. Even when I am hungry it is easy for me to ask for food. It is unlike maDube yes we are close but not that close so my borrowing from her is very limited because we are not that close (December 3, 2014).

At times, money is also borrowed. The money that is borrowed from neighbours may though entail the accruing of interest, but the interest is reasonable and not exorbitant compared to the loans offered by local loan sharks (known as *bomashonisa* in isiZulu). In this sense, then, the borrowing of money is not unconditional as it is based on the willingness to repay the interest accrued. It is also important to highlight that, though significant reciprocity does take place between neighbours, the household (and local kinship relations between households) remain the primary reference for household-based livelihoods. As a 44-year old woman from China 1 section put it:

Although in this township we help each other as residents but neighbours cannot help you in other things. Some of our relationships with neighbours is pretense or conditional. The family in this regard is always a place to run to. In most cases family members will assist without any conditions by the mere fact that you are a sister or brother (December 8, 2014).

As well, in many cases, neighbours only offered once-off support such as assistance during a funeral or in times of severe illness of a household member. Nevertheless, the opportunity of acquiring any form of material assistance from neighbours is based on the maintenance of active social relationships across households.

Thus neighbourly interaction of a purely social kind was critical for any possibility of material support. Again, to reiterate, there were differences in the frequency of visits between

neighbours in eZamokuhle depending, at least in part, on the proximity of the houses. People who live in the same section tend to have more chances of visiting each other, and are more likely to arrange combined activities, such as shopping together. Generally, when these neighbours meet each other on the streets they greet each other, chat for a while and then sometimes they invite each other for a visit. A man aged 27 from Jabavu noted that:

As neighbours we do visit each other often but it is not easy to go visit friends in other sections of the township although we sometimes do. For instance, I stay here in Jabavu; if I want to visit a friend in China I have to think twice because it's far. But with people whom I stay with, in the same section it's easy to visit because it is not far. Sometimes when I go to buy cigarettes I will meet a neighbour on my way to the shop and sometimes he invites me for a drink or something in his place (December 3, 2014).

In eZamokuhle, there are also random visits and conversations between next-door neighbours, especially by unemployed females. Additionally, having children of a similar age in the neighbourhood created, facilitated and strengthened social relationships between neighbours. This is partly because residents whose children play together or go to school together by necessity enter into some kind of social interaction.

While social interaction seemed to have positive spin-offs in neighbourhoods, some participants reported that there was annoying noise from neighbours, including shouting and loud music. An old man aged 63 expressed this in the following way:

I am sick and tired of this place; there is a lot of noise, sometimes it is even hard to sleep at night. I have pleaded with the owner of the tavern to try and reduce loud music but he continues to play music very loud. I wish the police can close this place because it really irritates me (December 3, 2014).

Noise levels were at their peak during weekends, summer time, after school and during school vacations. High levels of noise at times caused conflict with neighbours; however other people settled noise complaints in a peaceful manner.

7.3.2 Friends

Besides neighbours, friendships (which often involve neighbours) were of significance to eZamokuhle respondents. Thus 86% of the population have friends in the neighborhood while 14% do not. The prevalence of friendships amongst youth is particularly vivid, with many youth meeting at corners of streets, by the shops or in taverns. A young woman aged 25 brought this to the fore:

Since most of us in the neighbourhood are not working, we usually meet around street corners, taverns and shops. We meet almost every day to talk about movies, gossip, talk about men and sex, drink alcohol, talk about celebrities, talk about television soapies (December 20, 2014).

Such friendships, which may be of some immediate value in terms of validating a sense of social belonging, in the long run may have negative implications. Most young adults conform and restrain their actions to gain approval from their important friends and these actions may have unintended consequences of a problematic kind. One young man aged 25 therefore highlighted:

Sometimes because we want to please friends we end up doing wrong things that are unacceptable in the society. For instance, I was a non-smoker but now I smoke because I wanted to please my girlfriend who is smoking. It is in a way a culture in our friends' clique that one has to smoke to show that he is stylish (December 20, 2014).

On the positive side, even young people revealed that these social gatherings have many benefits as well such as the sharing of information. Some of the information shared is about job opportunities and how to answer certain questions during employment interviews, how to respond to the court magistrate if one has a case in court, and details about special retail sales regarding clothing.

At times, there may be conflicts between friends but these generally do not last long. In the in-depth interviews, participants cited constantly that they trust their friends. A woman aged 28 noted:

I trust and love my friends although sometimes we might have differences but that strengthens our friendships as we get to understand each other better. Gossip obviously happens among ourselves but that does not stop us from trusting each other (December 6, 2014).

According to Coleman (1988), mutual trust is an essential form of social capital on which future commitments and opportunities may be based. Some friendships though have moved from trust to mistrust due to certain circumstances such as backstabbing. Such friendships, if they can still be called as such, are now based on pretense and mistrust. A man aged 26 said:

Although I have a friend I don't trust him; but I used to trust him in the past. He went behind my back and impregnated my girlfriend, although he apologised but I will never trust him again. Whatever I do to him I am just pretending (December 13, 2014).

From the interviews, it was also gathered that female friendship networks in particular are very rich in expressing social support. Most female participants noted that it is easy for them to go to their friends and share their personal problems. Amongst male friends, there is an absence of expressive support. In the friendship networks, there are exchanges of goods; however, there was a slight difference in the kinds of exchange of goods between males and females. Female respondents usually exchange money, clothes, airtime and make-up. Male friends usually exchange cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana (and other drugs) as well as sometimes money. Overall, support amongst male friends tends to be more instrumental than expressive compared to female friends. A young man aged 27 from Jabavu section clearly brought this to the fore:

We as men even if we are going through rough times we hardly share that with our friends. If you always share your problems, you will be viewed as a weak man who cannot handle his own problems. Even if it is painful you have to pretend as if all is well (December 13, 2014).

The playing out of pre-assigned gendered roles and practices is evident in this.

Technology in eZamokuhle plays a crucial role in strengthening social capital amongst friends of nearly all ages, and this includes the use of cellphones, whatsapp, BBM, twitter and facebook. Youth in particular make use of facebook to establish new friendships and also new lovers in the study area. The creation of new social ties and strengthening existing ones through technology confirms what was found by Zinnbauer (2007: 23), who argues that “the formation of social capital ICTs are found to enable individuals to thicken existing ties and generate new ones”. However, technologies like BBM, whatsapp and facebook are tending to erode enduring bonds of spatial proximity as the value of verbalised conversation is being undercut by social media.

Clearly, residents in eZamokuhle valued the social interaction arising from friendships. A woman aged 35 from Phumula thus expressed that:

It feels good that you have ... friends living nearby. In times of need it's easy to go to a friend ... who lives nearby. It also feels good to meet acquaintances on local social places or streets and say 'hi' to someone (December 10, 2014).

However, elderly residents complained that most local people no longer stopped to chat to each other in the street, something which they dearly missed. One woman aged 67 from Smallville reflected on this:

Things here are unlike in the past, they have changed completely. In the past I used to go down the streets; adults will stop and we greet each other even if we have

never met before. Children or young people will say 'hello how are you Gogo' [grandmother]. Now people just pass most of them without greeting; even if you can try greeting them they don't respond (December 5, 2014).

Such comments of course speak to a possible decline in social interaction and networks (and thus a sense of community) in eZamokuhle, and the point raised by the elderly woman does show that the prospects of establishing friendships in particular are likely more difficult than in the past. In fact, residents at times (and notably in Roestein section) spoke about their dissatisfaction with the neighbourhood and attributed this to a decline in sociability. One of the male residents in Roestein aged 58 reported, like the 67-year old woman, that:

In the past here we used to greet each other and have some conversations. Sometimes we will invite each other for dinner but now things have changed; people always locked themselves up in their houses. They just greet and that's all. I really missed how we used to live in this area (December 2, 2014).

If this is a more widespread tendency in eZamokuhle, and it is difficult to say definitely, then it would seem that residents – though living in close proximity to each other (in townships which are effectively high-density areas) – are more and more living separate lives with a declining sense of pride in place or of community connection (Dempsey et al. 2009: 6).

7.3.3 Churches

Many churches are found in eZamokuhle and these include Free Evangelical Church, Assemblies of God, St Johns Church, and Zion Christian Church (popularly known as ZCC), along with other sects of Zion churches, for example Endumisweni Zion Church. The study clearly demonstrates that churches provide both significant expressive and instrumental support. Expressive support entails assisting church members emotionally during stressful times while instrumental support entails supporting church members materially and financially. According to respondents, the church was very supportive when residents experienced death and often offered some assistance either in the form of physical help (such as cooking food during the funeral) or financial assistance (for example money to buy a coffin or for food during the funeral gathering). There were a number of examples where the church offered some assistance. A 32-year old woman indicated:

When my mother passed away the members of the church came at my home two days before the funeral to comfort us. They also contributed money to purchase food for my mother's funeral. Furthermore, they assisted me with the cleaning of the house and our yard (December 7, 2014).

Another example of financial assistance was when a long serving pastor in the church passed away. The elders of the church and the entire congregation contributed a substantial amount of money towards the funeral of the pastor. The 70-year old wife of the deceased pastor claimed that:

When we reported the death of my husband, elders of the church visited our homestead within two days and they donated R430. Just before the burial of my husband the entire congregation donated R3,270. This money assisted me a lot in the preparation of my husband's funeral. It added to the little money I had (December 15, 2014).

Most women were members of local churches and some had official positions in the churches.

People attended organised prayers at least twice a week, on Sundays and during the week. At times, the church would pay for transportation of relatives who were staying far away and could not afford taxi fare to and from the church for religious services. When at church, people shared the “Word of God” so that they could grow spiritually, as well as connect socially. Such participation in church activities brought together people with the same religious beliefs and social values. This participation in church services acted as a fertile ground for social capital as people interacted on both a social and spiritual level. Some respondents joined a church after the death of family members who were actively involved in the church. Some stated that they attend church because it is imperative for one to have a very good relationship with God Almighty the Creator of heaven and earth. Others argued that church can heal those who have broken hearts and thus attending church was crucial for emotional reasons. Although emotional support was provided by the church, participants in the study rarely prioritised this in highlighting the benefits of church membership. One of the female respondents aged 40 did acknowledge the following:

When I have a problem I share it with [members of] my prayer group which they in turn comfort me and also pray for me. I also ask God to heal my wounds through prayer. Pastors as well play a major role in emotionally supporting members of the congregation (December 15, 2014).

But, overall, eZamokuhle residents emphasised material kinds of support when speaking about the church. This though does not mean that emotional and social support was any less important. Hence, in one focus group discussion, it was noted that material support contributed directly to the livelihoods of church households, and it was more likely to remember this kind of support relative to emotional support.

It was also the case that social support systems embedded in the churches of eZamokuhle do not draw a clear demarcation between church and non-church members, such that the latter are not excluded from the support systems. In a focus group discussion, a woman aged 37 stated that:

Churches in this township do not discriminate. I remember I used to not go to church before my mother's death but, when my mother passed on, members from Free Evangelical Church, Assemblies of God and Endumisweni Zion Church came to financially and emotionally support me. After the burial of my mother I decided to join the Assemblies of God church (December 15, 2014).

In the same vein, access to church social support services was generally universal in the study area. This was confirmed by a Pastor aged 34 in an informal interview who reported that:

It is our God given duty to reach out to people in our communities. God did not say we should only assist or support those who are church members. As a Pastor it is my duty to go around the township door to door and greet people. By doing so I am able to identify their needs and then decide as a church how those families can be assisted (December 15, 2014).

This conclusion, no matter how tentative, goes contrary to the argument by Mosoetsa (2011) that churches (and other social support networks) do not seem to go beyond their own membership in terms of an ethics of sharing and support. In eZamokuhle, some churches consistently reach out to people who are needy, providing clothes, food and money to identified needy families.

Although access to church social support services was therefore reasonably inclusive, there is no doubt that active church members receive more social support and non-members receive the least support. A woman aged 43 elaborated upon this:

Although we assist everyone in need, our church members receive more assistance as they are a family in the church. As the English saying goes 'charity begins at home'. For example, if we as a church have a slice of bread and a church member and non-church member were hungry we would obviously give it to our church member not because we are discriminating against non-church members but because the resources are limited. However, we have projects in church which assist the community (December 15, 2014).

This is consistent with the research undertaken by Ellison and George (1994:58) which found that "active participants in religious congregations may receive greater social support, on average, than their less active or unchurched counterparts".

7.3.4 Local Schools

A group of eleven teachers were interviewed in eZamokuhle in order to investigate the social networks and interaction in a local school. Participants (the teachers) were asked to name up to five of their friends in the school. For each friend that was named, teachers indicated whether the friendship existed prior to joining the school. The study found that some friendships were formed years ago while at tertiary level educational institutions while others were newly formed friendships. However, some participants have no friends among their teaching colleagues. And it was mainly men who had no friends. One man aged 42 reported that:

I don't have a friend because some people here are backstabbers. I just come here and do my job and go home. Yes, I do have friends outside the school. For me to not have friends here is a way of protecting myself in this place. It is not good (February 3, 2015).

This statement suggests that an absence of trust exists in the workplace as some people prefer to isolate themselves from colleagues. In fact, generally, the teachers acknowledged the presence of backstabbing in the school amongst teachers and, instead of an isolationist approach as in the case of the above-quoted male teacher, others simply overlook it whereas others advocate for a more proactive approach in addressing the problem head-on.

In order to ascertain frequency of interaction among teachers and their friends, participants were asked whether for example they go together to supermarkets in town or out for dinner, visit each other in their places of residence, lend and borrow money amongst themselves, and talk about personal challenges and problems. Friendships which were well-established prior to teaching at the school were very strong and reciprocal. These teacher-friends for instance often go shopping together at month's end outside Amersfoort, as well as visiting and calling each other on a regular basis. One female teacher aged 38 from Jabavu section thus indicated:

Yes, we are colleagues but we are more friends than colleagues; we spend most of our time together even after school. I am not afraid to ask for any kind of assistance from them and vice versa. We have made it our culture that every month end we go either to Emerlo or Volkrust to a restaurant and then after that we buy groceries (January 22, 2015).

The female teachers tended to be more inclined to interact with each other outside the school, and to provide not only instrumental support but also expressive and emotional support. Male teachers were less inclined to do so and mainly operated on the basis of an instrumental support system. Thus, while some teachers have many social ties to colleagues, others have significantly fewer with the form of interaction being highly gendered.

Additionally, sports activities of students at school contribute greatly to building social capital. Teachers as sports instructors are compelled to work as a team in coaching students. The student sports indeed seem to neutralise any tension which is found amongst the teachers and brings about some degree of harmony. However, teachers who are not originally from eZamokuhle or neighbouring places were being discriminated against at the school. Some teachers from other provinces are sometimes subjected to discriminatory remarks relating to their ethnic background. As well, teachers not from Mpumalanga Province claim discrimination on other grounds, namely, through limited opportunities in (or even informal restrictions against) accessing high positions within the school management system.

Students or learners in the school noted that they interact significantly at school and also after school, with a series of student social networks involving a significant degree of reciprocity. This reciprocity comes in the form of exchange of information, calculators, food and money. A learner aged 17 from Smallville section remarked that:

As learners we help each other in a number of ways. For example, if I know I am struggling in mathematics I go to another learner who is good in maths to assist me. I know I am good in business studies and some learners come to me and I share knowledge. We also help each other if one needs something like a pen, ruler and calculator (January 28, 2015).

Out-of-school interaction is in large part spatially bound, with students staying in the same vicinity often engaging with each other after school to discuss school assignments; at times, they are in fact given group assignments to undertake. Besides discussing school work, they discuss television soapies and movies and generally engage in gossip. They also play football together, go together to taverns to have fun and meet by the shops to chat about girlfriends, boyfriends and local politics. Further, some students interact with their teachers both at school and outside school including in social places like taverns. Some female learners claimed that they have male teachers as boyfriends. Overall, then, students and teachers interact at a professional, personal and social level. But the personal and social connections are quite limited, reflecting an intergenerational gap. Young people in general in eZamokuhle (and not just students) label older people as too strict and boring and thus they often refuse to mingle with them, while older people claim that there is a loss of dignity and respect in and through social interaction with younger people.

7.3.5 Stokvels and Burial Societies

From the discussion so far it is evident that norms of co-operation, trust and reciprocity are important for creating and maintaining social networks. Certainly, reciprocity and trust helped participants who are church members to cooperate and work together to achieve shared objectives. Trust, in the end, is a critical component of reciprocity, as Putnam also highlights (Putnam 1993:36). The importance of a particular form of social arrangement, which is common to urban centres in South Africa, namely stokvels, likewise brings this to the fore.

A stokvel is “a type of credit union, or communal buying group, in which a group of people enter into an agreement to contribute a fixed amount of money to a common pool weekly, fortnightly or monthly, to be drawn in rotation according to the rules of the particular stokvel” (Townsen and Mosala 2008: 1). In cushioning deficits of income, women in particular in eZamokuhle, and indeed a majority of women, have resorted to savings groups such as stokvels (as well as burial societies). Burial societies are known as *masingcwabisane* in isiZulu and the rotating credit associations popularly known as stokvels are called *umholiswano*. The burial societies operate on the same principle as stokvels. In eZamokuhle most households, mainly through women, belong to these associations. Thomas (1991) argues that these organisations reveal both the human need to aggregate in social groups and the desire for material goods for survival. In this way, stokvels can be labeled as associations designed by a group of people with the same goal to make regular contributions to a fund which is given, in whole or in part, to each contributor in rotation. In this situation, it is a form of social capital across and for households and functions as a balanced reciprocal relationship grounded on membership of a social network.

Respondents in eZamokuhle who engaged in stokvel activity are mainly organised amongst neighbours, friends, church members and sometimes relatives. It was gathered that a certain degree of trust and social interaction is needed to maintain a healthy stokvel association; however, there was no guarantee of this trust remaining steadfast. A 38-year old female respondent from China 2 highlighted:

Sometimes you can think you know a person but after sometime she will show you her true colours. There have been some instances whereby I acted as a reference for a friend or relative but later on after borrowing money from the stokvel they disappear.This has now created a spirit of mistrust not only to me but to the entire group (December 8, 2014).

In satisfying the need of stokvel participants for sharing and support, the fact that members are often relatives, co-workers, neighbours or members of the same church facilitates ongoing contact outside of formal stokvel meetings.

Both burial societies and stokvels in Ezamokuhle operate as saving schemes, and are also a means of regular association among the members. Residents appreciate the significance of these organisations in times of destitution, especially deaths, weddings and births. Informal interviews with residents indicate that even the very poor in eZamokuhle endeavoured to belong to a burial society, giving the reason that they or their family members could not be afforded a decent burial at death without burial society support. Some women from eZamokuhle had a grocery buying stokvel to which they paid a fixed amount of cash monthly. This was then used to purchase groceries in bulk monthly (at reduced bulk prices) which would then be distributed. Generally, stokvels are used by women to complement their sources of livelihood income as most women who participate in stokvels have other sources of income such as grants and informal trading.

Stokvels assisted residents in numerous ways. Some groups, with the money contributed monthly and saved during the entire year, withdraw a certain portion of the money at Christmas time, purchase groceries in bulk (like the specifically grocery buying stokvels) and divide the groceries amongst members. Across all members of the stokvels interviewed, there are certain groceries prioritised in the bulk purchases: live chicken, sugar, cooking oil, washing powder, rice, flour, mealie meal, samp and beans. The festive season purchases lasted a number of months depending on the size of the household and its consumption practices. Such an arrangement thus contributes to household food security for a certain period of time. A female participant aged 33 reported that:

The groceries that I get from the stokvel last me about three months, so in these three months I know I will be stress free because I know food is available. During these three months I buy things like cooking oil, soup, rice, samp and beans because they expire after a long period of time (December 10, 2014).

Stokvels of the burial society kind obviously assist in the burial of family members. If a member of the family dies, the member of the stokvel obtains an advance payment from her or his contributions in order to assist with the funeral expenses.

Although there are a number of clear advantages to being a member of a stokvel group, there are limitations as well. Some members find it difficult at times to maintain the monthly

contributions due to the lack of a steady source of income. This may then eliminate them from the benefits such as borrowing money from the group or being assisted in other ways by the group in times of trouble. In this way, members may be excluded on a formal basis from the group on financial grounds at least on a temporary basis. A widow aged 40 from Phumula noted this:

After the death of my husband I was unable to pay my monthly contributions in the stokvel because I could not afford it. So after that my membership expired and I was paid back my contributions that I had made. Right now I am not a member of any stokvel or any burial society and when I die this will put my family in trouble regarding my funeral expenses (December 11, 2014).

It emerged that a key difference exists in eZamokuhle between a stokvel and a burial society in that the former is more firmly based on trust while the latter revolves mainly around affordability. With regards to a burial society, there are therefore no possibility of negotiations if a member is unable to pay for one month as the membership simply lapses. With a stokvel, a member may not be able to continue with monthly payments for an extended period, yet he or she would not be excluded entirely and full benefits would be forthcoming when the member is financially fit.

7.3.6 Treatment Support Groups and Home-Based Care

In eZamokuhle, treatment support groups consisting of HIV-positive individuals were also present. In particular, there was one treatment support group which had its offices in a local clinic. Some respondents in the study shared their experiences about the groups and the potential benefits of these groups for HIV-positive people and for the community at large, but they indicated that there was significant work still to be done. At the time of the fieldwork, the clinic authorities had just granted a piece of land behind the clinic to the group for engaging in crop farming. The group members plan to plant vegetables like potatoes, spinach, tomatoes, pumpkin, onion, cabbage and other green vegetables. They aim to sell these vegetables to the residents in eZamokuhle, with the funds generated from these sales used to assist group members in need. The project also aims at providing food for the needy in the study area especially those who are HIV-positive. Future plans include the establishment of co-operative schemes, such as poultry farming (for selling eggs and chickens) and sewing clubs for making uniforms for example for local schools. It is hoped that sufficient profit will be made to allow the group to provide financial support to its members for payment of funeral expenses when a member dies. These arrangements for raising funds as well are meant to enable members of the

group to interact with other people in local communities living with HIV and with HIV-affected households more broadly, for the purposes of providing emotional support. In fact, currently, the main function of the group, and other such groups, is the provision of emotional support to its members.

This though has been a difficult process. Thus members of the treatment support group stated that some residents are afraid to seek help from the group, because of stigma. This however has not undermined their efforts in the community. A female member aged 29 reported that:

This is a very supportive group which seeks to assist people living with HIV/AIDS; however people are afraid to seek for assistance. Maybe this is because we have not done enough campaigns to educate people about the importance of our organisation but with time we believe their attitude will change (December 12, 2014).

But members reported how death and illness have played a role in reducing the size of the group and thereby possibly weakening its effectiveness in providing support to the community. A number of people from the group have died because they stopped taking their HIV treatment, which brings to the fore the prevalence of stigma and discrimination locally. There was a clear reluctance as well on the part of many residents who are HIV positive to join the group. When respondents were asked why, again stigma was stressed. One women aged 28 lamented:

If you join the treatment support group, people within the group will gossip about you in this whole township. Your status and secrets will be known by everyone and that is what discourages people to join the organisation. When people know about your status, you just feel naked and it destroys one's confidence (December 5, 2014).

It was noteworthy that very few males are actively participating in the group, with female members feeling that there is still a need to engage men in their campaigns in order to stimulate awareness about the important role they can play not only in their families, but also in the community at large with regard to the AIDS pandemic and addressing its effects.

The study found that there is another form of external support that households potentially may access for assistance around HIV, namely home-based care workers who are volunteers; but it seems that few respondents saw these workers as offering significant support. This problem is articulated by one female respondent aged 41:

The home based care team has not come for a long time now. I met one of the team members in China 2 and she asked how my son was doing but she never came. I told her that he was still sick and now he was refusing to take medication. Even though I told her

that, she never came to see him. Sometimes I feel like they choose who to visit (December 1, 2014).

In this sense, there was a general feeling amongst eZamokuhle residents that the home based care team is unreliable in making promises which it was unable to fulfill. Some respondents stated that home based care workers do not respect the confidentiality of HIV infected people and HIV affected households, with problems shared with these workers often being circulated amongst the local community. They were even accused of spreading the HIV positive status of individuals beyond a particular household. At the same time, some respondents highlighted the positive physical and emotional support provided by these caregivers, including feeding and bathing sick individuals and cleaning their houses. This was seen as important, as often neighbours were not able or willing to provide such services to HIV positive people.

The significance of these interventions is apparent from the sheer scale of the AIDS pandemic and such interventions are relevant to questions around human settlement given that the Department of Human Settlement is committed to providing more just “four walls and a roof”. In other words, promoting sustainable human settlements with specific reference to housing entails addressing health concerns such as HIV and AIDS. In the study area, some orphans who are heads of households narrated how they became orphaned because of the AIDS epidemic, and their stories reflect their experiences of vulnerability given the harsh socio-structural conditions of poverty. Three households headed by orphans, all in China 1 section, were identified in eZamokuhle though there are many more. One head was 18 years old, one was 19 years turning twenty in December 2014 and the other one was 20 years of age. They were all females and also close friends who supported each other in their hard times. The death of their parents through HIV, and their shared experiences resulting from this, created bonding social capital among these three young women.

In the case of one female, both parents died because of AIDS. As the eldest child, she had to take care of the younger brother after the death of her parents. They were eventually taken in by their extended family which itself was exposed to the harsh reality of poverty. When her mother died (which was before the death of her father), she was the one who took over the care-giver role, and she had to balance household duties, taking care of her terminally ill father, and her own school education. As a child of fifteen (at that time), she was basically deprived of her childhood as she took over the role of her mother within the household. She relates how she struggled to be the care giver for both parents when they were sick:

I was still 15 years and was doing grade 9 when my parents got ill. The sickness started with my mother with my father as a care giver to my mother. Two months later my father got ill as well. I then became a care giver for both parents. Before I went to school I had to cook for them and sometimes there was no food. I had to bathe them as well (December 19, 2014).

With regard to one of the other female orphans, she had to be a care giver at the age of ten when she looked after her terminally ill mother. She was even more so deprived of her childhood as she had no time to interact and play with other children. Now twenty, she reflected upon her experiences:

When my mother was ill I had to take care of her. I had no chance to play with my friends because I had to cook, take her to the toilet, bath her and so on. I did not want to lose my mother so I made sure I looked after her very well. I was stressed and sometimes I used to cry (December 11, 2014).

The parents' death through HIV of the three young women was clearly troublesome and traumatic for them, but it has created a degree of social cohesion between them.

7.3.7 Soccer

Involvement in leisure activities help in building a sense of belonging and identity while creating community networks and bonds vital for social support and cohesion. In the case of sports, there are is only one activity found in eZamokuhle, which is soccer or football. A number of respondents cited that, although there are many young people who are talented and willing to play soccer, there are very few opportunities to be identified by scouts from major league teams as promising soccer stars, with sports kits and sponsors for teams also being almost non-existent. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that soccer is an integral part of township life in eZamokuhle and draws crowds during the weekend games. A soccer coach aged 35 from China 2 reported that:

Boys in our area like soccer very much. Residents in the township both female and male come and watch soccer every Saturdays and Sundays when we have soccer matches.... There are a number of boys in the township who are talented but we are not receiving any form of support from our local municipality in the form of funding and soccer kits. In addition, there are very slim chances for our boys to be identified by bigger teams in the Premier Soccer League or other leagues since no one is supporting or promoting us (December 10, 2014).

This inability to ensure a better-functioning and organised system of football in eZamokuhle has a negative impact on consolidating social support structures in eZamokuhle township given that “sport provides opportunities for the development of both bridging and bonding social capital” (Tonts 2005: 139).

There are three soccer teams found in the study area namely Rocket, Double Trouble and Midrid Football Clubs. In interviews, respondents (football supporters) reported that they loved the friendliness and quality of Midrid Football club despite issues with aggression on the field. Supporters of Double Trouble Football Club likewise reported that they loved their club, but anti-social behaviour was reported as being even common amongst the players. Supporters of a particular club stated that they became supporters of this club because friends of theirs were already supporters and, as such, this reinforces well-established friendships. But interaction and socialising during soccer matches is not limited to friends and some encounters during matches end up in serious friendships. During soccer matches, spectators even talk to each other about various subjects, such as soccer, entertainment, politics, work and school. In this respect, many supporters from the three soccer clubs expressed their desire to create a vibrant and relaxed environment for socialising, ‘chilling out’ and enjoying watching soccer. Soccer players for the different clubs likewise socialise regularly with one another while they are not playing soccer. Thus the soccer players have close friends within their own football club and most soccer players in fact reported that they joined their clubs as a result of information provided by friends who were already playing for the football club. A Rocket Football Club player aged 21 reported that:

The reason I joined the Rocket Football Club is because my friend told me that the coach was looking for a striker. I went to the coach, we discussed and he gave me a chance to play. I scored 2 winning goals and he registered me in the club officially (December 14, 2014).

In this case, bonding social capital is not just a potential result of football but is also a mechanism to negotiate access to soccer clubs and further reinforce social networking. In this way, residents participating in local activities such as soccer (whether as participants or players) tend to have stronger ties within the community (Bramley et al. 2010: 109).

Additionally, respondents stress that migrants and local people bond together in and through soccer, thus perhaps slowly overcoming any cleavages which exist between these two groups and thereby contributing to internal cohesion within eZamokuhle township. A man aged 39 who is a supporter of Rocket Football Club from China 2 thus articulated:

There have been unnecessary differences between local people and migrants. Our local people here talk too much and they don't like people who are not originally from here and they have no valid reason for this. How can you hate your own South African brothers? Football is slowly putting that to an end (December 14, 2014).

This kind of effect arising through soccer speaks to the point which Corbisiero (2007: 9) makes more broadly, that “if bonding social capital provides a type of superglue between highly trusted individuals and groups, then bridging social capital reduces friction and increases movement between unrelated and often, unknown groups of people”. In short, soccer in eZamokuhle appears to be an arena which facilitates social connectedness.

However, results from the study also reveal that bridging encounters in soccer are not always peaceful exchanges. Football encounters involving migrants, local people and other soccer clubs from other places like Daggakraal and Perdekop trigger differences and tensions. Verbal abuse, miscommunication and distrust at times results in physical violence on the playing field. During the course of the study I watched a soccer match between Madrid and Double Trouble Football Clubs. There was a fight between supporters and players from both clubs after a controversial decision was made by the referee, with some supporters even running onto the field.

7.3.8 Drug Addicts Networking

The research revealed that there was another form of network which involved the use of illicit drugs. The main drug used is called *wunga*, with the boys and young men using *wunga* being called *Bafana be wunga* (meaning ‘wunga boys’). This drug is easily accessible because it is cheap and, as well, it is very addictive. It is made of rattex (a rat killer) and AIDS drugs. The relationships formed by *wunga* boys are mainly between themselves; however, they do interact with other people beyond their multiple networks. When asked why they are taking the drug, some youth said they simply liked it, while others said that it allows them to have a good time or it stimulated a good mood. Still others spoke of it as a coping mechanism in that they feel that they have been rejected by their family and/or society. *Wunga* boys usually meet every day to interact, support each other and take *wunga*. The most common type of reciprocity that is found amongst them is the exchange or sharing of cigarettes, alcohol and drugs. Sometimes they steal to buy alcohol and drugs; but they do not see themselves as criminals. Although *wunga* boys are economically disadvantaged, they have strong social capital. A young man aged 23 thus indicated:

Yes, we do take wunga and that brings us together but we also do petty stealing and that is what also brings us together. We steal in order to buy more wunga or alcohol but we prefer wunga more than alcohol. Sometimes we also share food and clothes (January 9, 2015).

Overall, *wunga* boys do not have strong ties with their family members, so that their friendships and relationships of reciprocity with their peers who likewise take *wunga* seem to fill this void in their lives, while perhaps also intensifying the distance between themselves and their families. In short, *wunga* boys see friends as more valued than their family. Many view family as a site of domestic conflict and parental pressure upon them, though this is not the dominant reason for all *wunga* boys when it comes to understanding their drug habit.

The drug life is often considered by society as a place of failure, danger and of hopelessness. However, *wunga* boys do not agree with this. A young man aged 25 reported:

Wunga life is good; when you have taken it you become more creative, confident and sometimes we come with great ideas about who we want to be in the future: running our own businesses, having millions, owning many cars and having a multi-story house (January 9, 2015).

This 'good life' jointly experienced by *wunga* boys highlights the strong ties and solidarity they display amongst themselves, almost as a corrective to their exclusion from broader community and societal life. In fact, throughout the interviews, it became clear that *wunga* boys appear as (or see themselves as) a unified group existing outside and against the world. The relative lack of family ties, for *wunga* boys, facilitates the formation of their social networks and helps in creating a sense of belonging to a marginalised group. When there is a problem with which to deal, they unite into oneness based on their shared experiences of exclusion. For instance, they are extremely protective of their group members when there is an outside threat. In this respect, a young man aged 23 from Jabavu section highlighted:

Let's say we are in a tavern and a person attacks one of our fellow members; we will all beat and stab that person because [in using the language of national politics] an injury to one of us is an injury to all of us. We cannot allow anyone to undermine or disrespect us, it doesn't matter his age (January 22, 2015).

It is important to stress that all *wunga* users are men, all of whom are unemployed and live under minimal familial social controls.

7.3.9 Built Environment Density, Crime and Social Interaction

Crime was a critical issue amongst eZamokuhle residents and certainly affected the possibility of social networking, but levels of crime seemed to be contingent on the density of the built environment. Overall, 88% of the respondents felt that there was a high level of crime in eZamokuhle, though 69% reported that they have never been a victim of crime. The main crimes cited in the area were robbery, theft and assault. The areas reported to have the highest level of such crimes were Phumlani, China 1 and China 2. Crime there was frequently taking place at night because, it was argued, these sections do not have street lights. It was clear that crime in these areas was impacting negatively on the quality of social life because of pervasive fear, distrust and suspicion. A woman aged 26 noted that:

It is not easy here in China to visit a friend at night or go to a tavern because thugs might rob you or even go to an extent to rape you. So it is not safe to go around at night because it is just not safe (December 12, 2014).

Women in particular highlighted the problems entailed in moving around at night on the streets of Phumlani, China 1 and China 2. Streets in Jabavu and Roestein sections are alight at night because of high mast security lighting and residents there were less concerned about crimes such as robbery and theft at night.

Participants from specifically Jabavu and Roestein who said they liked their area indicated in the main that they would not be willing to stay in other sections of eZamokuhle, and most notably in Phumlani, China 1 and China 2 sections. They cited two interconnected reasons, that of crime and high density. The latter sections are higher-density areas compared to Jabavu and Roestein, with these areas seen as undesirable because of high levels of crime. In fact, all residents in eZamokuhle seemed to associate high crime with higher density areas and low crime levels with lower density areas, which implies a relationship (perhaps even a causal relationship) between the built environment, crime and prospects for social interaction given prevailing fears about becoming a victim of crime.

There appeared to be an absence of support by the community to provide information on crimes committed (i.e. to act as whistle blowers) or even to report them, as well as to give evidence in court against perpetrators of crime. Some community members did not take precautionary measures to prevent crime. In an informal interview with a local police officer aged 28 from Jabavu, these kinds of issues were raised, including the failure of residents to minimise the prospects of becoming a victim of crime:

People are not supporting us as police to prevent crime; sometimes they buy stolen goods and that encourages crime. They also walk late at night and they got robbed and should also take precautionary measures to prevent crime. The community also needs to form a strong community policing forum especially in places like the China sections (December 12, 2014).

Although the study found that there were community policing forums in some sections of the study area, it was reported that they were not actively involved in community policing.

Intriguingly, despite the supposed higher crime levels in Phumlani, China 1 and China 2, residents in these sections indicated that they would not like to stay in other sections like Jabavu, especially because these areas are said to be quiet and boring. A woman aged 26 reported that:

People from Jabavu and more especially Roestien lock themselves up in their houses. They also see themselves as superior than other people especially China 1 and 2. Here it is easy to mingle with other people. Sometimes if you walk down the street bored it is easy to meet someone to chat to (December 12, 2014).

Hence, though higher density areas were associated with higher levels of crime, the possibilities of engaging in inter-household interaction (including simply on the street) were greater because of the closer proximity to each other in terms of the built environment and the propensity – under such circumstances – to have a more open and vibrant ‘street culture’. This is consistent with the claim by Bramley et al. (2010) about higher densities and the depth of unplanned social interaction outside the house and household. Evidence from previous researches by Glynn (1981) and Nasar and Julian (1995) also indicate that networking is considerably higher in places which, at least unintentionally, encourage face-to-face interaction.

7.3.10 Places of Contact

All participants engaged in a range of social interaction, both formal and informal, with relationships having different frequencies and intensities. The themes covered so far, such as neighbours, stokvels, churches and soccer matches, do not capture the full breadth of the social interaction taking place in eZamokuhle on a daily basis. Other physical sites for interaction and networking include for instance streets, shops and phone shops (for Vodacom and MTN). Such physical settings provided more opportunities for people to greet one another, converse with each other and sometimes develop social relations.

The research also revealed that people walking or using taxis (public transportation) to town (Amersfoort) have the opportunity to come into unintended contact with one another; those

who come to know each other might become friends and develop a sense of togetherness. A woman aged 45 expressed this in the following manner:

You know if you are a pedestrian or you use taxis it is easy to meet someone whom you share the same ideas with and you begin to talk. Sometimes such conversations end up creating strong friendships. For example, I met a lady in the taxi rank and at that time I was going through rough times; we began talking and the lady advised what to do and her advice help me a great deal. Even today we are still friends and we continue to help each other; she is more of a sister now (February 10, 2015).

In contrast, people using their own private cars are less likely to informally meet people in the neighbourhood and develop social relations in the process. A man aged 49 reported that:

I drive a car most of the time so it is very hard for me that I can casually meet people or create friendships in the township. There are few people I know around here including my neighbours. Otherwise I interact with colleagues at work most of the time. Sometimes I do casually meet people in supermarkets or in banks, in town and not in the township and we will have short exchange of words (February 10, 2015).

Undoubtedly, one the most important areas of social conversation, at least for those who are inclined to drink alcohol, are local taverns. Some of the popular taverns found in eZamokuhle are: KwaDelas, KwaPower, KwaSiginya, KwaKhanyile and Emzingwenya. In all sections of eZamokuhle, taverns appeared to play a pivotal role in facilitating social interactions. A female aged 28 hence recalled:

You know when you go to a tavern with your friends, you end up meeting your friends and other people as well. In a tavern we go there for fun so end up meeting new people. You begin to drink alcohol together and also share smoking cigarettes. In that way you end up knowing more people which in turn invite you for parties or dinner (January 26, 2015).

Creating new relationships at taverns can be quite intentional but often it involves unanticipated consequences arising from conversations between two (or more) people talking about their belief systems, experiences, values or concerns. It is through these repeated conversations and interactions that the “seeds of social capital grow and the design of the physical urban environment [including the positioning of taverns] can act as the fertile grounds to facilitate that growth” (Moobela et al. 2007: 9). However, other respondents (and certainly those who do not frequent taverns) value the social interaction brought about when visiting local shops, especially the well-known complex called kwaSimelane. A female aged 25 highlighted that:

When I feel bothered I just go to kwa Simelane complex whether I need something or not. I will go from one shop to the other. I will end up meeting people to chat to and sometimes will end up buying alcohol and drink. We then maybe go to a nearby restaurant called eMakoteni to chill with friends and more people will come and join us (December 20, 2014).

However, most respondents complained that there are very few places in the local town of Amersfoort specifically designed to encourage social interaction, and hence the prospects for building bridging capital would seem to be quite limited. Residents from eZamokuhle, if they want to watch movies, buy brand clothes, or buy food from top retail brands like Pick n' Pay, have to travel to Emerlo which is about 68 kilometres from Amersfoort. A man aged 28 thus emphasised that:

Here in Amersfoort there are very few places to socialise. If I want to socialise during month end I go to Emerlo for shopping and I will also go to social places like pubs. From there I will meet new people and I will begin to have a conversation. Sometimes you know as a man I also meet cute chicks.. you know the story.. hahahahaha [laughter] (December 18, 2014).

This relative absence of suitable social places locally means that relationships are often established with people outside eZamokuhle, though this inhibits the frequency of face-to-face interaction.

All socio-demographic groupings used local social places for engaging in interaction but there was some variation in this regard, with unemployed people meeting more often in public areas than employed people. Working residents are less likely to use social places, not always nor necessarily because they are unaware of nearby places to meet, but because most of their time is spent at work, at least during the week. A woman aged 29 expressed:

It is hard sometimes to use social places because you come from work tired and you would just need to get home, rest and get ready for the next day. Sometimes because I spend more time at work I don't even know some social places because when I have a day off I have to clean the house and also do other important things (December 13, 2014).

Two points are important here. First of all, there is likely a gendered dimension to this, with working women unable to socialise outside working hours because of heavy domestic responsibilities. Secondly, even the unemployed spend a considerable amount of time idling at home because they simply do not have the financial capital to spend money (for instance at taverns) hence limiting their social interaction publically.

It is also possible to scrutinise further the reasonings behind appearing or not appearing in public places and at certain times. For instance, some residents have decided not to visit certain places especially during peak hours because they seek to avoid people they knew, and with whom they would therefore have to communicate or interact. A woman aged 27 thus argued that:

Sometimes when you go to a tavern you want to go there, reflect on your day, drink and just be on your own without disturbance from anyone. Going to a tavern is not always about meeting people; sometimes it is about 'me time' while enjoying the vibe. Sometimes when it is busy I avoid going to a tavern where I will meet people I know whom will want us to engage in a conversation (December 19, 2014).

As well, some of the social places are used predominantly by a certain age group and, as a result, sometimes conflicts based on age differences erupt. A particular resident, because of his or her age, may therefore avoid using particular social places. For example, a man aged 36 (who, according to some classifications of 'youth', would be considered quite young) reported that:

Not all taverns are good for some of us. It is not good to mix with these young boys because we think differently and sometimes you might end up fighting with them which is not a good thing. For example, here in the township I don't go to kwaPower because that place is always used by young boys and they always fight each other. It is better to buy your beer and go to emaKoteni and chill with matured guys (December 14, 2014).

Another point about types of people and public spaces is that some places are mostly used by robbers or thugs and therefore they are unsafe, with many residents avoiding such places at all costs. A young man aged 25 stressed that:

I make sure that I don't go to places which are unsafe like kwaKhanyile because these boys mean business. They wait for you when you leave the place; they follow you and rob you. Sometimes they deliberately provoke you inside the tavern so that they beat and rob you (December 13, 2014).

This discussion shows the significant value of places for social interaction, as viewed by residents, as well as the intrinsic value of socialising. In certain ways, it may be that some forms of interaction are coping mechanisms for problems experienced in eZamokuhle, whether this involves unemployed youth sitting at a street corner chatting or men and women drinking in taverns on a regular basis. Insofar as such mechanisms are involved, it is certainly not the case

that they in any way address the chronic poverty which eZamokuhle residents confront on a constant basis. Indeed, for some residents (as suggested already) social places play only a limited role in their lives. Some residents in fact deliberately avoid all social interaction and social places. A women aged 26 reported that:

I enjoy myself; I don't need to go to social places. If I am not at work, I stay in the house and I don't need friends in my life. I am not the people's person. My colleagues and neighbours have asked me to go out with them but I always refuse. They see me as a boring person because I hardly interact with them (December 13, 2014).

Further there is also an increasing trend for social interaction to take place through social media such as facebook, whatsapp, twitter and BBM, with verbal conversations through cellphones being a supporting element for these media platforms. Whether these platforms weaken or deepen social interaction, alter the forms of interaction, or complement pre-existing face-to-face interaction remains unclear in this study. What they may do though is to weaken any causal relationship between the built environment and social relationships, as the latter become detached to some extent from the former. Because of this, claims which posit that the “material setting in which people live is both a condition for and a consequence of a set of social relations” (Moobela et al. 2007: 8) need to be revisited, as there is no tight and neat symbiotic relationship between the physical environment and people.

Despite the fact that social places are valued in eZamokuhle, there are many hindrances to social interaction in these places. Some residents, especially those not originally from eZamokuhle, are discouraged when it comes to using local social places because of the unfriendliness of the regulars frequenting these places and some remarks made about their perceived place of origin. This was the case with a migrant man aged 31:

When I first arrived here I searched for a place to chill and drink beer. When I arrived there ... a place called ... kwaKhanyile I bought a beer; as I was drinking two guys sitting at my right hand corner were staring at me. While I was still sitting a lady came and asked for R2 and I gave her, and the lady began a conversation. These other guys sat next to me and they started remarking saying 'people come to our place and take our women. We will deal with them' (December 14, 2014).

Another aspect which hindered some residents from using social places in their neighbourhood was their absence of social confidence and uneasiness in social settings, especially when they did not know many people in their section (or locally) and/or were alone without any company. These residents were simply not socialites in visiting social places like taverns, and were very

shy and uncomfortable meeting and sitting with many people in such a context. As a lady aged 25 from Roestuin section explained:

I like going out to taverns but my boyfriend is a very shy person and he does not like to sit with many people. Although he drinks alcohol, the company he prefers is beer and myself, only the three of us. So now we just buy our stuff and we sit at home and we drink and he feels more comfortable (December 14, 2014).

The other hindrance using social places, at least at night, was the issue of crime (a point noted earlier). Some participants reported that the place where they reside is not safe and they fear that they might be robbed or raped. A young woman aged 25 noted this:

I am afraid to go to taverns at night; this place is not safe. I used to go to taverns till morning but, after my cousin was raped in the morning coming from a tavern, I made a decision that I will never go to taverns at night unless there is a car to drop me home (December 14, 2014).

Violent crime in eZamokuhle undercuts at times the possibilities of social interaction by increasing fear, distrust and suspicion within local communities.

7.3.11 Ubuntu

The discussion so far, while indicating certain forms of tension between individuals across households as well as disunity and even alienation from the broader community at times, also points towards the existence of Ubuntu within eZamokuhle at least at very localised levels. Ubuntu means “a spirit of fellowship and humanity” (Burnett 2006: 124). In short, it refers to the sense of community and morality linked normally with traditional pre-colonial African societies. Residents in eZamokuhle in fact cited the existence of a high degree of Ubuntu based on the claim that, generally speaking, people were friendly, helpful and trustworthy, and values of caring and loving prevailed in neighbourhoods. The overall high-density character of the human settlements in eZamokuhle no doubt contributes to this, compared to the more privatised forms of human settlement found in middle-class suburbs in contemporary South Africa. This sense of social cohesion, involving a social interconnectedness (Stone and Hulse 2007: vii) at local levels, was articulated by a number of residents, such as a 50-year old woman as follows:

Generally, in this township we live as a family. When someone comes into your house and asks for salt, rice or mealie meal, we give that person because we know that a person is a person because of other human beings [umuntu ngumntu ngabantu]. When someone goes through rough times we support that person with all we have. In short we care for each other (December 15, 2014).

Judging from the interviews, residents seem to feel that they can depend upon each other, especially in times of distress, and this clearly is a sign of commitment to one another. However, this claim about the prevalence of Ubuntu and interconnectedness in eZamokuhle did not go unchallenged by others. Some respondents thus spoke about a limited sense of Ubuntu. The reasons cited are simply that people in the study area are unfriendly, rude and untrustworthy. As a woman aged 28 from Phumula put it this way:

Some people here are full of themselves. They befriend you because you have something and if you don't have anything, like myself, they are not willing to assist you. Another thing if you go to a neighbour and ask for sugar, that neighbour will go around gossiping about that. So I don't trust anyone (December 05, 2014).

In this light, any interconnectedness is highly instrumentalist and is not based on a notion of reciprocity and thus Ubuntu is more of an aspiration than a living reality.

Nevertheless, it is clear from the research that, though family is normally most valued, the lives of eZamokuhle residents are embedded in wider relationships and networks across households, with the significance of neighbours coming across as a recurring theme throughout the interviews. Actually, neighbours, friends and other networks were viewed by respondents as playing a key role in supporting them and their immediate families. This is consistent with what was found by Dodson (2009: 52), namely, that “family relationships do not offer many of the positive factors found in friendships” and other inter-household relationships. This of course does not imply a full-blown Ubuntu based on dignity, unity, trust and reciprocity (Broodryk 2002:13). But there does seem to be a strong will to enact Ubuntu through a diverse range of social networks, though forging such networks is not necessarily articulated in this manner.

7.4 Local Government and Social Capital

Before concluding this chapter, I end by discussing the relationship between local government and social capital in eZamokuhle. Through practices of democratic participation, communities and community organisations become able to organise themselves and interact with local authorities in a more vigorous manner, thereby facilitating in particular the development of bridging and linking social capital. In this respect, the Municipal Systems Act (MSA) (RSA 2000) is meant to regulate the relationship between citizens and local government specifically with reference to the provision of government services. This Act strives to articulate the values of accountability, transparency, efficiency, and consultation through the generation of dependable structures for community participation in local state affairs. And through seeking

to facilitate the improvement of service delivery, the Act aims to advance the plan of developmental local government and good governance by putting ‘people first’ (Pottie 2004: 614).

However, in the Amersfoort Municipality, all this seems amiss. Most respondents in eZamokuhle reported for example that there was no communication between ward councilors and the people, with the former not even calling meetings to inform communities about housing policies and integrated development plans. The claim is that councilors only come to the community when it is time for elections. A man aged 45 from Jabavu section in a formal in-depth interview stressed this:

We only see the councilor just towards and during the election period. After that they disappear. If you have a problem during this period, he [the councilor] is quick to assist but after that he will say he is very busy. We are also not given explanations if we need some clarification concerning issues affecting us as a community (December 12, 2014).

Those residents who indicated that they reported problems (such as around service delivery) to the municipality say that these are never addressed and, in fact, not even any feedback subsequent to reports is forthcoming. This has led to a loss of trust in the municipality. However, some respondents were afraid to speak out openly about such matters at local level as well as to criticise the councilor openly, and this was especially the case amongst older residents. In fact, this was also the case with regard to the research survey itself. Many residents felt that if they expressed their views to the researcher about the municipality, then this might be made known to the councilor, and thereby jeopardise their chances of having access to social services such as social grants, housing and clinic services (and free electricity mostly for pensioners). One respondent aged 62 was particularly concerned about this:

Why are you asking such questions about the councilors? What is this for? We do not want to say things which will lead us to not receiving social grants, or not receiving houses. We do not want our councilor to hate us because of you (December 12, 2014).

In relation to the local housing stock and participatory development, residents were asked whether they were involved in the initial process of planning the housing project in which they reside. The results revealed that the beneficiaries were not at all involved, with no input whatsoever in the planning phase of the project. Some respondents also, as indicated in an

earlier chapter, had no sense of ownership and pride in the houses provided by the government (in large part, because of the quality of the housing stock and its deterioration over time).

Further, eZamokuhle residents sometimes expected the municipality to maintain the houses, which the latter did not do because this fell outside its mandate. In this sense, the exclusion of active participation of residents at local level, including in eZamokuhle, in any and all stages of the public housing programme may have the effect of encouraging complacency and dependency of housing beneficiaries especially those who fall in low income brackets – as this entails a constant and waiting reliance on the government. Public housing policy, in seeking to redress the inequalities of the apartheid past and thereby attempting to improve the lives of poorer township people, should ideally entail direct community involvement to maximise community trust and belonging (Reid 2000: 3). According to Warner (2001), local government programmes are, at least potentially, incredibly useful ways of stimulating social capital formation at community level when local authorities view citizens as active participants and provide platforms and structures for such participation. But, overall, respondents in eZamokuhle are adamant that the local municipality uses a top-down approach to addressing housing and service delivery issues and this has led to corruption, fraud, and poor planning and implementation. From one of the focus group discussions it became clear that there are a number of reasons that hinder the community from participation in service delivery. Thus one male respondent in a focus group discussion aged 27 from China 1 said that:

The municipality does not consult us most of the time; we are [simply] told what development is coming in our community. Sometimes they come to us and ask us about our concerns but most often our concerns are not attended to. When you go to the municipality, they will refer you from one person to the other (December 12, 2014).

These leads to a lack of information and absence of knowledge in understanding the responsibilities and roles of the different administrative departments within the municipality. However, a few respondents did offer some kind of sympathetic understanding and portrayal of the municipality and councilor, indicating that there is citizen-municipality communication with some significant local development taking place as well. A woman aged 33 in a focus group discussion provided such a portrait:

Although there are still challenges in our community, our local authorities have been communicating with us and also provide us with good service. Sometimes when the councilor finds people gathered chatting, he stops his car, greets and chats with them (December 12, 2014).

In general, however, the study found that local authorities and eZamokuhle residents do not have well-established and constructive relationships. As such, not only is there mistrust between residents and the municipality, but a sense of community belonging and bridging social capital between residents has not been facilitated by what is said to be – officially – a municipal structure geared towards participatory local development.

7.5 Conclusion

Residents in eZamokuhle clearly recognise the importance of forming social networks, and these often involve very informal networks. The social capital which exists within the township in the main exists not because of the state but despite it; indeed, most forms of social capital arise and develop through community-based, bottom-up processes. This however does not imply the prevalence of a deep sense of belonging as a community as a whole, as the relationships and networks are very localised, ad hoc and subject to change on a regular basis. But certainly there is a multiplicity of binding relationships if only between two people across households, and these multiple relationships (involving diverse groupings) seem to ensure that no deep and permanent cleavages exist within eZamokuhle. At the same time, the formation of certain networks (such as gang-based networks) may lead to tensions in eZamokuhle insofar as these are viewed by the community-at-large as anti-social.

Chapter 8 Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

This concluding chapter brings out some of the key findings of the thesis and, in doing so, discusses the thesis objectives and findings in the light of the theoretical framing for the thesis. As a reminder, the key objective of the thesis was to critically understand and explain social reproduction in urban black South Africa with specific reference to housing provision and household livelihoods in eZamokuhle, Amersfoort in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. In relation to eZamokuhle township, the secondary objectives were as follows:

1. To examine the historical and contemporary provision of housing by the South African state in eZamokuhle including the role of the local Amersfoort Municipality;
2. To understand and analyse the livelihood strategies pursued by the black urban poor in eZamokuhle; and
3. To examine forms of inter-household social relations and interaction in eZamokuhle in the pursuit of livelihood outcomes.

In the following sections (sections 8.2 to 8.4) I indicate the ways in which these secondary objectives were met in the empirical chapters of the thesis. In section 8.5, I focus more broadly on the overall thesis objective and link it back to the theoretical framing of the thesis.

8.2 Housing Provision in eZamokuhle

In relation to the first secondary objective (which was addressed in chapter five), some of the public housing stock in eZamokuhle was built under the apartheid government. There is no doubt that a significant number of public housing units have been built since 1994, originally under the RDP initiative (until 2004) and then in terms of BNG. Though backyard shacks continue to exist, the municipality has been able to move some people living in informal settlements to new public housing units. Under post-apartheid conditions, it seems however that the state (and local municipality) initially sacrificed quality for quantity, that is, under the RDP programme. The BNG programme is more attuned to the need for treating housing provision as part and parcel of building sustainable human settlements. In the study, the criteria used to determine the quality of housing provided by the state involved primarily the durability of the housing structure given the nature of the building materials used and the standard of workmanship. It became clear that the quality of housing in eZamokuhle varies and, in sections such as Jabavu, China 1 and China 2, it is simply inadequate.

Comparatively speaking, houses built under the apartheid regime are generally of good quality (as many are still standing) and those built immediately after 1994 under RDP are generally of poor quality. Recipients of the houses which were constructed by the apartheid government were satisfied with their houses as compared with the houses constructed under the democratic government especially those found in Jabavu, China 1 and China 2 sections (which involved RDP housing). With reference to housing in these sections, there was inadequate space, physical insecurities, insufficient shelter from weather, and limited protection from threats to health like diseases. Leaking roofs, cracks in outside doors and poorly plastered walls all existed.

The fact that some of the earlier houses provided by the post-apartheid government under the RDP programme had to be later rebuilt testifies to the insufficiencies in housing quality. This took place under the Rectification Programme (a national initiative) which sought to improve the existing housing stock. The municipality in eZamokuhle tasked inspectors to evaluate the quality of existing houses. Houses with poor structural quality were either demolished and new houses were built, or the quality deficiencies were rectified. However, some eZamokuhle residents refused to have their houses rectified or replaced. Generally, those houses built from 2004 under the BNG policy are of good quality.

The local municipality provides basic services such as refuse removal, water and sanitation to residential properties. These services are inseparable from housing and the built environment. There are however serious problems with the conditions of the basic services provided. Further, in general, the settlement design of eZamokuhle does not meet national guidelines for constructing an integrated settlement (as articulated by the BNG) as some facilities such as schools and clinics are far from residential properties and local employment opportunities are few and far between. Because of the latter, eZamokuhle remains (in a sense) a satellite township dependent upon employment outside of the settlement. Residents thus often rely on alternative forms of income, including social grants, informal trading activities and rental income from backyard shacks.

While Amersfoort municipality is officially geared towards enhancing the housing and basic services for eZamokuhle residents, there is a degree of frustration amongst these residents about the municipality, including its inconsistencies in working for the community and questions around local government mismanagement and corruption.

8.3 Livelihood Strategies in eZamokuhle

The second secondary objective, as discussed in chapter six, considers the livelihood strategies of eZamokuhle residents. As indicated, eZamokuhle is a small (satellite) township which has no formal industrial or other activity to provide residents with regular employment or a stable source of income. Most people in eZamokuhle are thus unemployed, especially the youth. The only place which employs a significant number of local residents is Eskom's Majuba Power Station. However, most of these employment opportunities are seasonal, casual or temporary. In this context, households participate in a number of livelihood activities in an effort to maintain some basis for household-based social reproduction. Besides any formal employment, there are informal sector activities, urban agriculture, rentals, remittances, savings group, seasonal work and domestic services. Residents involved as employees in formal sector activities include teachers, nurses, police officers and electricians; as well, there are businesses owned and operated such as taverns and bottle stores. Those involved in the informal economic sector are, amongst others, prostitutes, scrap metal collectors and street vendors. In the main, these livelihood activities pursued by poor people in eZamokuhle are survivalist and unsustainable in the long run.

Government social grants, such as pension grants, foster care grants and child support grants, are also of some importance, and these are used to buy groceries, electricity, clothes and send children to school. The social grants do not only serve the needs of the beneficiaries but other households members as well, though this is not always the case. Some residents also engage in livestock and crop farming, allowing for a degree of food security and at times supplementary income. Those who engage in livestock farming sell cows, goats and chickens in times of trouble in order to generate cash. Challenges with regard to livestock farming include theft of livestock, livestock being impounded and drought. Crop production is limited by access to land and water, but does act as a substitute for purchasing vegetables from retail outlets. Because of limited employment, many young residents also turn to crime as a basis for earning income, including through drug dealing and theft. Such high crime rates impact negatively on eZamokuhle residents in terms of their levels of security and safety.

In general, eZamokuhle residents have no access to formal credit institutions because they have no source of income or physical assets to act as collateral to secure a loan. Because of these inadequacies, residents may turn to local informal money lenders during emergency situations to obtain quick cash. This though is done at exorbitant interest rates. Residents are simply not able to plan for the long-term because of the instability of their sources of income, with the

grants possibly being the most reliable. Livelihood activities are thus occurring in a constant state of crisis (sometimes as reactive responses to shocks or as mere coping strategies) such that there is little evidence of household resilience let alone sustainability.

8.4 Inter-household Relationships in eZamokuhle

Intra-household and inter-household relations (discussed in chapter seven and as the focus of the third secondary objective) exist in eZamokuhle. Family members have a huge responsibility to support members within the family and the extended family at large (outside the household), as this is culturally influenced. Inter-household relationships, or social networks beyond the household, were however focused on more specifically (in chapter seven), as they speak to more community-based dynamics.

In eZamokuhle, there seems to be a high level of trust and social interaction in the community and this contributes to the social well-being of the human settlement and entails positive social capital. Poor households in eZamokuhle are, on a regular basis, simply unable to meet their daily needs, and this becomes even more difficult at times of intense crisis such as the death of a household member. Without any alternatives, households are almost compelled to look for support from other people within the community. In this regard, households in eZamokuhle are outward-looking and community-spirited and, because of this, interdependent relationships across households are quite common. Not all cross-household relationships though are based on material need, as some emerge because of the sheer desire for social belonging and personal self-affirmation through networks.

Social networks which exist in the study area include the following: churches, home base care, stokvels and wunga boys, and these networks serve different purposes for its members. As well, some of these networks have both positive and negative implications in terms of social capital formation. Thus, certainly churches, home-based care groups and stokvels have distinct advantages for their members, though tensions may exist within them at times. Other networks, notably wunga boys, may bring about short-term advantages to their members but they are not long-term solutions and may indeed impact negatively on other eZamokuhle residents insofar as crime and insecurity is concerned. Other forms of social interaction are much more informal such as when households exchange basic commodities (for example, sugar, salt, rice and mealie meal).

Social interaction in eZamokuhle is also facilitated by physical settings such as phone shops, schools, churches, taverns, football fields and so forth, and these often provide an opportunity

to engage in unintended contact with one another. Taverns in particular are of critical importance, such as KwaDelas, KwaPower, KwaSiginya, KwaKhanyile and Emzingwenya. These taverns allow for the forming of relationships either on a planned basis or through unexpected conversations between two (or more) people talking about their belief systems, experiences, values or concerns. It is by these frequent conversations and interactions that the “seeds of social capital grow and the design of the physical urban environment can act as the fertile grounds to facilitate that growth” (Moobela et al. 2007: 9).

The eZamokuhle community generally has an established sense of Ubuntu whereby most residents are friendly, trustworthy and helpful. Actually, the existence of some degree of Ubuntu signifies that there is humanity, unity, reciprocity, dignity and trust despite the depravity of material conditions if not because of these conditions. However, it was also reported that some residents are inward looking and not community spirited, with particular problems arising with regard to the youth.

8.5 State Housing, Livelihood Activities and Social Reproduction

The overall objective of the thesis was to understand and explain social reproduction in urban black South Africa with specific reference to housing provision and household livelihoods in eZamokuhle. In this regard, the three secondary objectives contributed to fulfilling this main objective. This section draws relationships between state housing provision and livelihood activities in the context of the notion of social reproduction.

Social reproduction ultimately takes place at household level, and historically (even under apartheid conditions in South Africa) the state has played a crucial role in this. In the case of eZamokuhle, and under post-apartheid conditions, the ANC-led South African state has pursued a large-scale public housing programme though this has been limited to some degree by its neo-liberal macroeconomic programme. Thus, the state does have a redistributive thrust, which is also manifested for instance in the social grant programme which is an important part of the livelihoods of eZamokuhle households. On the downside, the macroeconomic programme has failed to generate economic growth in a manner which increases the levels of formal employment in South Africa; in fact, there is evidence of ongoing jobless growth in the country. In this context, eZamokuhle residents use their own ingenuity and creativity in seeking ways of socially reproducing themselves through productive activities, or activities which generate household income and assets.

At the same time, the state's policies and programmes set the broad social conditions within which these activities are pursued. Hence, while the state has failed to adequately tackle social reproduction challenges in eZamokuhle (and in other black urban spaces in contemporary South Africa), it nevertheless provides the built environment within which households seek to make a living. As well, the built environment in eZamokuhle (including its spaces and places) facilitates the kinds of social networking and social capital formation prevalent in eZamokuhle and it is also through this networking that households and individuals reproduce themselves as social entities and beings. Ultimately, though social reproduction in eZamokuhle is in perpetual crisis mode, with nearly all households being deprived of crucial material assets including financial and physical ones. This is a localised expression of the political economy of contemporary South Africa which, now over twenty years of democracy, has taken a path which is not sufficiently and properly addressing the enduring legacies of racialised poverty and inequality.

8.6 Conclusion

Finally, I would like to suggest two areas for future research. In large part, Amersfoort municipality has failed to introduce programmes and initiatives that focus on improving the everyday lives and livelihoods of households as they pursue social reproduction in eZamokuhle township. However, this is not a case unique to Zamokuhle as it is witnessed in almost all South African black townships. In this context, comparative research becomes critical to understanding the commonalities pertaining to social reproduction challenges in urban South Africa but also in identifying perhaps regional specificities. Besides this spatial concern, historical dimensions are also crucial. It is thus important to study generational continuity and discontinuity with reference to the crisis of social reproduction in black urban spaces in South Africa. It is hoped that this thesis may stimulate further interest in these kinds of intellectual inquiries as they speak to the significance of comparative work within Sociology.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1 Survey Questionnaire on Social Reproduction in Households. Department of Sociology, Rhodes University, Grahamstown

***ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED WILL BE KEPT IN THE STRICTEST
CONFIDENCE, IN LINE WITH ETHICS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH***

Section A. Background Information of Household		
1	Respondent Number	
2	What is your house number?	
3	Are you the household head?	a. Yes b. No
4	(If answer to question 3 is 'No'), are you a Permanently staying in this household?	a. Yes b. No
5	What is your relation to the household head?	a. Head b. Spouse c. Son/daughter d. Son/daughter in law e. Brother/sister f. Grandparent g. Grandchild h. Other (relative) I. Other (no relation)
6	How old are you?	a. 18-30 b. 31-40 c. 41-50 d. 51+
7	Sex	a. Female b. Male
8	Marital Status	a. Single b. Married c. Divorced d. Widowed e. Other.....
9	Highest educational qualifications	a. Primary level b. Lower secondary level c. Higher secondary level d. Tertiary level e. No formal education

18	If yes what kind of agriculture?	a. Livestock farming b. Crop farming c. Mixed farming	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
19	Why do you engage in this kind of farming?		
20	Roughly how much does the household spend per month on the following	a. Grocery R..... b. Transport R..... c. Electricity R..... d. Water R..... e. School fees R..... f. Other R.....	
21	How would you rate your current financial situation as compared to the past five years? Would you say it is;	a. Excellent b. Good c. Poor	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
22	Which of the following social services do you think the government is doing a great job? TICK AS MANY AS POSSIBLE.	a. Social grants b. Literacy/ training/education: c. Housing d. Income and employment supports e. Health f. Other.....	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
23	Do you trust the local government/officials that they can push for the development of the community?	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Section B. Housing Conditions and Household Livelihood Activities			
1	Is this a Self-built or RDP- government provided housing?		
2	What is the ownership status of dwelling?	a. Built on squatter land b. Owned c. Rented	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3	How many rooms does the dwelling have?		
4	Are there any back yard rooms/shacks?.	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Are there any tenants in this dwelling?	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6	How can you describe the structural quality of your house? (satisfaction)	a. Excellent b. Very good c. Good d. Poor e. Very Poor f. Needs Urgent Attention	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

7	What type/s of cooking fuel source/s primarily is/are used?. TICK AS MANY AS POSSIBLE.	a. Cow Dung b. Collected wood c. Purchased wood d. Charcoal e. Paraffin f. Gas g. Electricity	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Does your household have access to the following services? {TICK AS MANY AS POSSIBLE}	a. Piped Water b. Electricity c. Clinic d. Flushing Toilet e. Garbage removal f. Schools g. Other.....	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Section C. Inter-Households Relations			
1	Do you know your neighbours?	a. Most b. A few c. Do not know them	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2	How many times do you visit your neighbours and why?	a. Almost everyday b. A few times each week c. A few times each month d. A few times each year e. Never or almost never	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Do you have friends in the neighbourhood?	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4	How many would you regard as friends?	a. None b. One c. Few d. Many	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Do you assist each other with your neighbours in times of trouble? 5. a) If yes, what do you usually assist others with?.....	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6	How do you get assisted by your neighbours?		
7	How common are of the following challenges in this area?	a. lack of jobs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ very common ▪ common ▪ Uncommon ▪ Very uncommon 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

		b. lack of education and training opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ very common ▪ common ▪ uncommon ▪ very uncommon 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		c. lack of sports and recreational facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ very common ▪ common ▪ uncommon ▪ very uncommon 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		d. lack of safety from crime: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ very common ▪ common ▪ uncommon ▪ very uncommon 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		e. AIDS/HIV: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ very common ▪ common ▪ uncommon ▪ very uncommon 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		f. Poor housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ very common ▪ common ▪ uncommon ▪ very uncommon 	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
		g. Other.....	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
8	In some communities, there are different kinds of associations, clubs and organisations that people belong to. Which kind of association, club or organisation do you belong to?	a. Church group b. Social club c. Sports club d. Savings club/stokvel. e. Burial society f. NGO g. Other.....	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
9	How active are you in these organisations/ clubs?	a. Very active b. Active c. Not very active	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

10	Why are you a member in any organization/s above? PLEASE NAME ORGANIZATION AND GIVE REASON.		
12	How regularly are the meetings held?	a. Almost everyday b. A few times each week c. A few times each month d. A few times each year e. never or almost never	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Do you usually attend these meetings? Why?		
14	If yes, what is the value of attending these meetings?		
15	Do most people in the area usually attend these meetings?	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Section D. Intra-Household Relations			
1	Is your family important to you?	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2	If no, why not?		
3	In times of trouble who do you turn to first family or friends/neighbours?		
4	Do you assist your family when they seek any kind of assistance?	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Do you ever have any conflicts within the household? 5.a) If yes what are the causes of these conflicts?	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6	How can you describe the relationship within your family.	a. Excellent b. Good	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

		c. Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Do you believe in the saying which says, “there is no place like home”?	a. Yes b. No	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	If yes why?		

Appendix 2 Interview Guide (In-depth Interviews)

Background Information

- What is your name?
- How old are you?
- What is your marital status?
- Who is the breadwinner of your household? And WHY.
- How long have you been living in Ezamokuhle?
- When and how did you start your own household?
- Is your house self-built or provided by the government?
- Were there any challenges in accessing RDP housing or building your own housing?
If yes, please elaborate

Assets

- What kind of assets do you own (financial, natural, social, physical and human)?
- Among these resources which one is the most valuable to you and WHY?
- Which one of the resources do you rely on for your daily activities?
- What sort of problems do you encounter in accessing these resources?

Livelihood Activities (for residents engaging in informal business)

- What sort of livelihood activities do you engage in to survive?
- Among these activities which one is your main source of income and WHY?
- Explain what motivated you to engage in these livelihoods?
- Aside from this/these activities are there any other major sources of income.
- Has the number of income sources increased/decreased and WHY?
- What are the reasons behind reliance on these activities?
- Can you rate improvements so far since the time you started this/these activities?
- What role do household members play in carrying out these activities?
- Who decides and invest money on a certain activity?
- Is the money you get weekly, monthly or annually enough to cater for your needs?
- If NO what is it that the money is failing to meet?
- How do you spend the income you get from these activities?

Support (for residents engaging in informal business)

- Where do you get your funds from?
- Do you have any other support?
- What kind of support is it?
- What other kinds of support is needed for the livelihoods to improve

Social networks and livelihoods

- Do you believe that Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu: “A person is a person because of people.” 1. Yes 2. No. WHY?
- Who do you contact if you have a problem?
- Can you go ask for help in the neighborhood?

- Have you ever helped someone in the community in the last three months?
- If you had a problem would you go to your friends and ask for help?
- What do you benefit from your friends?
- How can you describe this area is it where people help each other or where people go their own way?
- Why do you think relationships among community members should be good?
- Do you as neighbours help each other without expecting something in return?
- Do you belong to any organization in your area? eg Stokvel, church etc.

Local Municipality (service delivery)

Municipal officials

1. What do you think are the two most important issues for the government to address?
2. Do you think government programs that try to improve the condition of poor people in this country are generally making things better, are making things worse, or aren't having much impact one way or another?
3. In your own opinion what do you think the government should do?
4. Do you think the municipality is doing its job with regards to service delivery?

Residents

- What are your attitudes and perceptions with respect to local services like clinics, housing, water, electricity, garbage removal in your area?
- Any disruptions to water supply?
- Do you afford water rates?
- How far is the clinic from your household?
- Do you afford electricity?

Appendix 3 Discussion Guide (Focus Discussion)

Assets

- What kind of assets do you own (financial, natural, social, physical and human)?
- Among these resources which one is the most valuable to you and WHY?
- Which one of the resources do you rely on for your daily activities?
- What sort of problems do you encounter in accessing these resources?

Livelihood Activities (for residents engaging in informal business)

- What sort of livelihood activities do you engage in to survive?
- Among these activities which one is your main source of income and WHY?
- Explain what motivated you to engage in these livelihoods?
- Aside from this/these activities are there any other major sources of income.
- Has the number of income sources increased/decreased and WHY?
- What are the reasons behind reliance on these activities?
- Can you rate improvements so far since the time you started this/these activities?
- What role do household members play in carrying out these activities?
- Who decides and invest money on a certain activity?
- Is the money you get weekly, monthly or annually enough to cater for your needs?
- If NO what is it that the money is failing to meet?
- How do you spend the income you get from these activities?

Social networks and livelihoods

- Do you believe that Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu: “A person is a person because of people.” 1. Yes 2. No. WHY?
- Who do you contact if you have a problem?
- Can you go ask for help in the neighborhood?
- Have you ever helped someone in the community in the last three months?
- If you had a problem would you go to your friends and ask for help?
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- How can you describe this area is it where people help each other or where people go their own way?
- Why do you think relationships among community members should be good?
- Do you as neighbours help each other without expecting something in return?
- Do you belong to any organization in your area? eg Stokvel, church etc.

Social networks and livelihoods

- Do you believe that Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu: “A person is a person because of people.” 1. Yes 2. No. WHY?
- Who do you contact if you have a problem?
- Can you go ask for help in the neighborhood?
- Have you ever helped someone in the community in the last three months?

- If you had a problem would you go to your friends and ask for help?
- What do you benefit from your friends?
- How can you describe this area is it where people help each other or where people go their own way?
- Why do you think relationships among community members should be good?
- Do you as neighbours help each other without expecting something in return?
- Do you belong to any organization in your area? eg Stokvel, church etc.

Local Municipality (service delivery)

Residents

- What are your attitudes and perceptions with respect to local services like clinics, housing, water, electricity, garbage removal in your area?
- Any disruptions to water supply?
- Do you afford water rates?
- How far is the clinic from your household?
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