

**TENURE AND VULNERABILITY:
THE EFFECTS OF CHANGES TO TENURE
SECURITY ON THE IDENTITY AND SOCIAL
RELATIONSHIPS OF THE URBAN POOR**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Directed by the Millennium Development Goal to improve the lives of at least 100 million 'slum' dwellers by 2020, national governments and development agencies are driving policy to upgrade and formalise informal settlements. This study is an investigation into the effects of *in situ* upgrade and formalisation on the vulnerability and resilience of the urban poor in Durban, South Africa. The study examines the relationships between tenure and vulnerability by identifying and exploring how changes to tenure security, introduced through the upgrade process, affect individuals' exposure to risk and ability to cope, and the ways in which identity and social relations influence those effects. The data are drawn from twenty-four ethnographies of residents living in three low income settlements in/around Durban each at different stages in the upgrade process. The findings of the study show that many residents are better off following an upgrade – ownership claims are better protected, they are more comfortable in their homes and able to improve livelihoods. However, these security and resilience gains are undermined by the high levels of crime and violence that continue post-upgrade and affect the desirability of a location and the ability of people to live there. Furthermore, the manner in which the process is implemented reconfigures local power relations, without meaningfully altering them; thus continuing to tie residents' wellbeing to social rules administered by informal institutions. These findings challenge conceptualisations of 'tenure security' and the conventional orthodoxy of upgrading.

DEDICATION

For my family - Jayprakash, Bhadra and Jigna

For their boundless encouragement, love and support

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Having grown up in inner-city London my earliest memories are of how dichotomous cities can be. I shopped in the numerous pound shops on Kilburn High Road and lived in social housing until my parents were afforded an opportunity to buy their ex-council flat at a much reduced rate under the 'Right to Buy' scheme. Following their homeownership, we still lived in Kilburn, we still shopped in pound shops, and my mother was still mugged on our doorstep. On a parallel road in West Hampstead I would see (mostly) white people drinking coffee outside fancy-looking cafes on wicker chairs at solid pine tables; less than half a mile away was a different world. For a while, to drink coffee on the pavement outside of a fancy cafe was the height of my childhood aspirations. I did not know it, but I shared many of the thoughts and dreams with the people I went on to interview who lived almost 15,000km away in Durban. I only know this because twenty-four people who I had never met before allowed me and my questions into their lives. They were patient, gracious and welcoming; and I am indebted to them. I am particularly indebted to Thoko, Nkosi and Mrs. Jiani - three of the best research assistants and friends I could have hoped for.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
BEC	Branch Executive Committee (of the ANC)
BNG	Breaking New Ground
CBD	Central Business District
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CC number	Cato Crest number (name given to shack numbers in Cato Crest)
CDC	Community Development Committee
CLEP	Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor
CMDA	Cato Manor Development Association
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
DA	Democratic Alliance
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DoHS	Department of Human Settlements (South Africa)
GoRSA	Government of the Republic of South Africa
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PSUP	Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme
R	South African Rand (R)
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RPF	Resource Profiles Framework
SACP	South Africa Communist Party
UDF	United Democratic Front
UN	United Nations
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USD	United States Dollar (\$)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WeD	Wellbeing in Developing Countries
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union

GLOSSARY

<i>Amasimba</i>	Shit (isiZulu, slang)
<i>Bantu</i>	Generally considered a pejorative term used to refer to black South Africans and 'African' culture in general
<i>Emaki</i>	A farm; ancestral or family home (isiZulu)
<i>Febe</i>	An 'overeducated' woman (isiZulu)
<i>Gogo</i>	Old African woman (isiZulu)
<i>Indololwane</i>	Elbow (isiZulu)
<i>Insizwe</i>	A person who prepares men to fight on the instruction of the Chief
<i>Jumah</i>	Friday (Arabic); in reference to <i>Jumah</i> prayers carried out on Fridays by Muslims
<i>Lobola</i>	Bridewealth
<i>Mjondolo</i>	Shack and/or informal settlement (isiZulu)
<i>Nkeri</i>	Traditional Zulu fighting stick (isiZulu)
<i>Shebeen</i>	Tavern
<i>Sangoma</i>	Witchdoctor
<i>Sawubona</i>	Good day; hello (isiZulu)
<i>Spaza</i>	Small shop
<i>Stockvell</i>	Rotating credit fund
<i>Toitois</i>	Protests
<i>Unjani</i>	How are you? (isiZulu)
<i>Vuvuzela</i>	Traditional African instrument popularised in a plastic form during the 2010 World Cup hosted by South Africa

MAPS

MAP 1 PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL¹



¹ Original map 'South Africa', Bielefeld: Reise Know-How Verlag (scale 1:1,400,000); annotated by author.

MAP 2 DURBAN AND THE SURROUNDING AREA²



² Original map 'KwaZulu-Natal', South Africa: Map Studio (scale 1:250,000); annotated by author

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This thesis is about the relationship between tenure and vulnerability. Through following the *in situ* upgrade and formalisation of urban informal settlements, the thesis examines how and why changes to tenure security influence and are influenced by poor individuals' identity and social relationships, and to what extent these influences affect their lives, exposure to risk and ability to cope. The thesis offers a detailed appreciation of the process of upgrade and formalisation in Durban, South Africa, from the perspective of residents living in settlements where the process is to be implemented, is currently being implemented and has been implemented.

This chapter demonstrates the relevance of the study by situating the research topic in the context of international trends in policies intended to drive urban poverty alleviation, and in the South African policy environment that drives national pursuit of one of the latest trends – the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements (**section 1.1**). The chapter sets out the aims and objectives of the study (**section 1.2**), and the research questions that arise from a discussion of the topic (**section 1.3**). It goes on to discuss the scope of the study (**section 1.4**), and present an outline of the structure of the rest of the thesis (**section 1.5**).

1.1 The research topic and relevance of the study

1.1.1 International trends in urban poverty alleviation

At some point in 2008, for the first time, half the world's population lived in urban centres (UNFPA, 2007). The rapid rate of urbanisation in the global South since 2000, accelerated by growing opportunities for investment and employment in urban areas, has led to a proliferation of "poor-quality, overcrowded housing, often in illegal settlements lacking good provision for water,

sanitation, drainage, health care and schools” (Satterthwaite, 2007:viii). Satterthwaite (2007), Meikle (2002), Linn (1982) and others have argued that the costs of rapid urbanisation in developing countries are borne by the poorest and most vulnerable members of society. This argument is recognised by world leaders and major international development agencies who in 2000 pledged to “improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020” (Millennium Development Goal 7, target 11, UN, 2000).

Since around the time this pledge was articulated, there have been a number of high profile global campaigns to change the urban landscape in the global South, primarily by targeting informal settlements as problem spaces and harbingers of poverty. The World Bank and UN-Habitat supported ‘Cities Alliance: Cities without Slums’ campaign is one such attempt. The ‘Cities without Slums’ campaign, launched in 1999 by Nelson Mandela while he was President of South Africa, conceives of slums as places of inadequate housing that “exemplify the variety of manifestations of poverty” (UN-Habitat, 2002:2). The campaign advocates an inclusive participatory approach to rid cities of slums by providing security of tenure, structurally sound dwellings, access to safe water and sanitation, and opportunities for improved economic livelihoods to their inhabitants (*Ibid.* 2002:3).

At a national level, contributing to the political and public imperative to take action with respect to informal settlements is the widespread belief that they are places of crime and violence. UN-Habitat’s seminal report, ‘The Challenge of Slums’ (2003) identifies a long-standing association between crime and informal settlements which has driven a negative view of informal settlements by public policy makers who justify razing settlements and relocating residents on the grounds of public safety, even though, when the report scrutinises the association between crime and informal settlements, it argues that “slum dwellers are not the main source of crime. [...] Slum dwellers are [...] more exposed to organized crime than non-slum dwellers as a result of the failure of public housing and other policies that have tended to exclude slum dwellers” (UN-Habitat, 2003: xxvi). UN-

Habitat states that policies to tackle crime and violence in informal settlements should not criminalise the poor in the process.

One of the strongest recommendations to create safer cities to emerge from the report is better planned public space, including upgrading informal settlements³. The recommendation was aided by the launch of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) in April 2008. Through this programme UN-Habitat aims to help national governments meet MDG 7 target 11, by upgrading informal settlements in sustainable ways that provide poor urban dwellers with a safe living environment conducive to their wellbeing and self-improvement. PSUP encompasses ideas of inclusion in its process and outcomes: that is the participation of shack dwellers (those who live in informal settlements) in upgrading programmes, and the inclusion of informal settlements into mainstream society. The participatory *in situ* upgrade of informal settlements is widely considered international best practice in current approaches to urban poverty alleviation.

The *in situ* upgrade of informal settlements marks a departure from site and service schemes that were popular throughout the 1970s, 1980s and much of the 1990s. These schemes (with some variation), were developed on cost-recovery principles and provided serviced lots that were made available to low income urban dwellers to rent or buy. Influenced by the ideas of John Turner (1976), site and service schemes attempted to improve the living standards of the poor whilst retaining flexibility in housing design and construction to better meet the priorities of the poor. They were lauded by the World Bank and UN-Habitat for “stimulat[ing] self-help, and mak[ing] it possible for the poor to house themselves in a viable, cohesive community with a minimum of public expenditure” (McNamara, 1975 in Peattie, 1982:133). In practice, many of the schemes were flawed. The state was largely unsuccessful at managing costs and keeping them low enough to be affordable to the urban poor (many instead attracted the middle classes); high quality building standards enforced by

³ Although World Bank and UN-Habitat supported informal settlement upgrade programmes pre-date the publication of ‘The Challenge of Slums’, as noted in Campbell (1990:205).

the state hindered self-build; and the schemes tended to be located on the outskirts of cities increasing the transport cost of residents to jobs, schools and shops (Peattie, 1982).

In contrast, the *in situ* upgrade of informal settlements appears more sensitive to the needs of shack dwellers. Any locational advantage of an informal settlement to the urban poor is retained; and the cost-recovery principle is not as prominent. Underlying both approaches is the promise of security of tenure through legal title to property ownership. Back in 1982, Peattie wrote, “The indispensability of secure tenure for making it possible for low-income people to invest in housing has for some time been established as an axiom of policy and, indeed, one of the conceptual underpinnings of sites and services” (*Ibid.* 1982:136). Almost thirty years later, the perceived benefits of tenure secured through legal title to land and property continues to underpin the rationale behind the formalisation of informal settlements.

The assumed relationships between tenure security, legal title and the benefits they are believed to engender demand greater scrutiny in order to assess the relevance of a theory that has underlain three decades of intervention in urban housing and poverty alleviation. The theory contends that secure tenure is synonymous with individual legal land and property rights, and that these rights enable the poor to use land and property rights as strategic variables in their attempts to improve their living conditions and general wellbeing. For example, the poor with a legal title are reasoned to be able to increase investments in their property, use it as collateral to access credit for business, leading to increased incomes, and participate in and benefit from a broader and more active land market (Deininger and Chamorro, 2004; May, Stevens and Stols, 2002; de Soto, 2000). The conceptualisation of secure tenure as land and property rights is consistent with neo-liberal theory on land which contends that land is a commodity, and that if the potential of land to generate capital is realised (through the perceived benefits of a title deed, for example), it can propel economic growth and drive national development.

This neo-liberal theory drives an economic imperative to upgrade and formalise informal settlements. Yet the body of research examining the social effects of formal land tenure on an individual's daily wellbeing and longer-term resilience is comparatively small. Such an examination demands empirical scrutiny of what life in an informal settlements is actually like for the individuals who live there, how they are able to access resources including land and shelter, how safe and secure they feel, what their aspirations for the future look like and the strategies they employ to meet them. This thesis focuses on how individuals construct and use aspects of their identity and social relationships to secure tenure and resilience, and how their identity and social relationships can conversely affect tenure insecurity and vulnerability. It thus contributes to a small but growing literature on empirically grounded studies of informal settlements and the realities faced by shack dwellers, and the effects of a major state-led intervention such as upgrade and formalisation (Ross, 2009 and Symphony Way Pavement Dwellers, 2011, are notable recent contributions to this field).

From site and service schemes to participatory slum upgrades, these programmes largely driven by UN-Habitat and the World Bank, and shaped by neo-liberal theory on land, signify the major trends in approaches to poor urban dwellers in developing countries over the past 30 years. South African approaches to urban poverty alleviation closely follow these international trends. Consequently, a recurring theme in the thesis is whether the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements in South Africa actually leads to the type of improvements envisaged and expounded by UN-Habitat: a vision of safer more inclusive cities.

1.1.2 South African approaches to informal settlements

Urban land and housing policy in contemporary South Africa, alongside all other major policy reform, is rooted in post-apartheid nation-building. In October 1996, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was adopted by the Constitutional Assembly. This highly progressive document enshrined a range of rights for all South Africans that were hitherto absent and thus redefined

conceptions of citizenship (Von Lieres and Robins, 2008). Under Article 26 Housing in the Bill of Rights (chapter two of the Constitution), clause 1 states that “Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing”. The second clause declares, “The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right” (GoRSA, 1996). The commitment of the state to meet this right drives both the national housing policy and a strong sense of entitlement, and correspondingly raised expectations, amongst South Africa’s citizens, who historically were dispossessed of housing, land and tenure rights. It also establishes citizenship – the relationship between citizen and state – as an important theme in understanding the aims and objectives of low income housing provision in South Africa.

At the end of apartheid in 1994, the first democratically elected government was faced with an acute urban housing crisis. The African National Congress (ANC) government assessed that in 1994 1.5million urban households (or 18% of all households) were living in squatter settlements, backyard shacks or overcrowded formal housing with no formal security of tenure, and that there was an urban housing backlog of approximately 1.5million units (GoRSA, 1995: section 3.2). This situation, in light of the Constitutional commitment of the state to enable access to adequate housing, demanded the delivery of low-cost urban housing for low income households. At the time the ANC came to power, a neo-liberal doctrine that viewed the market as an efficient and effective mechanism to correct economic inequality in developing countries was globally popular. The neo-liberal doctrine on land conceptualised individual land ownership and legal tenure rights as a necessary foundation to realise basic human rights and economic freedoms (Palmer, 2000:16). Although there are other approaches to urban land reform for social justice including customary and neo-customary approaches (discussed in **chapter 2**), in South Africa, the neo-liberal doctrine is paramount and guides both the purpose of urban housing intervention and the mechanisms.

In 1994 the Housing Subsidy Scheme, a collaboration of the state and the private sector, was launched to meet the demand for urban housing. The scheme sought to build formal housing, and provide potential home owners with access to credit to encourage home ownership (through a title deed) to address apartheid-era prohibition of African land and property ownership⁴, and to enable economic self-help through a stimulated low income housing market (Tomlinson, 1999:286; Huchzermeyer, 2008:2). Formal housing was often built on designated sites on the periphery of cities and poor urban dwellers were required to relocate in order to take advantage of the housing, land and property rights on offer. The site and services approach to urban housing, which included a house as well as a serviced plot in the South African context, was criticised for relocating Africans out of the city in ways reminiscent of the housing experience of urban Africans under apartheid (Maylam, 1996:17; Nuttall, 1997:196 in Huchzermeyer, 2001:310).

The scheme was succeeded in 2004 by the Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme. This programme, consistent with international trends, signified a policy and legislative shift to favour the *in situ* upgrade of informal settlements over and above relocation (GoRSA, 2005:12), although, in practice, relocation still accounts for much of national housing delivery (see Huchzermeyer, 2009). The shift in policy rhetoric does not, however, signify a break in ideological thinking. This programme, like the Housing Subsidy Scheme before it, aims to accelerate housing delivery, support the functioning of a single residential property market, and create linkages between the government and private sector so subsidy beneficiaries can use their house as an asset for wealth creation and to enter the formal property market (GoRSA, 2005:1).

The programme is driven by a presidential mandate to the Department of Human Settlements (DoHS, formerly the Department of Housing) to eliminate all informal settlements by 2014. This mandate is

⁴ The systematic theft of land from Africans, endorsed by legislation of the day, is dated by the ANC government to the 1913 Native Lands Act, which prohibited African ownership of rural land. The prohibition was later extended to urban land under the 1923 Urban Areas Act.

an interpretation of MDG 7, target 11, which as noted above, seeks to achieve by 2020 a significant improvement in the lives of 100 million shack dwellers. The language of 'slum eradication' and 'slum elimination' appears to derive from UN-Habitat's problematic use of the term 'cities without slums' (Huchzermeyer, 2007). This language encourages the use of terms such as 'eradication' and 'elimination' as perfectly acceptable ways to articulate and design approaches to urban poverty reduction. However, such language targets the residents of informal settlements and, contrary to the principles of UN-Habitat's *Cities without Slums*, disguises the root causes of urban poverty which can include unemployment, poor education, unstable urban governance, and/or misdirected national resources. The language of eradication and elimination instead shifts the focus of urban poverty alleviation efforts to dealing only with physical spaces known as informal settlements and the people who live in them. It suggests that the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements in itself can alleviate urban poverty and deprivation.

Although South African approaches towards informal settlements generally follow international trends, one major feature is notably absent. This is the drive to upgrade and formalise informal settlements in order to develop safer cities. The idea is implied through planning initiatives such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). However, neither the Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme nor the Housing Subsidy Scheme before it carries an explicit agenda to improve public safety or the safety and security of poor urban dwellers. The only explicit mention of security for shack dwellers is tenure security, which is conceived in terms of legal rights and entitlements. The omission of the safer cities objective in policy and practice demands further investigation. This study aims to explore the effect of changes to tenure security on the vulnerability of poor urban dwellers. The concept of 'vulnerability' captures the multi-dimensional and cyclical nature of poverty and the risks that poverty exposes poor people to; it allows for an exploration of how crime and violence affect poor urban dwellers' own conception of their security and vulnerability.

Exploring the process of upgrade and formalisation and considering how residents of informal settlements experience the process and its effects in Durban, carries salient points of interest to the investigation; especially, the ways in which an individual's identity and social relations influence their tenure and vulnerability. The first point of interest is the history of the city of Durban and the pattern of informal settlement within and just outside the city's administrative borders. Under the policy of apartheid (implemented from 1948) and before it, the city of Durban was administered under the authority of the ruling white minority. Unlike other South African cities at the time, Durban was surrounded by the tribal areas of the KwaZulu homeland which was governed under a traditional chieftaincy system where land use and ownership was determined by customary arrangements that drew upon an individual's social relationships and aspects of his/her identity to facilitate access to the chief and secure tenure rights (Leduka, 2004, details similar practices in neighbouring Lesotho).

This situation of land ownership and use meant that on the periphery of the city were settlements of poor Africans established under traditional rules and with the permission of the rightful landowner; these settlements later called 'informal' were not illegal (Hofmeyr, 1982). As the administrative borders of Durban expanded to cope with a growing population, first in 1932 and at frequent intervals thereafter, legal 'informal settlements' were increasingly absorbed into the city and came under the jurisdiction of municipal authorities. In addition to these types of settlement, some informal settlements grew within municipal borders and without the direct involvement of chiefs. For example, Cato Manor in Durban was white-owned land that was sold or rented to predominantly Indians emerging from indentured labour contracts in the early 1900s. African migrant men first settled there in the 1920s typically as tenants to Indian landowners. The settlement continued to grow, with residents often living under informal tenure arrangements, until forced removals in the 1950s and 1960s (Maylam, 1996). At the end of apartheid, this situation meant that there were a variety of legitimate and illegitimate land tenure regimes in the city that safeguarded (to varying

degrees) the tenure rights of poor urban dwellers. Of particular interest to this study are the variety of grounded experiences of tenure security and insecurity prevalent in 'informal settlements' in and around Durban, which denote different systems of governance in urban settlements, with correspondingly different values with respect to identity and social relations.

The second point of interest is the history of party political tension and contest between two dominant factions in African party politics in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN): the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and the ANC and the United Democratic Front (UDF) (established in 1983 when the ANC was banned). The division of African resistance to apartheid between Inkatha and the ANC sets the Durban political landscape apart from the anti-apartheid movement in the rest of South Africa. The IFP was founded by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi as a party based on ethnic Zulu identity and rooted in Zulu traditionalism. The power of the IFP was tied to the strength of the apartheid state; it was the Nationalist government that created a Zulu homeland and unopposed its government by the IFP. IFP power in the province was consequently challenged by the rise of the ANC in KZN. The contest for power leading up to and after the end of apartheid led to brutal communal violence across the province, mainly between IFP and ANC supporters; the violence was inspired by both party political allegiance and ethnicity.

Episodes of communal violence in the late 1980s and early 1990s resulted in the mass movement of 'refugees'. This movement determined where many poor rural and urban Africans live; it continues to influence how they live and their access to local and state resources. Apartheid-era antagonism between the IFP and ANC (and its underlying tone of ethnic preference) is still evident in contemporary local politics. For example, following the first ever victory of the ANC over the IFP in the 1999 KZN provincial election, the ANC promised to address the concerns of the poor in urban informal settlements (core supporters of the IFP tend to be based in rural KZN), specifically naming informal settlements in central Durban that voted ANC for improvements to basic services (Pithouse,

2008:71). The history and politics of Durban is strongly influenced by ethnicity, this means contests over land ownership and use are entwined with the politics of ethnicity as well as the politics of class, wealth and gender apparent in other parts of the country. The social and political landscape of contemporary Durban thus adds a cultural dimension to the analysis of social relations between individuals, and between individuals and the state.

The final point of interest relates to current events in land and housing policy in Durban and draws together national commitment to eradicate slums with the historic and contemporary pattern of informal settlement across the city. In 2001, the KwaZulu-Natal Minister of Housing, Minister Dumisani Makhaye, introduced a major slum eradication programme for Durban which he justified based on his observations of informal settlement in the city. He said:

Today, we are announcing a R200 million slum clearance programme that is specifically targeted at slums in and around the Durban area. When you enter the city of Durban you are met by slums and when you leave it is slums that bid you farewell ... That is why, as a Department, we decided that certain drastic steps had to be taken.

(Minister Dumisani, 2001 in COHRE, 2008:100)

The agenda to eradicate slums by 2014 is very strong in Durban. It has meant a strong push for the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements, as well as the relocation of shack dwellers who cannot be accommodated in upgraded settlements. The agenda has also driven the particularly antagonistic 2007 KwaZulu-Natal Elimination and Prevention of the Re-emergence of Slums Act. This Act aims to eliminate slums in the province through legislation that prevents new settlements from emerging and through the further legal empowerment of state actors to control existing ones. This Act and the debates surrounding it capture the current tensions in land and housing policy between the state and shack dwellers in Durban. Its critics argue that the purpose of the Act, despite the

rhetoric of the MDG behind it, is to eliminate slums without improving the lives of slum dwellers (Abahlali BaseMjondolo, 2007)⁵.

The lack of detailed research on the effects of the upgrade and formalisation process on the lives of the urban poor, does not match the growing importance of the topic. In November 2009 the World Bank launched its urban and local government strategy to tackle poverty in cities; this strategy emphasises the participatory upgrade of informal settlements and formalisation through individual land titling (World Bank, 2009). At the second African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development in Nigeria, July 2008, 26 ministers across Africa discussed how to meet MDG 7, target 11. The Ministers concluded that improving the lives of shack dwellers means upgrading informal settlements, which will “require investing USD 4.2 billion per year or USD 440 per person over the period of 2005 to 2020” (UN-Habitat, 2008). The majority of the investment is expected to come from bank subsidies and loans to the state and donor contributions. This study was undertaken in a context of this momentum and the arguments driving upgrade and formalisation agendas across the global South, making the findings relevant to studies on urban poverty alleviation not only within but also outside of South Africa. An investigation into the social effects of the *in situ* upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements is therefore timely and apt.

1.2 Research aim and objectives

The aim of the research is to explore the ways in which the *in situ* upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements in Durban, South Africa, is affecting the lives of current and former residents of informal settlements. This aim explores the effects of upgrade and formalisation beyond existing literature on the topic which primarily examines the economic effects of upgrade on urban poverty at a household level (e.g. de Soto, 2000, examines the investment effects and opportunities for

⁵ The Act is provincial legislation and gave greater powers to provincial authorities to eliminate informal settlements in KwaZulu-Natal. On 14 October 2009, the Constitutional Court reversed part of an earlier High Court judgement that gave the province power to evict people from land that is illegally occupied, irrespective of the wishes of the landowner. The judgement has halted the roll out of the Act across other provinces.

livelihood creation; and Moser examines the effects of legal title on household investment to hold off vulnerability, 1998).

There are five specific research objectives. They are:

1. To describe the implementation of the upgrade and formalisation process from the perspective of residents, focusing on how they access the process and any opportunities they have to influence it;
2. To identify and explain how experiences of tenure and vulnerability influence and are influenced by an individual's identity and social relations, and how and to what effect these influences alter at different stages of the upgrade and formalisation process;
3. To explore varying perceptions and experiences of tenure security and insecurity amongst residents of informal and newly formalised settlements;
4. To relate these experiences of tenure security and insecurity and the influences of identity and social relations to the relationship between tenure and vulnerability; and finally,
5. To use the research findings to develop an assessment of the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements as an effective mechanism to build safer and more inclusive cities.

1.3 The research questions

This aim and objectives lead to a series of research questions. The study asks: what are the effects of formalising tenure through *in situ* upgrade on vulnerability and resilience, and in what ways do identity and social relationships influence those effects, and why? This question is broken down into three sub-questions:

1. How do identity and social relations influence tenure and vulnerability/resilience? Specifically, to what extent do they affect:
 - access to land and tenure security; and
 - daily wellbeing in settlements and longer term resilience
2. Does the process of upgrade affect the role identity and social relations play in tenure and vulnerability/resilience, if so how and why? With respect to:
 - access to the upgrade and formalisation process and tenure security; and
 - daily wellbeing in settlements and longer term resilience

3. What is the relationship between tenure and vulnerability/resilience before, during and after the upgrade and formalisation of an informal settlement?

1.4 Scope of the study

Geographically, the study is located within the administrative boundaries of eThekweni Municipality, which includes the city of Durban. This municipality has a strong track record in the *in situ* upgrade of informal settlements, which meant that there was a wide selection of settlements that could potentially serve as suitable sites for the investigation. In order to 'follow' the process of *in situ* upgrade and formalisation, the research was conducted in three different sites each at a different stage of the process. The first site was at the pre-feasibility phase of the process; the second in the implementation phase; and the third in post-implementation phase. The selection of settlements at these three points was a strategic decision intended to help isolate and identify the role of the process in changes to individual conceptions of and attitudes to tenure, identity, social relations and vulnerability and resilience.

Methodologically, the study draws on interviews with municipal and provincial officials, local councillors and implementing agents acting on behalf of eThekweni Municipality for an understanding of how the process is implemented. The study centres however, on a diverse range of individuals who live in informal settlements, including the intended beneficiaries of upgrade and formalisation programmes and those who are not eligible to apply to the process. In order to achieve its objectives, the study adopts an ethnographic method that seeks to provide in-depth rich data about the explicit and the subtle nuanced effects of the upgrade process in Durban. The empirical data is therefore derived mainly from a series of repeated in-depth interviews with twenty-four residents of low income settlements. Although care was taken to select informants with characteristics typical of the range of social groups within the settlements, findings from the study do not claim or aim to be representative of the experiences of shack dwellers in the rest of South Africa or even other settlements within eThekweni Municipality. However, the main findings are relevant to upgrade and

formalisation processes in general. They raise salient issues concerning how residents can access a 'participatory process', their expectations of the process, and where and how the process has failed or succeeded to deliver tenure security and opportunities for improved resilience (the methodological approach is discussed in detail in **chapter 3**).

Conceptually, the study explores the nature and strength of the relationships between tenure, identity, social relations and vulnerability/resilience. The theoretical scope of the study draws on the work of Caroline Moser (1998) and her asset vulnerability framework and the resource profiles framework of the Wellbeing in Developing Countries group at the University of Bath (WeD). The asset vulnerability framework explicitly ties vulnerability to asset ownership in an urban context, and conceptualises tenure security as legal title (Moser, 1998). The framework also conceptualises social relations as assets that contribute to resilience. The resource profiles framework is more heuristic and asks what value poor people place on the resources they have in given social and cultural contexts and how this impacts on their use of these resources (Gough, McGregor, Camfield, 2006:23-24). It thus creates space to analyse the context and role of an individual's social relations and aspects of their identity in attaining their conceptions of wellbeing (White, 2006). This study combines and modifies these frameworks to meet the study aims and objectives (the frameworks are discussed further in **chapters 2 and 3**).

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This chapter discussed the relevance of researching the topic, and set out the research aim, objectives and questions that the remainder of the thesis will address. This chapter also identified four main concepts that the study investigates: tenure security/insecurity, identity, social relations and vulnerability/resilience. The following chapter critically discusses literature on the topic and presents theories that explain the relationships between these four concepts. This discussion will establish the conceptual framework that guides the enquiry. This discussion will also identify gaps in

the literature that would benefit from further research (**chapter 2**). This is followed by a discussion of the methodological approach adopted (**chapter 3**). The investigation involved a period of extended fieldwork in Durban in order to empirically examine the nature and effect of the relationships between the four concepts. The methodological approach also discusses and critically reflects on the ethics of primary data collection involving people who are generally poor and vulnerable members of society. The study is then set in national policy and contemporary South African history (**chapter 4**), in order to contextualise the analysis of the primary data that follows. This data offers grounded explanations of the nature and effect of the relationships between tenure security/insecurity, identity, social relations and vulnerability/resilience as understood and experienced by residents of three low income settlements in Durban: Gum Tree Road (**chapter 5**), Cato Crest (**chapter 6**), and Zwelisha (**chapter 7**). The analysis leads on to concluding statements that draw together empirical data with existing theory to generate assertions on the relationship between tenure and vulnerability and how identity and social relationships influence the relationship (**chapter 8**).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

The bodies of literature on tenure and vulnerability emerge from two distinct academic disciplines; discussion and analysis of the former is common in the land management and urban planning literature, while the latter is common in sociology and anthropological studies. The discipline of development studies, although multidisciplinary in many respects, does not adequately draw together the theories and concepts that surround tenure security/insecurity and vulnerability/resilience in a coherent body of literature. Research on tenure security and approaches to tenure security often offer rudimentary interpretations of vulnerability, and then not at the level of an individual (e.g. Gilbert, 2002:8; Royston, 2002; Durand-Lasserve and Royston, 2002; Cross, 1994). Similarly, the literature on vulnerability explores its expressions and relationship to related concepts including social exclusion, citizenship and poverty, but often tenure insecurity is treated only as a visible manifestation of vulnerability at the household level (e.g. Moser, 1998, 1996; Coetzee, 2002:7; Chambers, 1995, 2006; Beall, 2002).

The academic separation of discourses on tenure and vulnerability creates a need for a nuanced investigation into the nature of the relationship between the concepts of tenure and vulnerability; an investigation that explores how the process of changing tenure affects individual experiences of vulnerability, and how continually changing experiences of vulnerability affect tenure security and insecurity. Furthermore, within each discourse are points of conceptual synergy that need further exploration, such as the constructions of social relations and power that influence experiences of both tenure and vulnerability; and the role of identity, in constructions of citizenship and ethnicity, for example, that also influence experiences of tenure and vulnerability. This thesis aims to draw

together discourses on tenure with discourses on vulnerability and create a space in which to situate related concepts.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a discursive analysis of the following themes, and the theories and concepts that surround them; informal settlements (**section 2.1**), tenure security and insecurity (**section 2.2**), identity and social relations (**section 2.3**), and vulnerability and resilience (**section 2.4**). The discussion draws both on international and South African literature in order to situate South African issues in a global context. The analysis in this chapter establishes the conceptual framework for the research, within which research data is analysed (**chapters 5-7**), and contextualises the contribution of the thesis within a wider body of literature (revisited in **chapter 8**).

2.1 Informal settlements

Common definitions of a residential area where people live under a constant threat of legal eviction, where homes are constructed with whatever resources lie close to hand and where there is no obligation for anyone to provide basic services, have come to adopt the least objectionable term 'informal settlement'. Pejoratively, these settlements have been called slums, shanty, shack or squatter areas (Gilbert, 2007:697; 1992:123), although attempts have been made to counter the inaccuracies and negative associations surrounding these terms (e.g. UN-Habitat, 2003). The language used to describe the residence of vast numbers of the urban poor can indicate political attitudes to them and myths that surround their lives (Huchzermeyer, 2008:2). In particular, the term 'informal settlement' is set in opposition to formality: the distinction represents state policies that exalt the desirability of one and the illegality and undesirability of the other. This dichotomy however, rarely reflects the reality of the blurred boundaries between the formal and the informal.

Exploring the dichotomy of 'informal' and 'formal', this section discusses literature on informality as it relates to informal settlements and shack dwellers. The discussion centres on: what constitutes an informal settlement; who lives in such a settlement; and the order and disorder found within it.

2.1.1 The constituents of an 'informal' settlement

Informal settlements are legally, politically, socially and culturally contested spaces in urban or peri-urban areas. The study of 'informality' in the social sciences tends to be based on observed differences and points of distinction between the 'formal' and the 'informal'. That is, definitions of what constitutes an informal settlement are set in legal, political, social and cultural opposition to other types of settlement.

Legal definitions of what constitutes an informal settlement vary between countries. In South Africa, the working definition adopted by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Human Settlements is:

[An] area of unplanned and unapproved informal settlement of predominantly indigent or poor persons with poor or non-existent infrastructure or sanitation.

(GoRSA, KwaZulu-Natal Elimination and Prevention of Re-emergence of Slums Bill, 2006: Chapter 1 Definitions)

Whatever the particular characteristics of informal settlements, with respect to, for example, population density, history, strength of community leadership, investments in dwellings and social infrastructure, settlements are labelled 'informal' because living conditions are deemed unacceptable to the local authorities and the construction and location of dwellings falls foul of planning regulations and laws on land use (Gilbert, 1992; Byerley and McIntosh, 1994:167).

This basic legal distinction between illegal informal settlements and conventional formal townships denotes a deeper political distinction in the legal rights and obligations of two types of urban dweller - the informal and formal resident. Residents of informal settlements do not have access to the same legal framework that recognises and protects relationships between people as formal dwellers

(Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor (CLEP), 2007:5). The market-based property transactions of shack dwellers are not underwritten by state laws and do not officially involve state actors⁶. These differences in the rules of the housing system represent spaces where the state effectively functions and where it does not. The exercise of legal rights by shack dwellers can uphold and legitimise the presence of the state in a given space; and conversely the absence of legal rights can undermine the state's actual and moral authority.

The legal status of shack dwellers arises out of their experience of citizenship. Shifts in their state of legality, which accompany the process of formalising an informal settlement, can create opportunities for citizens to exercise rights and make demands on the state; as well as create room for the state to deny or contest the rights of others through, for example, determination of who is included in a legal framework and who is not (CLEP, 2007:7). In an informal settlement, citizenship can therefore become a negotiated process that is pursued through shifts in loyalty to the social order i.e. from compliance with the norms or obligations of the prevailing power structure that is perceived as legitimate by the user/citizen, to compliance with state determined norms and obligations.

The illegality of an informal settlement is the cornerstone of political perspectives towards shack dwellers and the space they occupy. For example, Peter Lloyd's (1979) description of a 'shanty town' settlement in urban sub-Saharan Africa conveys the attitude of a government that justifies "turning a blind eye to its problems and misery... on the grounds of the illegality of the settlement and its supposed non-contribution to the economic life of the city" (1979:50). Lloyd's description paints a picture of a settlement and its residents who, based on legal status, are to their government problematic, miserable and economically bereft. The residents of Lloyd's shanty town are socially undesirable; and through inference are different and excluded from mainstream society.

⁶ Unofficially state actors may be involved in land transactions possibly through a bribe to turn a blind eye, or a more active role as information gatekeeper to land buyers, sellers and renters (Amis, 1984).

In contemporary planning discourse, the 'neighbourhood effect' (Bauder, 2002) is a term often applied to describe undesirable urban spaces and the exclusion of people who live in them. The meaning and application of the neighbourhood effect is relevant to policies on informal settlements. It is associated with the urban underclass and essentialises the norms, values and behaviour of the underclass as causes of marginality. Bauder (2002:87-8) argues that the neighbourhood effect is the product of an ideological discourse that seeks to blame the marginalised for their marginalisation. The ideology is appealing to policy makers as an explanation for depressed inner city spaces. A broader consequence of the neighbourhood effect is an engendered desire for separation from informal settlement amongst residents of formal settlements. In post-apartheid South Africa, this separation is most apparent in suburban white South Africans' armed ghettoisation in response to their fear of (predominantly black African) informal and township dwellers (Steinberg, 2008).

2.1.2 The residents of an informal settlement

Urbanisation and migratory pressures contribute to the establishment and growth of urban informal settlements. As prosperous cities grow, international and national migrants, attracted by the opportunities to participate in city life and secure better livelihoods, arrive in large numbers, typically without the security of a home or employment, but with family connections (Gugler, 1992:159; Nederveen Pieterse, 2003). Urban residential clusters tend to form around kinship, and the new migrant initially builds associations for livelihood, socialising and housing within the cluster. Depending on the affluence and influence of residents of the cluster, they will live in a high income suburban area, an informal settlement, or somewhere in between. The draw of an informal settlement to a recent urban migrant is therefore the ease of access, social ties, and proximity to employment or livelihood opportunities. Informal settlements are thus spaces not just for residence, but also for economic activity and civic life.

To Jacobs (1965), the residents of informal settlements inject diversity into a city and are entrepreneurs and an important part of the labour force (1965:286). As their prosperity increases, areas are 'unslummed' or gentrified. Jacobs argues that informal settlements grow where there is a lack of other economic options for the poor (1965:290). In addition, it can be argued that they grow where increasing economic opportunities result in rural-urban migration and greater demand for housing where supply is restricted (Amis, 1990). Jacobs's (1965) construction of an informal settlement is framed almost exclusively in economic terms. Social deprivation, typified by the informal settlement, is a result of the absence of economic growth (Jacobs, 1969:119). In situating shack dwellers as solely economic actors with the agency to determine their own prosperity and the prosperity of the city in which they live, Jacobs ignores the political and social dimensions of the characteristics of shack dwellers, crucially, the relationship between state and citizen in different urban spaces and the question of citizenship.

Shack dwellers as political actors can play a variety of roles: at election time they can be courted by politicians and promised better services, secure tenure, or even encouraged to invade land (Kusnetzoff, 1987; 1990 in Gilbert, 2002:6). At other times, shack dwellers can exercise their political and moral rights as citizens to demand that the state meets its obligations (Gugler, 1992:175; Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 2004). More commonly however, shack dwellers are disempowered members of society in their relationships with formal structures of authority (Huchzermeyer, 2004; Schlyter, 2001; Mashabela, 1988; Morris and Hindson, 1994). They can be marginalised or excluded from formal decision making by virtue of the illegality of their residence and/or stigma attached to external perceptions of shack dwellers (Van Horen, 1999:261-262). Their citizenship is conditional, which is reflected in the meaningfulness of their political participation, and (sometimes) in their moral authority to demand entitlements from the state.

The assumed relationship between the concept of citizenship and the political exclusion of shack dwellers treats citizenship as ahistoric and non-context specific (Hickey and du Toit, 2007:13). It ignores the importance of a citizen's perception of the legitimacy of the state's authority as an essential component in the validity of the social contract between citizen and state. This is most apparent in South Africa, where the role of urban dwellers (informal and township dwellers) in the anti-apartheid movement and collective support for the ANC before it became the party of government means there is a strong sense of entitlement to positive treatment by the state in return for past support, and a demand for citizenship rights to redress historic dispossession (Beinart, 2001:Part III, 289-347; Beall, Gelb and Hassim, 2005:681).

However, in the case of international migrants living in informal settlements, the strength of the moral and political relationship between the state and shack dweller is difficult to decipher. In many countries foreign migrant workers and/or political refugees are denied full participation in the political system; that is from hard expressions of citizenship such as voting in elections or standing for elected office, to soft expressions such as access to services, including utilities and social welfare (Bertrand, Mullainathan and Miller, 2003). Whether a state's obligation to people within its borders is limited to its citizens is a major debate only touched upon here. The lack of citizen rights and lack of clarity over what foreign shack dwellers can legitimately expect from the state can furthermore expose them to racism and xenophobia that inhibits their participation in the internal political organisation of a settlement where they form a minority (Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), 2008). As with Giry's (2006) two tiers of citizenship in France, the first for Frenchmen [*sic*] (those with French ancestry) and the second for French immigrants and their descendents (who are also citizens) with access to resources distinguished between tiers, where an informal settlement houses foreigners, they may form a second tier of 'citizen', with completely different experiences and expectations of state behaviour and different access to resources than fellow shack dwellers.

The language of informality and the label 'informal' when applied to shack dwellers denotes their distinction from other types of urban dweller. This dichotomous language conceals the diversity apparent within informal settlements. Such settlements are assumed to shelter poor urban dwellers; yet evidence of landlordism and enterprise denotes the presence of relative wealth and affluence within them (Cadstedt, 2010). Houses are assumed to be precarious, "thrown together out of discarded scraps" (Perlman, 1976:13, in Gugler, 1992:169); yet, "Houses are built with a keen eye to comfort and efficiency, given the climate and available materials" (*Ibid.*) and some may be consolidated into good quality permanent structures over time. Informal settlements are also assumed to be unruly; yet residents can and do organise themselves into community committees or associations, which suggests urban governance and systems of order and denotes relative power (Van Horen, 1999).

2.1.3 Order and disorder in informal settlements

Early and more recent observations of informal settlements agree on the limited presence of the state in informal spaces, for example, restricted provision of services such as sewerage, electricity, rubbish collection (Pithouse, 2008); limited policing (Steinburg, 2008); and minimal delivery of social services (UN-Habitat, 2003:98; Bertrand, Mullainathan and Miller, 2003). The extension of the state's influence on the order and governance of an informal settlement varies according to the capacity of the state and the consent of shack dwellers to be governed by the state's authority. In post-apartheid South Africa, Steinburg (2008) argues, a negotiation of the terms under which consent is given by citizens to state authority has not occurred. Consequently, complex, competing and at times overlapping systems of authority still exist in townships and informal settlements.

In South Africa, the acquiescence of shack dwellers (in particular Africans) to the authority of the state has a historic dimension that cannot be ignored. During the apartheid regime, the state's authority was absolute in controlling the areas in which Africans could live and their movements

through systems of permits and passes that restricted their residence to designated townships. Within African spaces, however, alternative informal structures of authority grew to maintain security and secure power for African elites (Bonner, 1987). In the wilful absence of the state, a semblance of governance was established in informal settlements and townships to fill a power vacuum; some authority structures had agendas of legitimate interests, others were illegitimate, many vied with each other within a single township or settlement (Morris and Hindson, 1994:159).

In South Africa from the mid-1980s the divisions between informal settlements and townships deepened as urban conflict and violence “frequently coincided with the [politicised] division between squatters and township dwellers” (Morris and Hindson, 1994:159). Amid an increased need for protection within informal settlements and townships, systems of dependence and patronage grew, drawing households together and creating hierarchies of power through social relations. These social relations sometimes manifest in street corner gangs and civic-minded patrol groups (e.g. Sector Four Patrol Group in Alexandra Township outside Johannesburg, Steinburg, 2008:49-68⁷); thus binding together ideas of order and urban governance with protection from crime and violence.

However, the relationship between ‘order and security’ and ‘disorder and crime and violence’ is complex especially in informal settlements where order and disorder may overlap depending, for example, on whether acts of crime and violence occur in the civil or domestic spheres and the crime management mechanisms available. In South Africa, Meth (2011) discusses the role of elected local councillors and informally elected ward committees in an informal settlement in Durban as peace keepers who act to manage vigilantism, tackle neighbourly disputes and resolve some inter-personal conflict. These formal and informal actors often work together; they intervene without the active involvement of law enforcement officials using a range of social tools including diplomacy and

⁷ Sector Four Patrol Group is a group of middle-aged and elderly men in Alexandra Township who patrol the streets of the township at the weekend. Most are former political activists. They are not members of the police force, but do try to work closely with the local police.

influence (Meth, 2011:750). This is evidence of order and security in an informal settlement. Yet, in the same settlement and in other surrounding informal settlements she also discusses the prevalence of domestic violence specifically targeting women and girls, where the victims are subject to continual attack and often have few options to substantially alter their situation (Meth, 2004). The prevailing social order in their settlement is undermined by the levels of unpredictable crime and violence directed towards them. This indicates a gender dimension to experiences of crime and violence in informal settlements; particularly the type and locations of crimes women and girls are exposed to, for example, the physical and sexual assault and psychological abuse of women and girls often takes place within their homes, at school and/or within the homes of their abusers, leaving them with very few places of safety (Wood and Jewkes, 1997; Jewkes and Abrahams, 2002).

Moser (2004:5), in her roadmap of categories, types and manifestations of violence in urban areas, identifies five broad categories of violence that affect poor urban dwellers. The first, political violence typically includes the state and can manifest in armed conflict between political parties or paramilitary conflict. The second is institutional violence where the state or other institutional actors perpetrate violence against those for whom they ordinarily hold responsibility e.g. the 'cleansing' of street children from public spaces. The third is economic violence and includes acts such as robbery, trafficking and theft. The fourth is economic/social and typically involves gangs, petty theft and 'turf' wars. The fifth is social and is usually inter-personal conflict that can manifest in physical, psychological and sexual abuse committed by one individual towards another.

In addition to these types of violence that affect the physical safety and security of poor urban dwellers is the concept of structural violence. Galtung (1969:171) conceptualises structural violence as inequality and injustice, it is "... violence [that can be] built into the structure [of society] ... show[ing] up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (in Moser, 2004:6). Both physical and non-physical violence is linked by Moser "to fear and insecurity, which pervades

people's lives, with serious implications for trust, well-being and social capital among communities and individuals" (Moser, 2004:6). The combination of different types of violence that poor urban dwellers, especially shack dwellers, are exposed to can engender disorder and volatility in their lives and exacerbate their vulnerabilities to the extent that, "violence and security issues can be regarded by poor people as more important than housing or income issues" (UN-Habitat, 2003:76).

This section, rather than present a typology of what constitutes an informal settlement or the characteristics of shack dwellers, has explored common concepts and themes that appear in the literature on informality, such as citizenship, identity and culture, power relations and structures, and crime and violence. The section has deconstructed the concept of informality and identified significant gaps in the understanding and application of informality in discussions of informal settlements and shack dwellers. The key gaps are that debates on citizenship and the relationships between shack dwellers and the state potentially exclude a significant minority of shack dwellers, international migrants; and that the levels of organisation, order and security found within informal settlements can be undermined or even developed as a response to the extraordinarily high levels of crime and violence in urban areas.

2.2 Tenure security and insecurity

In urban areas especially, security of tenure typically concerns both land and housing issues. Land tenure security is associated with land ownership and land use rights; and housing tenure security is associated more strongly with the rights of residents to a property, which may include the rights of the owner (as landlord or owner-occupier) and non-owners such as tenants, lodgers or squatters. The distinction between land and housing tenure issues can be conceptualised as issues of 'space' and 'place', with security of tenure for shack dwellers, who typically live close to cities and under a variety of tenure arrangements, concerned with both land tenure security and housing tenure security.

This section focuses on two major approaches to tenure security and insecurity: neo-liberal and neo-customary approaches. These approaches represent ideas favoured by the South African government (neo-liberal), evident in current land and housing policy (see **section 4.1**), and theory that explains aspects of approaches to tenure security and insecurity in practice in many parts of the country including Durban (neo-customary). The section discusses the schools of thought from which the approaches emerge, their assumptions and typical causal claims and the appreciation of the concept of vulnerability within each approach.

2.2.1 A neo-liberal approach to tenure security and insecurity

The discourse of neo-liberalism, which rose to prominence in the 1980s, places a high value on competitive free markets in which rational individuals and firms engage in the pursuit of profit in order to secure survival and resilience. The role of development agencies within this discourse is to ensure that all individuals are equipped to enter and compete in the market. The intervention of development agents occurs at different levels. For example, at a national level, good governance agendas help to create a stable enabling environment for investment and the protection of investments; and at an individual level development agencies support the ownership of assets within a sound legal framework that protects the basic principle of an individual's rights. This thesis focuses on neo-liberal theories of land, housing and tenure security with specific reference to building the assets of the poor and protecting their ownership of assets in a legal framework, thus enabling them to use these assets and participate in land and housing markets in order to develop individual resilience.

In neo-liberal theory, land is a commodity and land without legally recognised ownership is “dead capital” (de Soto, 2000). In his seminal study, *The Mystery of Capital* (2000), de Soto argues that the land on which the poor live is their greatest asset, but because possession is poorly documented the value of the asset cannot be realised. He recommends the issue of titles, with a title deed being a

formal document that safeguards the rights of owners to engage in legally enforceable land transactions. These arguments are heavily subscribed to by multilateral and bilateral institutions (see DFID, 2007; USAID, 2008; UNECA, 2003). The theory assumes that we are all rational thinkers and act to maximise our potential to accumulate capital and/or utility.

In urban spaces, specifically informal settlements, following the logic of this theory, a title deed that stipulates ownership over land and any property provides legal protection from the threat of eviction from the state and others. It can afford a level of security to individuals that release them from the social obligations and financial ties to the land that had hitherto set the framework for tenure security. Financial burdens (e.g. reliance on moneylenders) can be ameliorated by the increased access to credit that a title is said to facilitate; and social obligations can be eased when the responsibility for secure tenure rests with the legal system and not power dynamics played out in personal relationships (according to de Soto, 2000). In terms of housing tenure, a neo-liberal discourse also supports the legal protection of tenancy rights through rental contracts. Such legal frameworks are presumed to manage the risk of exploitation (especially of tenants by landlords, Cross, 1994), and thus help tenants to someday own their own property.

Criticisms levelled at the neo-liberal approach to land and housing tenure security tend to focus on the supply-side constraints that hinder delivery of the progress and prosperity de Soto promises. For example, in reality not only is the total supply of credit limited in countries with poorly developed financial sectors, credit institutions do not issue loans on the basis of a title without taking into account factors including the location of the land/property, the income of the borrower, and the institution's attitude to risk, which inhibit them from lending to typical informal settlement residents (Durand-Lasserve and Selod, 2007; Toulmin and Quan, 2000). Those critics influenced by the rights based approach point out that legislative reforms that protect land and property rights are not accompanied by a bundle of other pro-poor rights, including inheritance rights, an issue particularly

important for: households affected by HIV/AIDS (Drimie, 2002), poor urban women (Varley, 2007), and the elderly (Schlyter, 2006; Varley and Blasco, 2003).

These criticisms do not, however, represent a theoretical challenge to the very ideas of de Soto and Deininger (2003). A neo-liberal approach to land seems to neglect the cultural value of land in urban spaces - the premise that everyone wants or needs a title is not questioned and nor is the supposed relationship between the wellbeing of the poor and vulnerable and their status of 'formal land owner'. In Gilbert's (2002:1) critique of de Soto (2000), he raises an important (yet rhetorical) question: "does it [a title deed] in fact make so little difference that most of the so called advantages of legalisation are a sham?" Gilbert answers that a legal title deed makes little difference to the lives of the urban poor and that illegality itself is not a major problem for most.

Based on Gilbert's argument, three important points can be made that extend the critique of the neo-liberal approach to tenure security from economic-based arguments to more social ones. The first is that tenure insecurity is a variable condition, accordingly its effect on the vulnerability of an individual and his/her family varies. The desirability of a location and the means available to people to continue living there depend on a range of factors including changes to family circumstances, shifts in the housing market, the prevailing political environment, and natural disaster. For example, in Dhaka, Bangladesh, residents in informal settlements are at risk from seasonal floods that significantly increase their tenure insecurity and household vulnerability at various points throughout the year depending on the threat of floods, actual flood damage and the effects of contaminated water many months after a flood (Pryer, 2003:10). The extent to which a person is tenure secure may also depend on their gender, ethnicity or nationality. In the light of the many scenarios that affect tenure security, a uniform response such as titling may not be appropriate.

The second critique concerns perceptions of 'security'. To de Soto, security arises through legal protection against the possibility of eviction by the state or others. In a hermeneutical appreciation

of 'security', the role of the state is broader than acknowledged by de Soto. For example, state actions and rhetoric may perpetuate insecurity through the mass resettlement of residents and the razing of poorly constructed buildings. In terms of greater tenure security for residents with weak tenure rights, the role of the state is then not to simply provide legal rights, but to alter its behaviour and, in turn, residents' perception of their security.

The third critique concerns existing complex tenure arrangements in informal spaces that may be negatively upset by the process to formalise ownership and issue title deeds. For example, gendered approaches to land titling tend to argue that vulnerability amongst women at a household level can be decreased through formal acknowledgement of joint ownership of assets with husbands, fathers or sons (Varley, 2007; Varley and Blasco, 2003). While joint titling between husband and wife can reduce a woman's vulnerability, the position of a second wife can become more vulnerable in countries where polygamy is practised. Furthermore, formalisation of an informal settlement can open an area up to commercial land speculation which can crowd out the poor (Cross, 2002 reports this in South Africa; Mooya and Cloete 2007; Skuse and Cousins 2007 report similar findings across Southern Africa). This crowding out can exacerbate inequality and consolidate divisions between owner-occupiers, landlords, renters and the homeless (Pugh, 1995:35).

The theory of neo-liberalism emphasises that deprivation and vulnerability are overcome and participation in social life achieved through building capabilities and capital (de Haan, 1999:4). The neo-liberal approach to tenure security not only purports to offer security and access to capital, it also offers a different type of citizen-state relationship to residents of informal settlements, with debates around tenure providing a means to renegotiate the terms of citizenship (Royston, 2002:169). Tenure security through an upgrade and formalisation process can be a way to draw residents of informal settlements into mainstream society. However, there is an important (and as yet unanswered) question as to whether formalised tenure shifts the centre of power from elites

within informal settlements to the state. In terms of perceptions of legitimacy, residents of informal settlements may not buy in to the legitimacy of state authority on the basis of formalised tenure alone.

In the context of land and housing policy in South Africa, neo-liberal theory explains both the purpose of state intervention in land and housing (e.g. asset building), and the market-based mechanisms through which the purpose is to be realised. Post-apartheid land and housing reform has strong redistributive characteristics and market-based mechanisms play a significant role in facilitating the redistribution of resources from largely, resource rich white South Africans to resource poor black South Africans. For example, the state's 1997 land reform programme focused on a 'willing buyer – willing seller' mechanism for the redistribution of predominantly white-owned rural land (GoRSA, 1997a); a mechanism that is clearly in line with a neo-liberal approach to land policy and redistribution.

In the housing sector, the redistributive element of the state's housing programme has two aspects. The first is the spatial (re)distribution of race; in policy discourse this is captured by the rhetoric of 'integrated communities and the building of a non-racial society' (DoHS, 2009, further discussed in **section 4.1**). The second is the redistribution of wealth through a housing subsidy programme (a plot, house, full services and a title deed) that builds the assets of the poor for low level wealth creation and facilitates their entry into a single formal residential property market (GoRSA, 2005). The political imperative for the post-apartheid state to redistribute resources and to build the asset base of predominantly poor black South Africans may explain the restrictions placed on the sale of RDP houses⁸, which although this seems to contradict a central tenet of neo-liberal theory – free

⁸ The 1997 Housing Act details restrictions to the sale of RDP houses. These restrictions include that houses cannot be sold on the open market within the first eight years of occupancy. Should the recipient of a state subsidy wish to leave their RDP house within the first eight years they must offer the house back to the Department of Human Settlements (at provincial level), who will not pay any price, but will ensure the former owner remains on a waiting list for a future housing subsidy. Also, in the event of the involuntary sale of a

market transactions – in the South African context, as the state appears to emphasise building poor people’s assets as a precursor to their engagement with the free market, the theory remains appropriate. Furthermore, the underlying aims to legally recognise property ownership (via title deeds) for wealth creation (as argued by de Soto, 2000) and to draw the poor into the formal land and housing markets means that neo-liberal theory is a relevant description of the overall aims and approaches of the state to land and housing issues.

2.2.2 Neo-customary approaches to tenure security and insecurity

In neo-liberal appreciations of tenure security, the state initially commands a leading role in approaches to land and housing. In contrast, neo-customary approaches to tenure are quasi-formal and set a pluralist framework where state and non-state actors secure land and housing tenure through a mix of social institutions and law (Durand-Lasserve, 2007; Payne, 2002; Rakodi, 2006). Neo-customary approaches developed from customary approaches where agents with moral, social and political (although not necessarily legal) authority, such as chieftainship institutions, led tenure arrangements, under which land acquisitions and transactions were influenced by history and cultural traditions, and managed by a flexible set of processes that seemingly adapted to changing social and economic contexts (Durand-Lasserve, 2007:3; Drimie, 2002⁹). The assumption of neo-customary approaches is that land and to a lesser extent property transactions are embedded in the traditions and cultures of a society, and that the legitimacy of a transaction is rooted in the perceptions of the user and the acceptability of dispute resolution mechanisms provided by customary authorities.

subsidised house, the creditor or title successor must first offer the house to the Department of Human Settlements at a price not greater than the subsidy granted to the original owner (GoRSA, 1997b).

⁹ Drimie (2002) explores the influence of HIV/AIDS on land in Lesotho and charts how the disease impacts the household at every stage. Despite legislation that allows the state to seize underutilised land, for households affected by HIV/AIDS chiefs have been known to not report fallow land to the authorities. This suggests that chiefs are perceived as the legitimate authority over matters regarding land, and highlights the value of flexible social institutions to households facing challenges to their tenure security unacknowledged in formal responses and in discussions of the causes of tenure insecurity.

Neo-customary approaches emerged in the wake of challenges to traditional practices of customary tenure (Payne, 2002), challenges that include the reconfiguration of power and the mass movement of people at post-colonial independence in African societies. They represent a negotiation between a neo-liberal commodification of land and its emphasis on individual ownership, and a customary attitude that safeguards tenure security through collective ownership; although, in practice, there is overlap between the two. In Leduka's (2004; 2006) study of Maseru, Lesotho, he observes the practice of the state issuing a group title to a traditional authority, and the authority dividing ownership among individual members is well established and reflects a gradual acknowledgement by the state of traditional authority and the perceptions of legitimacy held by citizens over matters concerning 'their' land.

Leduka (2006) identifies two main mechanisms that follow neo-customary approaches for households to access land and obtain a measure of tenure security in Maseru. The first is commercial and refers to a commodification of land by the chief, who, through the informal land market, sells land to migrants looking to establish some kind of base in the city (Leduka, 2006:194). Household entry is dependent on income, which can favour households that are in receipt of migrant remittances (Chimhowu and Woodhouse, 2006). The second mechanism is non-commercial and reflects traditional arrangements where land is allocated by chiefs on the basis of social custom, with the transaction usually reciprocated through material gifts and/or services (Leduka, 2004:27). While commercial customary mechanisms can discriminate on the basis of wealth, non-commercial mechanisms can discriminate on the basis of marital status, ethnicity and gender, depending on how these are socially and culturally valued. Neo-customary approaches can thus create spaces for nepotism and exploitative relationships that strengthen the power of local elites at the expense of the financially and socially poor. Furthermore, as land is sold to migrants, the legitimacy of a 'traditional' authority's claim to govern over non-indigenous groups is questionable.

In informal settlements in many cities, the majority of residents are said to acquire land and property in ways similar to the two main mechanisms under neo-customary approaches: commercially, through purchase from private sellers, who include settlement leaders (Kironde, 2000:157; Daley, 2005a; 2005b¹⁰); and non-commercially through family via inheritance or marriage or through other social customs. Informal residence does not necessarily equal insecure tenure, as in some areas, informal arrangements carry greater legitimacy than the state. Furthermore, informal settlements are developed and used for many purposes; land in the settlement is not just for housing, but also a location for many livelihoods (Roth, 2002). Informal systems of land management, where access and tenure is flexible, permit this wide variety of uses to occur.

In neo-classical economic theory, a land market is constrained only by the finite supply of land and imperfect information, which may limit a buyer's knowledge of what land is available, where and at what price (Wallace and Williamson, 2006:128). The theory assumes that an individual's ability to participate in the land market is dictated only by income. However, even within this perspective there are two points that highlight the role identity and social relations can play in land and property markets in terms of access to knowledge and access to finance. The informal land and property market involves private sellers, buyers and the active involvement of middlemen, who perform functions similar to a real estate agent in formal markets (identifying land/property, valuing it and facilitating transactions). The access of the urban poor to these middlemen may be associated with kinship and other social relations.

Access to finance is another area where social relationships matter. Once land/property has been identified, the individual will require finance or some other asset to purchase it and complete the transaction. Social networks, especially friends, family and neighbours, can be a principal source of finance, given limited formal finance options (Kironde, 2000). These points suggest that, in practice,

¹⁰ Both discuss the issue with reference to Tanzania.

informal land and property markets, despite carrying a neo-liberal appreciation of individualism and the market, have a strong social element that draws upon 'customary' social relations.

In Durban, non-commercial access to land/property and tenure security in an informal settlement typically involves accessing rural systems of knowledge, trust and social relations adapted to urban spaces (Cross, 2002; Davies and Fourie, 2002; Huchzermeyer, 2002). Cross (2002; 1994:187) argues that, in Durban, urban tenure is not tied to land or housing but to a network of social relations that manage membership in a community. She describes how rural tenure arrangements are adapted to urban use: outsiders join a community after they have been introduced to the settlement leadership by a local relative/friend (2002:202). Following an interview, and normally a fee, land is transferred to the outsider by the leadership on behalf of the community. Gaining land in the settlement is akin to gaining citizenship. Breaking the social rules (through crime or violence, for example) can lead to expulsion. The role of leadership is similar to the role of chiefs in Leduka's study (2006).

Davies and Fourie's (2002) study in the Eastern Cape, further develops Cross's argument on the role of social relations in securing tenure. They formulate a 'social change approach' to engender improved tenure security for residents of informal settlements on the basis that levels of tenure security in urban informal settlements evolve over time, subject to internal changes to informal rules on tenure, land and property transactions, and external forces. Internal changes often develop through rising tensions and growing conflict between groups within a settlement (they call this an 'internal dialectic'). Internal tensions, they argue, are shaped by sub-groups of residents competing "horizontally and vertically for control over resources, access to land and political power" (2002:221). The leadership of a settlement is thus related to, or may be the outcome of, competing sub-groups (which carries implications for community participatory processes). These internal tensions shape the development of an informal settlement and its systems of tenure security.

The tensions between residents of a settlement are strongly influenced by external forces such as urbanisation patterns, local land and housing policy and local government attitudes to informality (Davies and Fourie call these forces and their effect on a settlement an 'external dialectic'). An intervention such as the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements is one example of an external force. They argue, "Although these are positive actions, they do generally cause unplanned changes at the local level ... [because] the local authority's interventions are manipulated by people in the local community to their advantage" (2002:222). Their findings raise interesting questions regarding the upgrade of informal settlements, specifically, the extent to which the process used to upgrade settlements can be manipulated, by whom and to what effect, and what local land management systems and rules on tenure security in a settlement are subsequently engendered?

This section explored two approaches to tenure security and insecurity: one that represents an ideal for the South African government (neo-liberal), and one that best describes current practices in approaches to tenure security in informal settlements in many cities, including Durban (neo-customary). The different schools of thought and the assumptions that underlie each approach capture variation in the understanding of tenure security/insecurity and actions to achieve greater security amongst state policymakers, local elites and residents of informal settlements. The various approaches to tenure security, however, do not exist in isolation. A neo-liberal approach, which emphasises the role of formal authorities (the state and then the formal property market) implies interventions in informally developed processes that can already guarantee a measure of tenure security. This means that each stage in a process to upgrade an informal settlement may alter a resident's experience of tenure security.

2.3 Identity and social relations in urban spaces

This section discusses the distinct yet interrelated concepts of 'identity' and 'social relations'. Following a brief discussion of their interrelationship, the section focuses on 'African urban identity',

specifically theories of ethnicity and gender in an urban context, and how identities influence access to power and resources (2.3.1). This discussion leads on to the role of social relationships in urban areas especially informal settlements, and focuses on what social relations and networks reveal about power and organisation in society (2.3.2). The section also explores how social relations are built and maintained (2.3.3), and the circumstances under which they are strained and can breakdown (2.3.4).

Certain identities facilitate access to social groups, and the defining feature of a social group can be a specific collective identity such as a political, ethnic or religious identity. Some identities, the meanings of which are shaped by social, political, cultural and historic processes, are determined at birth, such as gender, ethnicity and race. These identities also determine kin and membership of a family or clan. Other identities are acquired through personal choice, social history, economic necessity and cultural protocol, and their meanings are defined and refined over the course of a lifetime, such as a political or religious identity.

Collective identities centre on boundaries that separate 'us' from 'them'; they are typically formed in opposition to other identities, for example, what it means to be a woman is often set in opposition to what it means to be a man (Tilly, 2005). The people bound together by a collective identity tend to engage in creating narratives about the boundary and the people bound by it. The social relationships cultivated within collective identities reflect the dynamics of power that surround a person. Tilly (2005) argues that assertions of a collective identity, because they are set in opposition to other identities, involve claims of inequality; with people on one side of a boundary enjoying advantages over people on the other side. Inequality in treatment, resources and power is therefore a distinguishing feature of a collective identity, especially in political processes.

To an individual however, collective identities give an incomplete answer to the question 'who am I?' Appiah (2001) argues that a person's identity has at least two dimensions: a collective dimension

(gender, race, ethnicity etc.) and a personal dimension (charm, wit, intelligence, charisma etc.). Together they develop a coherent sense of who a person truly is. While both collective and personal identities develop a person's character, knowledge of the world and their role within it, this section focuses on collective identities because they engender ideas about 'us' and 'them' in ways that are open to political, social and cultural manipulation and thus can be more powerful than personal identities alone.

2.3.1 Urban African identities

Any discussion of African identity, especially a discussion by a non-African author based at a European university, is laden with political, social and cultural agendas that either consciously or sub-consciously imply a flow of power influenced by colonial history. Davison (1997) argues there are inherent and major limitations in discussing and analysing African society using European or Western theory, language and experience. She argues that ideological constructs, such as 'clan', 'ethnicity' or 'tribe', are simply ""categories of convenience" used to describe and explain variations in African social relationships" (Davison, 1997:10, she quotes Barnett and Silverman, 1976:8). While sympathetic to Davison's argument and the limitations of such categories and their treatment within this thesis, this section discusses two particular collective identities that feature prominently in political and social processes that influence access to resources: ethnicity and gender.

Theories of 'urban African identity' in the early years of urban African anthropology was traditionally discussed in terms of rural to urban migration and the effects of the displacement and relocation of African 'tribal' society. Moore (1994:29-73) describes how constructions of tribalism developed by US-European anthropologists from the 1920s-1960s were used to explain social organisation in 'closed societies'. Urbanisation challenged this early use of 'tribe' as a single model of African life and a single identity that could be transposed to the town or city. Yet, classic concepts of tribe persisted, for example, urban social relations were regarded as metaphorical representations of

kinship and village relationships (Moore, 1994:51). Southall (1975), amongst others, rejected the use of 'tribe' in this early anthropological literature and gave greater prominence to 'ethnicity' as a flexible, contemporary concept that better describes rural and urban social organisation in African societies. He argues:

Many aspects of urban behaviour are better understood when [they] [...] are not related as tribal associations to a falsely imagined primeval past, but as [contemporary] ethnic associations ... I have therefore expunged the term tribe from my anthropological lexicon...

(Southall, 1975:266)

'Ethnicity', however it is defined, is a politicised concept that is highly relevant to discussions of organisation, relationships and social and political power. It refers both to a group of people bound by certain commonalities, and the process through which 'ethnicity' is developed and understood over time (Davison, 1997:27). 'Ethnicity' in urban African society is therefore not only a public identity (a way to identify others), or a private identity that can initiate a sense of belonging, it is a political identity open to manipulation.

In apartheid-era South Africa, 'ethnicity' and 'race' was an organising principle for society. Residence in a township and the creation of 'homelands' demanded African affiliation to an ethnic identity; this identity determined patterns of urban settlement, with townships divided into areas for Zulus, Pondos, Venda and others, and corresponding patterns of socialisation (Mitchell, 1968 in Moore, 1997:64¹¹). Southall (1975:272) argues that "the ethnic rivalry imposed on [South Africans] [...] carried into other fields", including competition for resources. Since the end of apartheid, ethnicity (and race in general) has been redefined in many ways, yet it continues to denote not just

¹¹ In Mitchell's study of a mining town in Zambia, he argues that because so many people of different backgrounds come into contact with each other in urban areas, 'ethnicity' has an exaggerated importance in forming urban social groups.

differences in African history, language and custom, but differences in life chances (Davison, 1997; Comaroff and Comaroff, 2008; Jansen, 2009).

The discourse of ethnicity in contemporary South Africa is at the forefront of national politics, especially leading up to the 2009 presidential elections when Jacob Zuma's political campaign seemed to rest on evoking his ethnic (and gender) identity, and the strong leadership characteristics attributed by his campaign to this (Kagwanja and Waititu, 2008). Ethnic rivalry in party politics may affect ethnic-based rivalry over power and competition for resources in other parts of society. Sichone (2008) argues that this is evident in xenophobic acts reported across the country, where ethnicity and the expectations of power are closely related to a sense of entitlement and the loss of entitlement. Attacks on foreigners in urban areas, he argues, are part of a "struggle for space, jobs and other resources" (2008:258). Although he dates xenophobia to earlier periods of South African history, he argues that in recent years, "ethnic identity among the poor has become sharper as their sense of civic identity and citizenship has been disappointed by the failure of the new state to deliver a 'better life for all'" (Sichone, 2008:258).

Gender, like ethnicity, is also subject to social and political processes that shape its meaning and value at a particular point in history. It is a useful concept in any detailed study of society because the analysis of gender is instructive about both the organisation of a society and the opportunities available to an individual within it. Gender is a comparative concept, applied relationally (Davison, 1997:32). The roles that men and women are expected and perceived to play in a given environment, their position in society and associated power, and their access to and use of resources, is influenced by ethnicity, religion, class, age, kinship and lineage ideologies which combine to set the rules by which men and women are expected to live. An analysis of gender necessarily involves an assessment of these variables.

In the lineage ideologies of patriarchy and matriarchy, an individual's access to land, shelter and livestock, the construction of family life, use of labour, and the movement of a family, are determined by gender. Davison (1997), in her study of gender, lineage and ethnicity in southern Africa¹², found that traditional African society is mostly patrilineal with men inheriting land and assets to pass onto their sons. Men also tend to control a woman's labour, for example at marriage a woman went from working for her father to her husband's village, where she would be chiefly responsible for animal husbandry, small-scale farming and household chores (1997:1). Mama (2001) argues that in most African societies, past and present, women are pervasively governed by traditional customs which leave them less able to realise their civil rights than men, while under customary rule, they are afforded a minor status compared to men; theirs is a conditioned citizenship (2001:15).

In urban areas, traditional rules on gender roles are challenged and complicated by the physical environment and social organisation of a city or town; for example, an emphasis on wage labour affects the traditional livelihood roles of men and women; and the absence of extended kinship networks affect the structure of family life. One explanation for the complications is that African cities established since colonial times are not designed for women; they especially do not accommodate poor migrant women (Obbo, 1975; Beall, 1996). Poor urban women are most likely to engage in informal livelihood activities that allow them to juggle earning an income with other household responsibilities. Yet, the structure of a city invariably makes their lives harder. For example, transport systems have been "designed around the man's journey to work ... As mothers and carers, women have to escort others; as working women engaged in informal sector activities, they often have to carry heavy loads. Yet public service vehicles are often designed without these requirements in mind" (Beall, 1996:12). The contribution that women make to urban areas is not reflected in the power they hold in terms of political appointments in governance systems (Beall,

¹² Davison's study focuses on societies along the Zambezi River: Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

1997), or sometimes within their homes (for example with respect to domestic violence, Meth, 2004).

As discussed previously, one of the main differences between men and women is their respective exposure to crime and violence (**section 2.1.3**). Concerns of crime and violence and negative influences in the city affect family life, and for some women influence major decisions on child-rearing and motherhood. In her study of an informal settlement in Kampala and the lives of women in the settlement, Obbo (1975) describes the life of Fatuma, a mother of four who pays her father to raise her children outside the city. Fatuma explains that, although she and her husband have jobs and a good income, she fears that “children raised here [in the settlement] are wild, disrespectful towards their parents and turn into useless citizens” (in Obbo, 1975:291). To Fatuma, traditional ideals of motherhood are compromised by her urban environment.

For some urban women, however, the influence of a city and the clash of rural and urban values can have a positive outcome. For example, the practice of *lobola* (bridewealth) is widespread across southern Africa. However, some urban educated women reject the practice, associating it with capitalism and purchase of women (Davison, 1997:47-48). The cultural and actual compensation to a family for the ‘loss’ of a woman is sometimes seen as a transaction that commodifies women. Whether urban women who choose to reject *lobola* are less likely to marry is uncertain, but these women illustrate how urban socialisation and education can change gender-based expectations and improve a woman’s sense of her worth. In African society, gender alone does not set the rules of behaviour for women and men; gender in combination with class, ethnicity, and the political and social environment establishes the degrees of an individual’s exposure to vulnerability and means of resilience.

2.3.2 Social relations in urban informal settlements

The remainder of this section explores the role of social relationships in urban areas, and informal settlements specifically. The idea that social relationships are valuable and can be used to improve individual and collective wellbeing is captured by the concept of social capital (Woolcock, 1998; Putnam, 1995). However, social relations and networks are not synonymous with social capital – the former are richer terms that acknowledge that social relations cannot be owned by an individual or necessarily be capitalised on (Gough *et al*, 2006). Social relations are the basis for social organisation; they can conceal and reproduce inequality and institutionalise augmentations of power. Use of the term social relations better captures associations that can be positive or negative influences on vulnerability at various points in time.

The role and form of social relations in an informal settlement vary over time. Makhatini (1994) describes three stages of land invasion that established the settlement of Cato Manor in Durban, and his findings carry wider resonance. The first stage is 'hidden squatting'. The first settlers on the land were extremely vulnerable to eviction and the power of local authorities; their success was highly dependent on acting as a socially cohesive unit to withstand external threat. The first stage concluded with the numbering of shacks by the municipal authorities and accompanied a prohibition to new construction, thus granting a degree of tenure security to first settlers. The second stage was 'open squatting', which is characterised by division and social distinction between first settlers and new arrivals. Newcomers threaten the informal deal with the municipal authorities, and so were pushed into hidden squatting by settlement leaders. Hierarchies of authority based on tenure began to emerge and take root. The acknowledgement of the settlement by the municipal authorities in stage one evolved into negotiations with the authorities for basic services in stage two. The third stage was 'consolidation', where settlement leaders negotiated for permanent tenure. Within the

settlement there was evidence of political division, influenced by kinship and ethno-linguistic allegiances, as different groups of settlers demanded different deals.

Social relationships are in evidence throughout the three stages of this and other settlements' development. First settlers manage the space they have secured, determining access by newcomers and influencing the development trajectory of the entire settlement. The question of tenure security in informal settlements is therefore "directly linked to social organization and the associated control over resources [and space]" (Huchzermeyer, 2002:185). Where first settlers are characterised by heterogeneity and diverse interests, they are more likely to lack social organisation and to be exposed to state-led eviction¹³.

The social cohesion of an informal settlement implies a broad social identity that legitimates the authority of the settlement leadership to act on behalf of all residents. However, the identity of an informal settlement and its residents is subject to continual internal confrontation, contention and negotiation. In Makhatini's (1994) observation, the managed growth of Cato Manor by first settlers depended on them exerting power over newcomers (sending them to the periphery) and extending the dominance of the settlement leadership over weaker residents. The identity of 'newcomer' was forged by the dominant social network of first settlers. If initial social relations in urban informal settlements are built around reproductions of rural rules (as argued in **section 2.2.2**), the inference is that the traditions and cultural practices first settlers bring with them (most likely from a common place of origin, Moser, 1996:11), are adapted to urban space and extended over newcomers through socialisation. The social relations within informal settlements therefore are conduits of political, cultural and social power, which alter over time and vary in influence. In stage two, for example, new social networks emerged that challenged the dominant identity of the settlement leadership.

¹³ The idea that more socially cohesive communities are better at controlling resources within their borders of power, and are more effective in negotiating greater resources from external agents, is not new. Communitarians have long argued the same point to promote their ideology of localised governance and mutual wellbeing (Etzioni, 1998)

Formations of social networks can arise through political or economic coalitions of interest, and may be bolstered by an appeal to common culture and tradition that heightens the importance of ethnicity, race and language in constructions of collective identity (Bucholtz and Hall, 2004).

Social relations can also play a significant role in the lives of poor but formalised low income settlement dwellers. Ross (2009) traces the social relations, aspirations and resilience strategies of people who were resettled from an informal settlement to a purpose built township in the Cape Flats, Western Cape, over a period of seventeen years. Ross's main findings state that over the course of relocation and upgrade there is the continuation of a harshness or 'rawness' (2009:4) to life that is made bearable by "maintaining social relationships [which are not only] central to survival, [but also] to a sense of oneself as a person, and to one's sense of belonging" (2009:205). These findings are highly relevant to this study.

2.3.3 The maintenance of social relationships

Social relations and networks are typically maintained through reciprocal relations and community networks (Putnam, 1995; Moser, 1998; Woolcock, 1998). Reciprocal relations between individuals can serve to strengthen, maintain and expand inter-personal relationships (Mauss, 1954:71). Moser (1996:60; 1998:13) distinguishes between short and long term acts of reciprocity. Short term reciprocity, it is suggested, centres on money exchange and is a response to immediate crisis; long term reciprocity, such as sharing food, water and space, builds longer-lasting networks of trust that are necessary to build the foundations of successful community networks. However, Moser's appreciation of reciprocity implies that exchange is a rational act, willingly entered into. In anthropological studies of exchange, whether the norm of reciprocity is culturally embedded or autonomously applied is deeply contested.

Moser's appreciation of reciprocity appears to be based on the work of Bronislaw Malinowski (1922) and his observations of exchange in and amongst island communities in Melanesia. Malinowski argued that exchange was governed by rational rules that seek to advance self-interest. Homans (1958) further developed this idea into a rational choice theory of social behaviour. Homans argues that individuals only enter into an exchange if there is equilibrium in the value of the goods being exchanged (i.e. there is an obvious and worthwhile benefit to both parties entering the exchange). To Malinowski and Homans, acts of reciprocity and exchange are not engaged in for mutual wellbeing (although this may be produced as a by-product); the motivation for exchange is self-oriented and calculated to benefit oneself or immediate family.

Marcel Mauss (1954, originally published in 1923), a contemporary of Malinowski, also worked in Melanesia, and unlike Malinowski, observed that exchange was not always rational, self-interested and undertaken by independent individuals. Mauss observed that society was ordered by kinship relations and common interest. The rules of transaction were a part of society, and gift exchange an articulation of the social order. Some reciprocal behaviour was obligatory, and denying the obligation was to deny a social norm or a particular social relationship. The value of the gift itself mattered less than the actors and the action involved in giving and receiving (Carrier, 1991). In Mauss's conception of reciprocity, exchange can carry on over generations, meaning there is no end to the practice of reciprocity, as the obligation to give and receive constantly shifts. Malinowski and Mauss both agree, however, that reciprocity reveals something about social relationships and the nature of society. The act of reciprocity, or its absence, can identify power dynamics between individuals, and can indicate levels of cohesion or fragmentation in community networks.

The ties between reciprocal relations and community networks are described by various authors as the interplay between 'horizontal relations' (inter-personal relationships maintained through acts of reciprocity) and 'hierarchical relations' (relations between an individual or household and schools,

churches and/or state actors or influential individuals) (Moser and Holland, 1997:27; also in Woolcock, 1998:163-164, as a discussion of embedded and autonomous social relations). Moser and Holland argue that reciprocal exchanges between individuals extend to social institutions at a community level, which increase the opportunities for an individual/household to build hierarchical relations and a diverse stock of social capital (1997:4). These types of institutional relationships can enable an individual to expand their social world and access more opportunities for accessing greater resources and power. An individual's hierarchical relationships can link him/her to local leaders, external bureaucrats, political and civil society actors; in the context of upgrading informal settlements, these institutional relationships may be crucial to an individual negotiating the terms of his/her upgrade.

2.3.4 The breakdown of social relationships

In understanding social relationships as conduits of power, the breakdown of social relations and networks can be regarded as a rupture to the dominant structures of power from which new social and cultural practices emerge. The term 'breakdown' implies a negative outcome to the rupture, and an emergent social network that does not aspire to goals of mutual wellbeing. In poor urban spaces this can be expressed, for example, in the formation of street corner gangs, a counter-culture that challenges established norms of behaviour, and in places can successfully become the dominant power structure and prevailing identity, amongst young men in particular.

The membership base of many street corner gangs is young men who experience multiple deprivations, especially in informal settlements or areas of low income housing (Gugler, 1992: 167). In the social capital literature there is a debate as to whether belonging to a gang is a type of social capital (Moser and McIlwaine 2001). Social capital is a concept that represents assets which people can accumulate and on which they can draw; on this basis gang membership is as much a form of social capital as membership of a community based group (Lederman, Loayza, Menéndez, 2002:509).

The major difference is that the accumulation of social capital through a gang is a 'perverse' social capital, which directly impinges on the 'good' social capital of others (Kawachi, Kennedy and Wilkinson, 1999:721). Gang activity can increase fears of public insecurity and adversely affect perceptions of neighbourliness and a sense of community.

At an individual level, the violence that typically accompanies gang culture erodes social relationships (Moser and Holland, 1997:33). Sometimes gangs can act to relieve their own deprivations, for example through burglary or theft, or through acts that build 'respect' which, for the most part, is synonymous with the fear they can evoke. In each of these acts, however, the collective behaviour of a group of excluded people increases the vulnerability experienced by others, as direct victims of crime or violence, for the families of gang members who live with fears of reprisal, or for others who live with the constant threat of crime or violence. The presence of gangs and gang activity creates arbitrary boundaries and spatial divisions that restrain mobility within and between communities. This contributes to an environment of fear and distrust which, Moser and Holland (1997) argue, depletes stocks of social capital. In terms of social relationships, mobility and fear affect the practice of reciprocity and the environment in which exchange is undertaken.

This section presented a theoretical discussion of the relationship between identity and social relations in urban African societies and went on to discuss how and why social relations and aspects of identity are significant in shaping social institutions and structures in informal settlements and urban areas in general. To an individual, social relations and aspects of identity influence tenure security in two ways: firstly, gaining initial access to land and housing (getting there); and secondly, securing oneself from threats of eviction (staying there). The negotiation for access and security reveals the dynamics of power that are crafted by discourses of identity and are inherent in social relations.

2.4 Vulnerability and resilience in urban spaces

The vulnerability discourse rose to prominence in the 1980s as a theoretical (Sen, 1987) and case-study led (Chambers, 2006, originally published in 1989) critique of income-based poverty analysis. The concept offers a holistic appreciation of poverty, its dynamics, causes and treatments. Over the years the concept of vulnerability has evolved following critique and new bodies of literature have emerged on chronic poverty (Hulme, 2003), livelihood systems (Beall and Kanji, 1999; Rakodi, 2002) and wellbeing (Gough *et al.*, 2006) that progress the poverty discourse. This section traces the evolution of vulnerability as a concept in these bodies of literature and makes a case for the relevance and modification of Moser's (1998) asset vulnerability framework for this study. Through this process, the section explores how vulnerability relates to the concept of poverty, how it is contextualised and manifests in urban spaces, and to whom the label 'vulnerable' is applied.

2.4.1 From income-based poverty analysis

The criticisms of Sen (1987) and Chambers (2006) on the dominance of income-based poverty analysis in development studies arose from two different perspectives. Sen's work on the capabilities approach adopts a strong theoretical position to challenge the usefulness of 'utility' in economic discourse as an all-encompassing term equal to 'wellbeing'. Sen argues that 'utility' (often defined by economists as happiness or satisfaction) concerns a person's desires, and its absence is erroneously equated with poverty (1987:15). Sen tries to shift the focus away from opulence to opportunity. The capabilities literature focuses on the set of opportunities a person has and their potential achievements, with wellbeing an assessment of those achievements that are realised (Sen, 1987:33; 1999; Nussbaum and Sen, 1993).

The capability approach conceptualises welfare and wellbeing as a standard of living measured by degrees of personal freedoms. However, the approach did not really develop and take root in economics, the *lingua franca* of development. Kuklys (2005:10) suggests three reasons why: first, the

approach has little to offer welfare economics; second, Sen's philosophical approach and disciplinary jargon fail to appeal to economists; and third, most plausibly, there is little consensus on how to operationalise the capability approach. For example, how can researchers identify and measure potential that is not realised and opportunities that were not taken? Where later economists have tried to incorporate the concept of vulnerability in welfare economics, they have largely done so by reducing vulnerability to a measure of transitory poverty, and a condition that impacts the income patterns of the poor (Morduch, 1994:8).

Chambers's (1995; 2006) critique of "universal, reductionist, standardized" top-down appreciations of poverty is empirically led and based on the premise that the poor have many criteria of wellbeing and deprivation (1995:173). He argues that vulnerability does not mean want (agreeing with Sen), but is exposure to shock, stress and risk from external factors and an inability to cope with the exposure. 'Poverty', therefore, is not a particularly useful term in capturing *how* the poor are poor, stay poor, and move in/out of poverty. Chambers argues (1995:180-1) that the application of poverty is typically two-fold: first, it is a blanket term in development to cover ill-being and deprivation; second, it is a technical definition applied in the measurement of income. Chambers's use of vulnerability occupies a space somewhere between these two conceptions of poverty. Vulnerability means varying degrees of "defencelessness, insecurity, and exposure" (2006:33); its opposite is security. Chambers argues that poor people are faced with a trade-off between vulnerability and poverty. In highlighting the diversity of vulnerability and who it affects, Chambers (like Sen) struggles to operationalise his conception of vulnerability into policy action at anything above the community level. His suggestion (in keeping with the rest of his work) is for policy makers to better listen and understand the specific needs of the poor.

From different positions, Sen and Chambers arrive at a similar predicament. Both expose the limitations of the static, measurable understandings of poverty prevalent up to the 1980s. Both

argue for a deconstruction of poverty and a nuanced analysis of *how* the state of poverty is entered and *why* some people remain poor. However, neither successfully bridge theoretical arguments and empirical cases to develop generalisable approaches to address vulnerability. In many ways Moser (1996; 1998) bridges the work of Sen and Chambers and addresses some of the criticisms levelled at them. The asset vulnerability framework explores how increases and decreases in different assets impact a household's ability to respond to economic crisis and risk (Moser, 1996:2). In breaking down a household's vulnerability and resilience into a series of assets, Moser allows for cross-country comparison (e.g. Moser, 1996) and the engendering of generalisations, giving impetus to social policy interventions that seemingly negotiate universal human need and cultural relativism.

2.4.2 Asset vulnerability framework

Moser (1998) argues that the poor are managers of complicated asset portfolios. The ability of a household to manage its assets (and thus its risks) is a measure of where a household stands in the vulnerability to resilience spectrum. Moser (like Chambers and Sen) distinguishes vulnerability from poverty; the former better capturing the dynamics and change of circumstance that means people move in and out of poverty in response to external shocks. It also acknowledges multiple actors and the constant negotiation with them that secures household wellbeing (Coetzee, 2002:5). Vulnerability and resilience are explicitly tied to asset ownership. Resilience means the ability to mobilise and manage assets at difficult times, "The more assets people have, the less vulnerable they are, and the greater the erosion of people's assets, the greater their insecurity" (Moser, 1998:3).

The asset vulnerability framework has specific relevance to urban spaces and particular forms of urban vulnerability, adapting earlier sustainable rural livelihood frameworks for an urban setting (Gough, McGregor and Camfield, 2006:19). Moser (1998) identifies three characteristics that distinguish urban vulnerability from rural: the first is commoditisation of both the self and things necessary for survival. The labour of an urbanite is his/her most valuable asset, and with little means

for self-production, the purchase of goods and services is dependent on wage labour and realising the capital of other assets e.g. the income potential from renting spare rooms in urban homes. The second characteristic is the natural environment; she argues that the macro and micro effects of environmental degradation have a different urban/rural impact on vulnerability (also in Meikle, 2002:40; Smit, 1998). The third is social fragmentation. Moser (1998:4) argues “Community and inter-household mechanisms of trust and collaboration can be weakened by greater social and economic heterogeneity” associated with a wider distribution of income, opportunities, political influence and the spatial distribution of kin. The first and third of these characteristics are of particular relevance to three assets in the vulnerability framework: productive assets (especially housing), household relations and social capital.

The framework disaggregates the assets of households into labour, human capital, productive assets, household relations and inter-household relations or social capital. According to Moser (1996), housing is the most productive asset of the urban poor. Housing offers more than shelter to a family, it can be the location of cottage industry, and a source of income (rent) in its own right. Housing insecurity, therefore (defined by Moser as a lack of formal legal title) “creates an extreme sense of vulnerability. In contrast, tenure security and legal title give households the incentive to invest in upgrading their homes and the security to use this asset productively” (Moser, 1998:10). However, the explicit link Moser makes between tenure security and legal title is erroneous; as discussed in **section 2.1**, access to systems of tenure security is not always dependent on legal title. Furthermore, if legal tenure security allows investment, a title may not positively affect everyone’s resilience, renters may be worse off meaning that the resilience of poor households may be at the expense of the increased vulnerability of poorer households.

Moser distinguishes intra-household from inter-household relations (to Robert Putnam (1993; 1995) however, on whose work Moser builds, both are a form of social capital). Moser (1996:61) argues

that there is a delicate balance in the use and overuse of a household's (or an individual's) stock of social capital. In times of economic pressure, social relations are called into play. A household facing an external shock such as the death of a family member or a birth can access reciprocal relations and social networks to manage associated risks and vulnerability, thus strengthening the bonds of social capital. However 'overuse' of reciprocal networks can weaken social capital, as trust is eventually replaced by a lack of confidence in the relationship. Moser (1996:60) also asserts that households support each other only when they are coping; in times of hardship support ceases. This idea is challenged by reciprocity studies that argue reciprocal relations are an integral part of society (Mauss, 1954); although they are not activated in times of hardship they are woven into the social fabric.

By contrast, the chronic poverty literature dissects the nature of social relationships and argues that the poorest lack agency and enter clientelistic relations that are based on unequal relationships and reproduce social inequalities (Wood, 2003; Cleaver, 2005; Thorp, Stewart and Heyer, 2005). To Wood (2003:465), structures of dependency are fed by reciprocal relations; for example in his research in the North-West Frontier Province in Pakistan, social and cultural currency is gathered by stronger members of society by helping the weaker, forcing the latter to accrue debt. Exploitative relations can be intergenerational and carry a gender and ethnic bias. This inequality in social relations represents "the "dark side" of social capital" (Cleaver, 2005:894), where social relations consolidate discriminatory structures and are inherently biased against the chronically poor, who are in a weak position to negotiate better terms in the relationship, and are excluded from meaningful participation in political groups that could help overcome their marginalisation (Thorp *et al*, 2005:907).

The asset vulnerability framework is weak in investigating the depth and nature of social relationships in terms of their positive or negative effect on vulnerability. Furthermore, Moser does

not explore how increases or depletions of one asset affect other assets. For example, and of central interest in this study, how does an increase in productive assets affect social capital and an individual's resilience?

2.4.3 Chronic poverty and vulnerability

The chronic poverty literature also disaggregates poverty, identifying an 'order of magnitude' amongst groups labelled the ultra-poor, hardcore poor, destitute, poorest of the poor and declining poor; all those who live below a poverty line for a lifetime or long periods (Hulme, 2003; Hulme and Shepherd, 2003:412). The greatest criticism of the concept of vulnerability in the literature is that it focuses only on households who have assets (Hulme, 2003; Wood, 2003; Cleaver, 2005; Green and Hulme, 2005). The chronic poor are those without assets to trade or negotiate, and for whom poverty is not a process one falls in and out of.

Hulme and Shepherd (2003) also criticise the policy bias towards the vulnerable. They argue that the MDGs have engendered, amongst donors and national policy makers, poverty interventions that focus on the "easy to assist poor", i.e. not the chronically poor (2003:404; also in Harriss, 2007). Coupled with prescriptive poverty policy that leaves little room for debate, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, there is a rollout of investment in social safety nets to protect the assets of the poor and help cushion shocks for the vulnerable (e.g. Rook and Freeland, 2007; Wood, 2003:867), whereas the chronically poor need a different and currently largely absent policy orientation, one that builds up assets. This preference for safety net type social policy intervention may stem from specific historical circumstance. For example, in South Africa, the post-apartheid government inherited a largely functional social security system, and rather than restructure it to meet the needs of the chronically poor, the system was simply extended to include all citizens, although with significantly lower levels of benefit for claimants (Aliber, 2003:483).

While the majority of the chronic poor have a rural orientation, there is an interesting rural – urban dynamic, captured by Aliber (2003) that shows how chronic poverty can be transferred and institutionalised. Aliber’s (2003) study of chronic poverty in South Africa found that 71 per cent of all rural people fall below a poverty line of R352 a month¹⁴. The poorest provinces in South Africa are the most populous former homelands, specifically KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Eastern Cape. The proximity of the city of Durban to the former homelands of KwaZulu-Natal means chronic poverty in this province spills from rural to urban areas as municipal boundaries change and rural to urban migration increases¹⁵.

Hulme and Shepherd (2003) argue that livelihood analysis is best for tracking chronic poverty, as it allows longitudinal analysis of household assets. It also recognises agency and household strategies employed to cope with poverty. While they agree vulnerability is “central to understanding chronic poverty”, the asset vulnerability framework (as a specific type of livelihoods system analysis), they suggest, deals inadequately with social relationships and power (2003:414; also Wood, 2003; Cleaver, 2005; Thorp *et al*, 2005). The authors suggest that where the framework is used, it needs to be supplemented by an analysis of where households fit into wider social structures. They infer that analysis of poverty using the asset vulnerability framework pays insufficient attention to the social and cultural context.

2.4.4 Livelihood systems and vulnerability

Livelihood systems analysis was popularised in the late 1990s/early 2000s by development agencies. This type of analysis is appealing because it promises to frame the poor within historical, cultural and social processes that are dynamic and context specific, and to identify the ways the poor contribute

¹⁴ Aliber uses May, Woolard and Khasen’s 2000 data set.

¹⁵ Rakodi (2002:33) warns against absolute categories of ‘rural’ and ‘urban’, as many households and individuals straddle both. This is illustrated by Steinberg (2002) in KwaZulu-Natal, where people often moved between townships in Durban and the homelands, depending on employment opportunities, the need/desire to spend time with family and the availability of multiple homes.

to these processes (Rakodi, 2002; Beall, 2002:71; Beall and Kanji, 1999: section 1). Broadly, livelihood systems analysis describes how the poor manage their lives with the resources they hold and the access to resources they are able to negotiate. 'Access' and 'resources' are differentiated by Bebbington (1999, in Beall 2002), although both are influenced by external political, economic and environmental processes; and internal factors like intra-household dynamics are influenced by household size and composition, gender dynamics and age/inter-generational tensions.

While urban livelihoods systems borrow conceptually from work on rural poverty, they emphasise different assets/capitals that make up the core of the livelihood system. For example, human capital (the ability to work, educational attainment etc.) is valued above natural capital (fertile land, proximity to water) (Meikle, 2002:43-44; Beall, 2002). However, the availability of resources means very little to the urban poor if access is denied. The importance afforded to 'access' differentiates urban livelihood systems. Issues of access are typically issues of political and social inclusion, and are shaped by social relations and identity (Beall, 2002:83). At an individual level, the politics of intra-household competition and the distribution of resources is influenced by culture, custom and tradition (e.g. the prioritising of men, women or children's needs); at a household level, the politics of identity and group formation influences community organisation (e.g. forming coalitions of interest to press the preferences of one group); and at a community level politics determines the ability of a community to negotiate with local authorities (e.g. for better services or tenure security). The three levels of access mean that individual and household strategies link into other community-level livelihood strategies. However, Beall (2002:73) argues that often relations of power and social asymmetries are missing from livelihood frameworks, which weakens the value and meaning of any analysis.

A major criticism of livelihood systems analysis is that everything is reduced down to enable policy and practice interventions. The literature on wellbeing builds on Beall's argument and argues that

livelihood systems analysis takes little account of socially constructed social and cultural environments that influence the aspirations of the individual or household and constantly shift the context within which vulnerability is experienced.

2.4.5 Wellbeing and vulnerability

The wellbeing literature takes issue with defining the poor by their poverty. The concept of wellbeing acknowledges humans as rounded beings, and the struggle for resources as a strategy to improve quality of life and life satisfaction. This ontology puts a spotlight on subjective wellbeing and agency. So even for the poorest there is an achievement of relative wellbeing, without which life would be unbearable (Gough *et al*, 2006:3-7). Wellbeing is an umbrella term, “beneath which a variety of related ideas and concepts can shelter” (*ibid*, 2006:5). The concept of vulnerability is an important aspect of wellbeing, and one that recognises that wellbeing is constructed by a number of different processes (Coetzee, 2002:5).

The concept of ‘wellbeing’, as applied by the Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD) research group at the University of Bath, offers development studies a different set of ontological assumptions about poverty and vulnerability (McGregor, 2006; Gough *et al*, 2006; White, 2006). In situating subjective wellbeing at the centre of approaches to improve life conditions, WeD’s concept of wellbeing distinguishes between two strands of livelihood frameworks. The first looks at what assets and capital the poor have and their agency and ability to control them; the asset vulnerability framework falls into this category. The second strand is more sociological and anthropological and examines ‘what people think and do’, i.e. it is heuristic and asks what value poor people place on the resources they have (at a given time) and how this impacts their actions (Gough *et al*, 2006:23-24). This framework assumes that the value of resources depends on the wider wellbeing goals the poor set for themselves; it creates a space to analyse the aspirations of the poor.

WeD employs a Resource Profiles Framework (RPF) to identify factors that contribute to wellbeing. The resources are: material, human, social, cultural and natural (or environment). These resources are distinguished from the five assets in Moser's (1998) work and DFID's five capitals in the sustainable livelihoods approach (Clark and Carney, 2008), because WeD treats them as culturally and socially negotiable (Gough *et al*, 2006:7). That is, social and cultural factors interplay with the use and increase of material resources (*ibid*, 2006:22). For example, White (2006) describes a few days in the life of Asha – a poor Bangladeshi woman who lives in a rural part of the country, and her social and cultural negotiations to access different types of healthcare for herself and her mother. Asha's ability to mobilise social relations directly impacted her sense of wellbeing. The most successful treatment came from the herbalist who knew Asha personally (her history and family), he asked about her problems and she left with a "somewhat lighter heart" (2006:20). In the public hospital where she did not know anyone, she derived no comfort and was treated as a representative of the social category: poor, rural, woman. The importance attached to the relationships with different healthcare professionals is entirely cultural. In certain cultural contexts her social relations and identity mattered more than others, but in all cases they mattered. The construction of culture varied in each context according to Asha's perspective and wider social and cultural structures like patriarchy and class. White concludes there is no single cultural lens that offers a perspective on the differences in her treatment. Multiple cultural constructions interplay in how a poor person contextualises his/her wellbeing and inform the strategies employed to derive wellbeing.

The RPF emphasises local values and meanings and contextualises the study of resources, assets and capital of the poor within a framework of their priorities and pursuit of wellbeing. It is strong in contextualising social relations and identity within constantly shifting constructions of culture that affect experiences of vulnerability and resilience in particular matters. As an approach, the RPF

offers strong methodological and theoretical insight into the study of vulnerability and resilience from the bottom-up.

2.4.6 Asset vulnerability framework revisited

This study looks at the lives of poor urban people with limited assets living in informal settlements. The concept of vulnerability as it is applied by Moser (1998) and Chambers (2006) focuses on the ability of a household or individual to cope with external shocks. However, this definition is far too narrow for a study that explores life in an informal settlement. Often both daily and longer term needs are met by the poor's use of the same assets that Moser identifies in her vulnerability framework (for example, productive assets supply shelter and may generate income, social relations provide company and information and influence access to basic services). How the poor accumulate and use these assets and their ability to cope with both daily challenges and external shocks is of equal interest to this study. This necessarily entails a broader understanding of vulnerability, but one that is still well served by the asset vulnerability framework.

The main criticisms levelled at Moser's asset vulnerability framework, and livelihood frameworks in general, is that they pay an insufficient attention to the social relations, identity and cultural environment that in practice shape aspirations and subsequent access to and use of resources. The RPF by contrast, is rich in creating a theoretical and methodological space for considering culture, identity and social relations, and how they influence and are influenced by wellbeing strategies. While the conceptual origins of these two frameworks differ, they can complement each other, allowing a deeper understanding of what assets people have and control, what they think about them and how they plan or are able to use them.

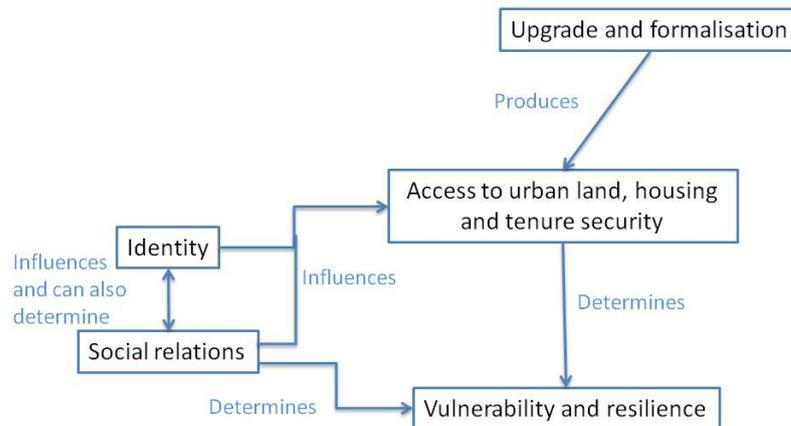
The RPF is strong in describing the lives of poor people and their experiences of daily and long term vulnerability; the asset vulnerability framework is theoretically strong in linking tenure and

vulnerability. This study aims to investigate the relationships between tenure and the vulnerability and resilience of residents of informal settlements and the influencing effects of an individual's identity and social relationships. The vulnerability framework identifies productive and inter-household and intra-household assets (i.e. land and housing tenure, and social relationships) and their impact on experiences of vulnerability, and the RPF allows a nuanced heuristic treatment of the meanings applied by people to their assets and an understanding of vulnerability that is culturally and socially specific. The inclusion of the RPF's approach to society and culture allows urban vulnerability to be better contextualised, addressing the main criticism of the framework levelled by Hulme (2003) and others.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the main theories that inform approaches to tenure security, theories of identity and social relations and their role in influencing access to resources, and the theoretical background to the concept of vulnerability. From this review, the conceptual framework of the study emerges. This framework suggests that the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements in a neo-liberal approach to urban land and housing delivers legal land rights, the highest level of tenure security, which in turn improves the ability of individuals to cope with daily challenges and external shocks (resilience). It also suggests that identity is strongly tied to social relations, and that both influence an individual's access to land, tenure security, vulnerability and resilience. The conceptual relationships are presented in a diagram (**FIGURE 2.1**) below.

FIGURE 2.1 Conceptual representation of the relationships between the upgrade and formalisation process, tenure, identity, social relations and vulnerability/resilience



The overall discussion and analysis of the literature makes a strong case for a heuristic approach to this study, to fully appreciate the meaning and value of socially and culturally constructed approaches to tenure and experiences of vulnerability. The asset vulnerability framework and the resource profiles framework will be used in subsequent chapters as a diagnostic model to identify and analyse the relationships between tenure and vulnerability amongst residents of informal settlements, and the effects of identity and social relationships on that relationship. The following chapter develops the methodological approach to investigating the relationships between the four main concepts of the study in the context of the *in situ* upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements in Durban, South Africa.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explores *how* the questions raised by the research topic will be addressed. The methodological approach adopted for this study recognises the importance of contextualising and acknowledging the multiplicity of meaning afforded to the four concepts: tenure security/insecurity, identity, social relations and vulnerability/resilience. This understanding informs the research philosophy (**section 3.1**) and epistemology (**section 3.2**). These in turn, alongside the research questions and the conceptual framework of the study, inform the analytic framework (**section 3.3**), research design (**section 3.4**) and choice of data collection methods (**section 3.5**). The research topic and choice of methods raise important questions around research ethics that are addressed later in the chapter (**section 3.6**).

3.1 The research philosophy

The research questions and objectives ask *why* and *how* the *in situ* upgrade of informal settlements changes the tenure, vulnerability and resilience of shack dwellers. ‘Why’ and ‘how’ questions need a critical philosophy of science that supports explanatory research. This section makes the case for a critical hermeneutic-interpretive research strategy that incorporates philosophical developments in discourse analysis such as Bucholtz and Hall’s ‘tactics of inter-subjectivity’ (2004) and Bruner’s (1991; 2004) approach to self-narrative in constructions of reality.

Previous studies of the lives of shack dwellers indicate that the highest quality research on urban poverty is largely ethnographic and adopts an abductive research strategy to understand behaviour and inter-personal relations (e.g. Perlman, 1976 in Gugler, 1992; Ross, 2009). Such a strategy combines hermeneutics, interpretation and criticism. Its starting point is “the social world of the

social actors being investigated: their construction of reality, their way of conceptualizing and giving meaning to their social world” (Blaikie, 2000:25). An abductive research strategy is suited to this study. It provides scope for epistemological reflexivity and an iterative explanatory approach to the definition, meaning and importance attached by research participants to the concepts of tenure security and insecurity, vulnerability and resilience, and their identity and social relations.

In classic hermeneutics, the focus of research is to explain social phenomena. The philosophy of Max Weber developed a methodological position that focused more on interpretation. Weber’s theory of explanatory understanding attempted to bridge classic hermeneutics and positivist truth-seeking (Delanty, 1997:49). Weber argued that an interpretive approach draws on the researcher’s empathy, understanding and, critically, his/her prejudices and experiences in the act of interpreting explanations of social phenomena. Weber’s theory is heavily critiqued in the philosophy of language, which argues that language sets the barriers for understanding reality, explaining it to others, and interpreting it. In light of this criticism, Habermas and Abel reworked Weber’s theory of explanatory understanding, and are often credited with developing a theory of hermeneutic-interpretation and critical philosophy of language (Delanty, 1997:49-55). Habermas and Abel’s position establishes linguistics as the most significant conduit to understand and explain social phenomena.

Habermas and Abel’s theory of critical hermeneutic-interpretation is adopted as the methodological approach to this study; it is an approach that asks both *why* and *how*. Social phenomena, in this study, are regarded as real (i.e. not constructs), and language is regarded as a tool through which the meanings and values of reality are constructed¹⁶. How this social constructivist position is translated to analytic application is further discussed in **section 3.3** with reference to Bucholtz and Hall (2004) and Brunner (1991; 1995).

¹⁶ The social constructivist position is not without contestation. Derrida, Barthes, Saussure and others broadly labelled ‘deconstructionists’ advocate an extreme constructivism and argue that reality itself is a social construct (Delanty, 1997:100).

3.2 Review of epistemology

In social constructivism, the arguments of which influence this study, the subject is an active agent, not a passive subject to be studied in value-free social science. Similarly, the researcher is not a passive actor. The questions a researcher asks and how they are asked signify his/her involvement and value-laden interjection. Therefore, as the researcher, who I am, the values I hold, and level of empathy for the subject is important to understanding both the approach of the study and the analysis of the relationship between tenure and vulnerability.

According to Burr (1995:46; 2003), a person's sense of self (identity) is constantly contested, validated and maintained through language (as the principal medium for communication), and language is mediated by culturally available discourses which affect how we act, are treated, and perceived by others. Such discourses are related to age, gender, class and ethnicity. The widespread acceptance of particular dominant discourses in society reveals that all discourses are tied to power relations (Burr, 1995:62). In social interactions we position ourselves and others within a variety of discourses (with more than one discourse playing out in a conversation). Within certain discourses we are positioned as powerful or weak, e.g. as man or woman, young or old, black or white. These positions give context to my subjectivity in the research.

I am female, in my late 20s, and British of Indian origin. I am a non-native outsider to South Africa. My perspective on the history of land, race-relations, and the relationship between citizen and state in South Africa developed through academic research rather than personal experience. This perspective allows me to make the case that I am as non-judgemental as possible and empathic to the various experiences of research subjects. Non-personal ties also help facilitate an ability to be critical. My identity and my role as researcher placed me in positions of both power and weakness at different times, depending on the identity of the research participants and the wider cultural context in which data were collected.

3.3 Analytic framework

The framework for analysis is principally guided by the conceptual framework and research questions. This section sets out how the relationships between tenure security/insecurity, identity, social relations, vulnerability/resilience were researched. The findings drawn from the analysis contribute to explanations of the relationship between tenure and vulnerability.

Understanding and analysing constructions of identity, as they relate to shack dwellers, is significant to explaining how changes to tenure security may affect conceptions of community and citizenship, and alliances of power (through shifting social relations) within a settlement. It is also the foundation to building an appreciation of how, at an individual level, self-perception contextualises and frames attitudes towards and experiences of tenure security and insecurity, and vulnerability and resilience. Identities are discursively formed and revealed. Bucholtz and Hall's (2004) approach to analysing identity, and Bruner's (1991; 2004) approach to personal narratives in the construction of reality, are modified and incorporated into the analytic framework of this study; both approaches are born from ideas of social constructivism.

Bucholtz and Hall argue that socio-linguistics illuminate how identities are categorised, reinforced and constructed, all within a context of power. Their model to analyse identity, known as the 'tactics of inter-subjectivity', is adapted for use in this study. The tactics of inter-subjectivity capture dual process: "the subject is the agent, the subject of social processes; [...] [and], the subject is the patient, subject to social processes" (2004:493-494). Bucholtz and Hall apply their model with gender and sexual identity in mind, but it can be applied to other types of identity. They argue that sexual identity is a form of social identity often formed in the face of stigma, shame and exclusion. This can be said of 'shack dwellers' as a social identity too. The identity of a shack dweller in terms of self-identity and the label 'shack dweller' are produced in a context of power. At an individual and collective level, they are prescribed by dominant power groups or in relation to a power group.

Bucholtz and Hall (2004) apply three sets of tactics through which the inter-subjective construction of identity is analysed. The first set, 'adequation and distinction', refers to social sameness and social difference. In the process of identity construction, an individual may highlight those characteristics that are consistent with dominant community-wide characteristics (adequation) e.g. being Zulu in Durban. They may also highlight aspects of identity that differentiate and distinguish them from the dominant identity e.g. being a landlord and in a position of relative wealth. Adequation and distinction interplay: as new identities are constructed aspects of old ones are erased.

The second set, 'authentication and denaturalisation', refers to ideas of truth and untruth in how one's identity is displayed in a social setting. Authentication concerns presenting oneself without conscious deception. By contrast, denaturalisation is to pretend another identity or suppress aspects of one's identity e.g. in the workplace pretending not to live in an informal settlement. For an outsider to attribute labels of 'truth' and 'untruth' to depictions of self-identity is difficult because this judgement relies heavily on the subject values of the outsider/researcher. It also requires a comparative perspective on an individual's identity set against top-down prescribed identities, with a focused attention on any disjuncture between the two.

The third set is most relevant to external or top-down constructions of informality: 'authorisation and illegitimation'. Authorisation concerns institutional recognition (in law or in social acceptance) of certain identities, whereas illegitimation is the institutional withholding of validation of particular identities. A narrative analysis of key policy documents on urban land and housing in South Africa reveals instances of institutional authorisation and illegitimation of poor urban dwellers (such an analysis is provided in **chapter 4**).

Narrative analysis is a tool that can also be used at a micro level. In his work, Jerome Bruner (1991; 2004) employs life stories as a tool to analyse how individuals construct their social worlds. The act of constructing a narrative, he argues, reveals the importance afforded by an individual to particular

sequences of human events. The moment of recollection is a snap-shot of certain ideals and values that are important enough to ascribe to a particular experience. The analysis of a personal narrative allows for contextualisation of the experiences of the upgrade and formalisation process within the broader context of individuals' lives. This contextualisation is essential to identify extra-ordinary changes and shifts in self-perception that arise over a lifetime of physical relocation, changes to tenure security and interactions with the state.

Theories that explain the relationship (or parts of it) between the three remaining concepts (tenure, social relations and vulnerability/resilience) are strongly presented in Moser's asset vulnerability framework (1998). The framework establishes theoretical links between tenure and vulnerability; and between social relations and vulnerability. A critical assessment of the relevance of the framework to this study (**section 2.4**) resulted in a strong argument for the adaptation of the asset vulnerability framework through the incorporation of aspects of the resource profiles framework (McGregor *et al.*, 2006).

As an analytic tool, a modified asset vulnerability framework isolates tenure and social relations as variables and asks: what aspects of these assets do people have and control, what do they think about them, and how is the asset used in relation to their aspirations? These questions allow for social and cultural specificity, incorporating elements of social constructivism (the resource profiles framework's treatment of culture and social relations), and critical realism (both frameworks' attempts to establish causality between assets/resources and vulnerability/wellbeing). Once having analysed responses to these initial questions, the modified framework allows for analysis of the relationship between tenure and social relations, and how any relationship between these affects vulnerability and resilience.

In early discussions of the rationale behind investigating the relationship between tenure and vulnerability (**section 2.0**), a need for further research into how vulnerability can affect tenure was

established. The modified structure of the framework creates a space to analyse how vulnerability may drive tenure decisions and levels of security; and how vulnerability may engender particular social relations. As an analytic tool, the framework asks how vulnerability affects decision-making around issues of tenure security, including the formation and maintenance of particular social relations related to tenure and the emphasis on particular aspects of identity. The findings of how aspects of identity, social relations and tenure affect vulnerability and how vulnerability can drive tenure and influence identity and social relations will help explain how the upgrade and formalisation process affects individuals' lives and identify the ways in which vulnerability and/or resilience can increase. These explanations in turn, help to address the research questions.

The analysis of a range of data on tenure security/insecurity, identity, social relations, vulnerability and resilience demanded different techniques including narrative analysis, discourse analysis (i.e. the tactics of intersubjectivity) and an analysis of visual data (see **section 3.5**). A common agenda for the analysis of the data was developed through the coding process. In coding the data a 'medium stance' was adopted by the researcher. That is, a mix of the researcher's own concepts and lay concepts were used. The researcher's concepts formed the main categories of analysis and were the four concepts central to this study: tenure, identity, social relations and vulnerability and resilience. Lay concepts were used to develop a series of sub-categories and were identified during an initial reading of the data. For example, 'reflections on shack/informal dwelling' (tenure), 'personal characteristics' (identity), 'relations with traditional authorities' (social relations), and 'aspirations' (vulnerability/resilience); these sub-categories were added to a comprehensive list of codes on an iterative basis. This 'medium stance' reflected the need to balance the value an abductive research strategy places on the use of lay concepts, and the usefulness of the researcher's concepts to guide the analysis and afford it a structure to ensure the research questions were addressed.

3.4 Research design

The overall aim of this study is to investigate how and why the *in situ* upgrade of informal settlements changes the tenure, identity and social relations of residents and what this means in terms of their vulnerability or resilience. An abductive research strategy and critical hermeneutic-interpretive approach means this study does not aim to provide statistically representative descriptions of all informal settlements and shack dwellers' experience of the upgrade process in Durban. Rather, the selection of settlement sites and groups of informal dwellers is intended to produce inferential findings that expose underlying social structures that affect the relationship between tenure and vulnerability.

3.4.1 Identifying and selecting settlement sites

The selection of settlement sites and groups of shack dwellers was based on typicality i.e. how typical is the site and groups of dwellers, to allow broad inferences and the theoretical generalisability of findings (Barbour, 2008:19). Typicality, Barbour (2008:61) observes, is sometimes critiqued for being unrepresentative. However, with respect to her own research, she concludes there is no guarantee her sample of selected students was representative of the whole student body, "However, conversely, neither was there any reason to suppose that it was unique" (Barbour, 1983:6, in 2008:61).

The selection of settlements was influenced by a case study design which satisfies the need to describe, understand and explain (Yin, 1994). The study aims to document social changes that have emerged as a result of the process of *in situ* upgrade and formalisation. Therefore, given the lack of opportunity for a long term longitudinal study of one or more settlements, the main criterion for the selection of fieldwork sites was their stage in the upgrade and formalisation process, to enable the study to 'follow' the process without being drawn into a direct comparison of the sites. Three

settlements at various stages in the process of *in situ* upgrade were identified: one at feasibility stage, one at implementation stage, and one post-implementation.

Ward and Chant (1987:97) note that the size of an informal settlement affects the diversity, structure and leadership of the settlement, reflected by the number and variety of social and political groups. The larger the settlement, they found, the greater the number of community leaders and the more complex the layers of social interaction. Consequently, for this study, settlements with similar characteristics were sought i.e. settlements of similar size, age and population density, in order to control for tenure status as the key variable affecting change across settlement sites. Ward and Chant (1987:93) also note that diversity of settlements is related not just to size, but to the presence of dwellers with different tenure arrangements (owners, caretakers) and different land rights (owner-occupier, landlord, squatter, tenant). In order to investigate a wide range of experiences, it was necessary to select settlements that house dwellers with a variety of tenure arrangements and land rights (discussed in **section 3.4.2**).

Sites for fieldwork were therefore selected on the basis of the following criteria (in order of importance):

1. Located within the legislative boundaries of eThekweni Municipality;
2. At a specific stage of the *in situ* upgrade process;
3. Of a similar size, age and population density, but with a variety of tenure arrangements and land rights evident within the settlement; and
4. Either all sites are on land governed by customary tenure arrangements, or all sites are on state-owned land (either public or private) or land in the process of being acquired by the state.

The three settlements identified and selected for the study were chosen following a period of preliminary fieldwork in Durban from August – November 2009. This was followed by a period of substantive fieldwork from February – July 2010. In order to meet the first criterion, a list of projects

approved and pending either *in situ* upgrade or relocation within eThekweni borders was obtained from eThekweni Municipality¹⁷. The list breaks down all settlements into 587 phased projects at feasibility or implementation stage. The list of projects was regrouped by the informal settlement the projects referred to and settlements listed as relocation or greenfield development sites were eliminated. Sites listed as 'rural' were also eliminated. Remaining sites were grouped according to whether they were on state-owned or private land, or land governed by customary arrangements. For consistency, all sites governed by customary arrangements were eliminated (these sites were mostly large with low population density). For consistency in settlement size and to maximise the variety of tenure arrangements, settlements with fewer than 500 or more than 1500 households were eliminated. This left 115 settlement sites.

All the remaining sites were grouped according to whether they were in the implementation phase or the feasibility phase. Expert opinion was then sought from eThekweni officials, academics and consultant experts on the feasibility of obtaining access to the site for research purposes. Primary consideration was given to: ability to negotiate access to the sites; ease of getting to the site on a regular basis; and how responsive residents were likely to be to the presence of a researcher. Additional consideration was given to the personal safety of the research team. Notoriously volatile settlements and those with high levels of violence at the time of fieldwork were discounted.

On these bases, the site at feasibility stage selected for research was an informal settlement called Gum Tree Road, one of seven neighbouring sites known collectively as Kenville/Sea Cow Lake. The site at implementation stage was Cato Crest (this was also the site for the pilot study). There was greater difficulty in identifying a suitable post-implementation settlement. The formalisation process in eThekweni typically takes up to eight years to complete. This meant that the list of potential settlements to study was shorter than the list for the other two types of site. In consultation with a

¹⁷ The list is dated May 2009 and was received via email to the author, 29/09/09.

Senior Planning Manager at eThekweni Municipality, six potential settlements were identified, one of which best fitted the original criteria outlined above. The site selected at post-implementation stage was Trenance Park 4B, also known locally as Zwelisha. The location of the sites is illustrated in **Map 2** (page vii) and their key characteristics are given in **TABLE 3.1**.

TABLE 3.1 Key characteristics of research sites

	Gum Tree Road	Cato Crest	Zwelisha/Trenance Park 4B
Number of households*	402**	1500	513
Ward number and political party of councillor(s)	Ward 34 ANC councillor	Wards 30 and 31. Both councillors ANC***	Ward 59 ANC Councillor
Stage in formalisation process	Pre-feasibility	Implementation	Post-implementation
Existing land tenure and land rights	Shack tenants and owners, squatters in abandoned formal housing	Formal homeowners and tenants, shack owners and tenants, squatters	Formal homeowners and tenants, and shack owners and tenants
Age of settlement	First informal settlers from early 1980s, significant expansion since late 1980s	Latest phase of settlement since 1989	First informal dwellers from mid-1980s
Types of housing	Shacks in very close proximity to formal houses	Formal houses, shacks, transit camps	Formal houses, shacks
Socio-cultural characteristics	Mostly Zulu and Xhosa from the Eastern Cape, some foreigners	Mostly Zulu, some Xhosa settlers from Eastern Cape, some foreigners	Predominately Zulu settlers, but first settlers were from Eastern Cape, some foreigners
Location	Adjacent to light industrial zone (north Durban)	Closest informal settlement to central Durban	Close to redevelopment zone near La Mercy airport (north Durban)

*Data on the population of settlements is only available by household. Source of data: Metro Housing, eThekweni Municipality, 'Informal settlement program – May 2009'.

**Based on feasibility study reports made available after the selection of research sites. Source of data: Interview G, 15/09/09

***Correct at the time of fieldwork. Prior to local elections in May 2011 constituency boundaries were redrawn. Cato Crest is now in Ward 29 and governed by an ANC councillor.

In addition to meeting the outlined criteria, all three sites are of urban orientation. Their location meant that they were a mix of established settlers and a constant flow of newcomers. This mix highlighted issues surrounding tenure, especially the desirability and means of staying in a particular location.

3.4.2 Identifying and selecting respondents

The research study anticipated two distinct groups of research participants: officials at municipal level in Durban and other experts in the implementation of upgrade and formalisation policies; and residents of settlements. From the first group, eighteen people were interviewed regarding municipal policies toward informal settlements and the upgrade process as it concerned the study sites. Criteria for selection included current or recent employment with the municipality and/or a professional involvement in policies towards informal settlements. The purpose behind interviewing these specific respondents was to increase the researcher's understanding of the local political context in which settlement upgrading occurs, to understand the processes and challenges involved in selecting a site for upgrade and implementing the intervention, and to triangulate some information from resident respondents (the second group) on the history of the settlement sites, and specific facts such as when a programme of upgrade started and which actors are supposed to be responsible for specific elements of the process e.g. the allocation of housing and compilation of housing lists. The data gathered across the eighteen respondents was repetitive. Consequently only seven respondents are cited in the thesis. The data from the remaining eleven respondents contributed to increasing the researcher's knowledge and understanding of the upgrade process.

Residents in the settlements were identified and selected on the basis of their characteristics in order to ensure a mixed group of respondents. Such an approach recognises the limitations of purposive sampling, selecting participants according to particular characteristics, which necessarily theorises why these characteristics are significant to the investigation. Therefore, the three groups of resident respondents (each group corresponding to a settlement) were from a cross-section of society and included men and women, young adults and the elderly, foreigners and South African nationals, homeowner-occupiers, tenants and landlords. The aim here was "not to produce a representative sample, but [...] rather to reflect diversity" (Barbour, 2008:53).

Reflections from preliminary fieldwork study in late 2009 informed the number of residents selected in each settlement and the pattern of information gathering. Consideration was given to the number of residents with whom it was possible to complete a series of interviews over a timeframe of six months. In the pilot study it took six weeks to complete five rounds of interviews with two respondents (fewer rounds of interviews were completed with ten other respondents over the same period). The inference drawn was that over a six month period in three settlements, it would be possible to complete five rounds of interviews with eight people in each settlement.

Respondents were selected through close collaboration with research assistants who lived in the relevant area. Consideration was given to the language skills of potential research assistants. All research assistants were fluent in at least isiZulu and English – the two languages all interviews were conducted in depending on the fluency and comfort of the respondents. Interviews in isiZulu were translated into English at the time by the research assistant to enable the lead researcher to ask follow up questions. Language proficiency was assessed by asking the research assistant to translate into English a range of isiZulu phrases developed with the assistance of staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. In Gum Tree Road the research assistant was a mid-aged Xhosa woman, in Cato Crest a young Zulu man, and in Zwelisha an older Xhosa woman.

The research assistant made initial recommendations of people to approach, based on the aim of interviewing a cross-section of society. The research assistant also acted as gatekeeper, this helped to build trust between the research team and research participants. There is a danger that responses were influenced by the presence of a person known to the participant, and that in only speaking to known contacts of the research assistant a heavy bias was introduced. There is also a danger that using gatekeepers may inadvertently reinforce certain power dynamics between people (Mauthner, Birch, Jessop, Miller, 2002: chapter 3). However, as Rashid (2007) explores in her study of an informal settlement in Dhaka, the hazards of employing gatekeepers must be balanced by the need

to gain access to research participants and the necessity to build trust. In a study of this nature, the trade-off between the possible influences of a research assistant was outweighed by the gains made in terms of access and trust. To help manage the inherent bias in the selection of respondents, following initial recommendations by the research assistant, further recommendations of people to approach were made by the respondent, with the same effect on trust-building. Twenty-four people participated in the study through quota sampling through a 'snowball' effect.

3.5 Choice of data collection methods

The choice of research methods was influenced by the research strategy, the type of data likely to be produced, and the appropriateness of methods to the type of respondent. Each of the groups of respondents identified (municipal officials and experts; and residents of settlements) required a slightly different approach. The first group were engaged in the study because of their professional involvement in issues of urban land and housing; they were also likely to be familiar with the interview process. Therefore, data from municipal officials and other experts were collected using semi-structured interviews. The format allowed for interviews to be guided by an interview schedule to aid later analysis (see **Annex 2**), but was otherwise flexible, to allow respondents to discuss their own experiences and opinions in their own way.

In collecting data from individuals residing in former and current informal settlements, the methods applied were largely ethnographic. The selection of specific data collection methods was informed by the findings from a pilot study, which confirmed the importance of building trust with residents of settlements in order to maximise the value of each method employed. This lesson was reflected by an iterative approach where rounds of interviews were conducted with respondents over the course of several months. At each interview session, a different data collection method was employed to gather information on different aspects of an individual's tenure, identity, social relations, and vulnerability/resilience.

The methods employed were: semi-structured interview; a social mapping exercise; a community mapping exercise; a life history; and a gift diary. Each method alone failed to yield sufficient data to address the research questions. However together, as a multi-method approach, the different types of data generated built a holistic picture of the complexities of identity formation, social relations, appreciations of tenure and vulnerability at an individual level. That is, different parts of each method address different parts of the research questions. Together, they culminate in thick-descriptions of life in a settlement, which can aid later research and assessment of the transferability of findings to other areas inside or outside of South Africa.

The purpose of the first round, a semi-structured interview, was to introduce the participant to the study and research team, build an initial profile of the respondent, and identify particular areas for further investigation during the course of the sessions. The modest purpose of the first round reflected findings in the pilot study where contradictory information emerged in later interviews, calling into question the reliability of data from a single one-off interview.

The second round built on the foundations established in the first round and went into greater detail on an individual's social relationships. This information was captured through a social relations map where respondents drew a diagram of all those social relations (individuals and institutions) that related to tenure at the time of the exercise and when they first moved to the settlement. For example, respondents were asked to identify people who helped them to come to the settlement initially, helped build their home, helped to maintain the home, and people/institutions that help the informant feel safe and secure in their home. The exercise illustrated how social relations (with regards to tenure) can change over time, and that the responsibility for certain functions can shift between actors. Woodhouse (1998: 142) argues that visual techniques are valuable to improve communication between researcher and respondent, especially in cases where building rapport between the two is essential. In practice, the diagram focused attention to specific areas in a way

that would be difficult with an interview. For example, the research team were able to probe around individual areas and, because the respondents were able to see what was written in front of them, they were able to provide clarification and volunteer additional information as the session unfurled.

The third round was a community mapping exercise. The purpose of the exercise was to identify the relationship between particular social relations important to tenure security and the geography of a person's dwelling. Respondents were asked to draw a map of the physical environment around their home and to identify the location of individuals and institutional representatives named in the previous exercise on the map. Respondents were also asked to explain any locational advantage or disadvantage of their shack or house. As with the social relations mapping exercise, a diagram helped to focus attention and elicit in-depth information. However, in both visual mapping exercises there was an issue with comprehension amongst the earliest respondents. This was overcome by providing an example of a social relations and community map drawn by the researcher. While providing an example increased understanding of the purpose of the method and thus its effectiveness, respondents may have been unintentionally influenced by it.

The fourth round was a life history. The purpose of a life history was to provide context to the experiences and perspective of the informant, to identify longitudinal trends in decision making and approaches to tenure security, and to reveal aspects of self-perception (identity). Reflecting on the fieldwork, participants seemed to enjoy the experience of telling their stories to a captive and interested audience. By the time this method was employed, a relationship between the informant and research team had already been established, this allowed for a greater divulgence of personal experiences. Each life history was transcribed into English and a copy given to the informant in order to continue building trust, shift ownership of the narrative to the story-teller, and comply with what Atkinson (1998) regards as standard moral practice.

The final method was a gift diary that captured data on horizontal social relations that are important to the respondent’s daily life (an example is shown in **FIGURE 3.1**). In the first round of interviews, respondents were asked to complete a diary entry every time they gave or received a gift. An item was considered a gift only if money had not been exchanged for it (i.e. it was not a commodity). Diaries as a research method are suited to this type of study, which aims to track a process of change (Alaszewski, 2006; Almedia, 2005). Diary entries gave a real time snapshot of the state of social relations in an area at a particular point in the upgrade and formalisation process.

FIGURE 3.1 Structure and example entries of a gift diary

DATE	ITEM	TIME OR GOOD	RECEIVED BY	GIVEN BY	HOW OFTEN THIS WEEK?
12 March 2010	Babysitting	Time – 3 hours	M’du (neighbour)	Kamna (me)	2
13 March 2010	Oranges	Good	Kamna (me)	Sarah (sister)	1

The data in the gift diary were self-reported. The fifth and final round of interviews focused on the information in the diary and explored the motivations, expectations, incentives and conditions for giving and receiving.

These methods complemented one another and are inter-dependent in drawing a meaningful analysis of changes to identity and social relations during periods of change in tenure security, and attitudes towards tenure security and vulnerability. The use of five methods helped to triangulate findings, aided external validity and built a more complete picture of life in a settlement. Throughout the period of fieldwork, detailed researcher notes were kept to manage internal validity and aid reflexivity.

3.6 Ethical considerations

This study involved working with people who are mostly vulnerable. It was therefore essential that their participation in the research did not exacerbate vulnerabilities or take advantage of them. In order to maintain a relationship based on trust, the process began with the full disclosure of limitations (e.g. the research was unlikely to affect their housing or land issues), and assurances of confidentiality and anonymity; the process concluded with a final meeting where a transcript of the respondent's life history was given to them and they were given the opportunity to provide general feedback to the research team. This final meeting served to acknowledge the importance of the respondent's contribution to the research topic and also provided a way to check-back the interpretation of data (ASA, 2005).

All data held on respondents living in settlements are anonymous and confidential. The names of the respondents were coded with letters and numbers, e.g. A1, and only the researcher has a list that links ID numbers with real names. The respondents have been given pseudonyms to protect their anonymity; these pseudonyms reflect their gender, ethnic identity, and nationality, just as their real names do. All recorded data and electronic notes are held in a password controlled laptop accessible only to the researcher. All paper notes are securely kept in a locked file. All respondents were given a consent form and participant information sheet which contained information on the study, the obligations of the research team to ensure confidentiality, the commitment required of respondents, and information on how their data will be used and stored. Its content was approved by the Ethical Review Committee at the University of Birmingham in August 2009.

This chapter set out how the research questions were addressed over a nine month period of primary data collection. The following chapters report the findings, using the analytic framework developed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 4

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LAND AND INFORMAL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.0 Introduction

This chapter sets the historical and political context of contemporary urban land issues and policy in South Africa in general and Durban specifically (**section 4.1**). It also discusses the growth of informal settlements in Durban focusing on the establishment of the three settlement sites in this study: Gum Tree Road, Cato Crest and Zwelisha (**section 4.2**). This history sets the context in which the *in situ* upgrade of informal settlement is implemented in Durban (**section 4.3**), and is the foundation to understanding the research analysis and findings (**chapters 5-7**).

4.1 The land question in South Africa

Early twentieth century conceptualisations of land amongst the ruling white minority in South Africa evolved from colonial experiences of land ownership. Twentieth century land policies were therefore entwined with the ‘native question’; that is how to control African movement and agency in order to cement white minority rule. Early legislation extended features of race-based segregation by restricting African movement, livelihood options and rights to land ownership¹⁸. To Africans access to spaces of economic importance such as mining areas, urban nodes and productive rural lands was restricted. These lucrative spaces became exclusively white domains.

The 1948 Nationalist government institutionalised racial segregation and through policies of ‘retribalisation’ developed the Bantustan (or homelands) concept – a specific space for created groups of Africans to live and work separately from each other and white settlers. Post-1948 land policies were directed at separating Africans and sectioning them into manageable areas either

¹⁸ For example, the Native Land Act 1913, Native Affairs Act 1920, Native (Urban Areas) Act 1923, and Native Administration Act 1927.

under the direct administrative control of municipal authorities in townships or under traditional rulers in homelands. Large-scale resettlement of Africans to homelands was implemented throughout the 1960s-80s (Marks and Trapido, 1989:13). Forced movement and the dispossession of land forced changes to African livelihood, familial legacy and power relations between Africans.

When majority rule in South Africa came in 1994, Lahiff (2002) argues that questions of land became marginal to the political debate. He suggests that this is because the negotiation process between African and white elites that precipitated the transition to democracy included a political compromise that left land, power and wealth mostly still with the white minority. At the transition to majority rule, he argues, a political consensus agreed that the role of capitalism should not change in the post-apartheid era, instead it should accommodate new African faces (Lahiff, 2002:2-6).

An analysis of the early land policies of the ANC government supports Lahiff's implication that the conceptualisation of land has not drastically or meaningfully altered in the new political climate. In 1997 the government launched its white paper for land reform, which outlined a strategy to redress the history of land dispossession and inequality of land holdings in the country (GoRSA, 1997a). The strategy aims to redistribute (mostly rural) land on a 'willing buyer-willing seller' basis. In urban areas the strategy calls for mitigating land invasions and containing urban sprawl; a direct reference to the growing number of informal settlements in the 1990s. It aims to grant legal land rights to those denied land rights under apartheid. Under a programme of restitution, the strategy compensates those dispossessed of land under the 1913 Native Lands Act. Restitution has been the most successful part of the reform (Walker, 2005), leaving land redistribution and tenure security lagging behind.

In urban areas, tenure insecurity affecting the residents of informal settlements has been conceptualised by the state as a problem of insufficient and inadequate housing that complies with building regulations in serviced/serviceable areas (GoRSA, 1995), thus conflating tenure security with

housing policy. State solutions to insecurity are to build more formal housing and promote individual freehold tenure in order to protect assets and facilitate access to credit that can stimulate both individual livelihoods and a low-income housing market (Huchzermeyer, 2008:2; 2004:335; GoRSA, 1995; 2005; Tomlinson, 1999:286). In President Thabo Mbeki's state of the nation address in 2008, Mbeki stated that the eradication and upgrade of informal settlements must integrate communities and build a non-racial society (DoHS, 2009). The encouragement and, in some housing subsidy packages, the gift of an individual freehold title deed, is regarded by the ANC government as a way to redress the longstanding inequality in land and property ownership between Africans and other South Africans.

The policy approach of 'eradicating' informal settlements demonstrates a narrow conception of informality and little appreciation of issues relevant to tenure security/insecurity. In this policy, the state does not appear to appreciate that settlements grow and contract with changes in the environment, municipal approaches to policing settlements and livelihood opportunities, and that these dynamics affect a shack dweller's risks and opportunities. Such a limited appreciation of the realities of informal settlements has exposed the failures of urban planning policies. For example, despite a zero-tolerance policy on the growth of informal settlements (through 'freezing'), new constructions are continually added to the periphery of settlements (Huchzermeyer, 2008).

The 1994 Housing Subsidy Scheme and the 2004 Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme outline the implementation of land and housing policy as it affects shack dwellers. The Housing Subsidy Scheme was first introduced in 1994 as part of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of the first ANC government. The RDP is an integrated policy framework and outlines how the government intends to meet the basic needs of all citizens, build the economy and democratise the state (ANC, 1994). The RDP in the housing sector, though now defunct in policy terms, remains an

iconic programme, with current low-income houses built by municipalities colloquially termed 'RDP houses' by residents, municipal officers and the media.

In 2004, the scheme was supplanted by the Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme, under a new policy direction called the Comprehensive Plan for Sustainable Human Settlement, commonly referred to as Breaking New Ground (BNG). The programme aims to create a policy and legislative environment that favours the *in situ* upgrade of informal settlements in order to encourage a shift across all provinces away from relocation (GoRSA, 2005:12). BNG also aims to accelerate housing delivery, support a single residential property market, and create linkages between the government and the private sector so subsidy beneficiaries can use their houses as assets for wealth creation (GoRSA, 2005:1). BNG is not an ideological shift from the RDP; however, it marks a significant historic point of departure in the conception of many urban dwellers as poor, African and permanent. Under BNG, beneficiaries of *in situ* upgrades of informal settlements can expect a fully serviced site, a house on a plot of land no smaller than 30m² and a corresponding freehold title deed (Interview A, 23/10/09).

4.2 Informal settlements in Durban

The contemporary history of the three settlements in this study illustrates a continuation of the historically tense relationship between informal African spaces and, in Durban, formal predominantly white and Indian spaces. The 1950 Group Areas Act was instrumental in creating the racial residential zones still evident in Durban. Settlements of Africans and Indians that existed close to the Central Business District (CBD) were destroyed and the residents forcibly moved to peripheral areas (e.g. Cato Manor; see Edwards, 1996, and Hindson and McCarthy, 1994, for a detailed history). Contemporary informal settlements in/around the centre of Durban – like the study sites - emerged

in the city during the years of major change and confusion at the fall of apartheid and the beginning of South African democracy¹⁹.

In KZN the end of apartheid came amidst organised violence and warfare between African supporters of the IFP and largely African supporters of the ANC and UDF. The African political landscape since the 1980s has resembled garrison politics, with some areas aligned to the politics and ideology of Inkatha, and others to the ANC and UDF. Indiscriminate and targeted violence between the IFP, ANC/UDF and any politically non-aligned Africans drove many, especially in IFP rural strongholds, to the city. Many contemporary informal settlements, including Cato Crest and Gum Tree Road, were (re)established during this period. From 1994 (when the new national government was elected) until 1996 (when the new post-apartheid administration took office in the municipality), there was a unique opportunity for prospective shack dwellers. During this time, new informal settlements were established and older ones expanded, without challenge by the authorities.

4.2.1 Gum Tree Road²⁰

Under the Group Areas Act, hilly Kenville and Sea Cow Lake, two separate but adjacent areas of light industry in north Durban, were declared Indian-only areas. The areas remained exclusively Indian until the 1970s, when African factory workers started to rent rooms from Indian landlords. In the late 1980s, African residents of KwaMashu township moving closer to work, and African tenants of Indian landlords tired of paying rent and keen to build a home conveniently located for work and suitable for allowing them to (re)build a family, began to erect shacks close to Gum Tree Road in

¹⁹ The history of these settlements stands in contrast to much older informal settlements such as Malukazi (south Umlazi), Clermont (Pinetown North) and Inanda (northern Durban) (see Cross, Mngadi and Mbhele, 1998; Hofmeyr, 1982; Bekker and Manona, 1992). These settlements were in the KZN homeland but were drawn into the metropolitan region when municipal borders expanded first in 1932 and then at frequent points after, and changed (for planning purposes) from semi-rural settlements on the fringes of the city, with self-built homes governed under customary tenure arrangements, into urban informal settlements (discussed in **section 1.3**).

²⁰ The history of Gum Tree Road related here is based on the common recollections of current residents of the settlement, the long standing local councillor and Indian families whose formal houses are adjacent to the informal settlement.

Kenville/Sea Cow Lake. This group of settlers concealed their homes by building shacks deep in the wooded areas around and in between formal Indian houses. Gum Tree Road informal settlement was the first of seven established in the area; it will be the first settlement to be upgraded and is at the pre-feasibility stage in the upgrade process.

The number of settlers in Gum Tree Road started to increase in the late 1980s, and substantially grew from the early 1990s around the time of the first democratic elections. Mr. Naidoo, an Indian resident in a formal house, who has lived in the area for 30 years, recalls:

There were just a few [shack dwellers] in the 1990s; but then two-three big trucks full of people came in the early 1990s (I think it was before the elections) and the trucks dumped the people in the middle of the night. We heard hammering, knocking, lots of noise. And in the morning there was a whole area full of shacks.

(Interview F, 27/05/10)

Mr. Naidoo suspects that this was a deliberate tactic to increase ANC votes in an area dominated by Indians and lower-middle class whites, whose vote for an ANC government was uncertain. Relations between African shack dwellers and predominantly Indian formal residents were (and remain) largely positive. Indian residents gave water and offered some basic assistance to early settlers, and later, as the number of shack dwellers grew, they sold water.

Intense demand for land amongst the new arrivals meant that trees were cut down, exposing shacks built on steep slopes to the risk of landslides brought on by heavy rainfall. In the early years of the settlement at Gum Tree Road, there was little self-regulation amongst shack dwellers over who could build a shack and where. Mrs. Zanele Mhlongo arrived in Gum Tree Road in 1990. The earliest settler amongst the study interviewees, she recalls the process of claiming ownership over a plot of land, the beginnings of a settlement governance structure and the violent conflict over both:

There was no one here to ask [permission]. You come here in those times you just clear the bush and build a house. When the police came to demolish our shack we

decided to go to the landlord and get a permit to live here, that was in 1994. The landlord said 'yes'... The permit was a physical letter to say we can stay, written by the land owner – an Indian man... Once we had the permission, the rest of us living here decided we needed a community leadership.

My husband was a community leader – most of the old leaders have passed away now – most died naturally, some stabbed each other, those who wanted to be leaders by force. Eventually it settled down.

The people who came later wanted that letter; they wanted to kill my husband for that letter. The paper controls the area. So I tore the letter and burnt it. Once people knew the letter had been burnt they went away somewhere else, or they have passed away now.

(Mhlongo, 15/03/10)

The landowner who gave permission to Mrs. Mhlongo and her husband also encouraged them to contact the municipality and demand access to water. Soon after, in the early 1990s, the first municipal services arrived – standpipes, later followed by a regular refuse collection. The first Community Development Committee (CDC) was established out of a need to organise for survival. Later committees (members and leaders are changed by popular demand when/if they are regarded as non-performing) have been instrumental in securing services for the area. The current leaders of the committee were elected at a public meeting in 2001. They are widely regarded by shack dwellers, nearby formal residents and the local councillor as a positive presence and capable negotiators with the municipality on behalf of residents with regards to the impending upgrade process.

The apparent cohesion of the CDC since 2001 is closely tied to three recent events. The first occurred in 2001 in an adjacent informal settlement, where violent conflict between ANC supporters and IFP supporters resulted in the death of ten people. The episode is widely believed to have been calculated and managed by grassroots party political leaders. Following the deaths, any remaining IFP presence was 'chased away' by the majority group of ANC supporters²¹. The event was reflected

²¹ A variety of strategies are employed to 'chase away' undesirable residents, ranging from verbal threats to acts of physical violence and arson.

on by several interviewees as a positive action that brought stability (and political homogeneity) to the area. The second event was in 2005, when some Zulu residents in another settlement identified and killed many Xhosa-speakers. Tensions ran high, especially in Gum Tree Road, where many Xhosa-speakers live. The confrontation did not spread, largely due to the quick and decisive action of the settlement's leadership, who intervened and reprimanded likely (but unproven) attackers and threatened to chase them away. The third event occurred during countrywide xenophobic attacks in May 2008, during which over 60 people were killed and thousands displaced (HSRC, 2008). The leadership's previous experience of ethnic violence was invaluable in managing tensions in the area. It was reported that leaders openly discussed the contributions of foreigners living amongst them. No one was killed. However, many foreigners chose to flee temporarily in fear of their lives.

Gum Tree Road was and remains an attractive location for economic migrants to the city. Nearby factories that require the type of low-skilled labour found in abundance in the informal settlements of Kenville/Sea Cow Lake initially meant that settlements grew quickly to capacity. A high demand for housing and a limited supply of shacks or land on which to build a shack has meant that shack rental is a lucrative business, complicating the matter of determining eligibility for an RDP house during the upgrade process.

4.2.2 Cato Crest

Cato Crest, part of the wider Cato Manor area, was unoccupied land for almost thirty years. The settlement, which is currently at the implementation phase of the upgrade process, is a mix of RDP houses, shacks and interim transit camps. The history of the current settlement is retold here through the recollections of an early settler. Her version of events is supported by the recollections of other early settlers and non-resident activists supporting the formalisation of the area.

In 1989, Grace Nkosi moved to Cato Crest with her husband and young family; they were one of only a handful of families. At the time she moved to the area, there was little evidence of the land ever

having been lived on; grass and shrubbery had overgrown former footpaths, roads and the remaining foundations of old houses. This was the principal appeal of the site to Grace, the ability to hide her family away from outside dangers. Grace and her family had fled political violence in northern KZN. Her family had long been ANC supporters and the family moved amid fears that IFP supporters would kill her sons and husband if they stayed. Cato Crest was to be a haven away from political violence in the rural areas and townships for families like Grace's, who continued to arrive in large numbers despite the threat of raiding parties (formed by local white residents) and the fear of forced removal by the municipality.

Early settlers, like Grace, tended to demarcate relatively large and well-positioned plots of land for their families. The best plots of land were towards the top of the hill on which Cato Crest sits and close to previous footpaths and roads. Proximity to a main road meant access to *spaza* shops²² (nearly always on roadsides) and taxi²³ routes (mobility). Later settlers were free to settle where they wished, but as the best plots had already been taken, newcomers were inevitably pushed further down the hill. The latest to arrive built dwellings in the most undesired locations, closest to the two rivers running alongside Cato Crest: the Umkhumbane River and the Mayville River. During Durban's rainy season, raw human sewage runs through homes en route to the rivers, earning the Mayville a new name amongst residents, the *Amasimba* River²⁴.

The imperative for a settlement leadership came from the group of early settlers, who also dominated the leadership competition. The early leadership (which included Grace and her husband) tried to set rules of behaviour and establish order within the settlement. Members of the leadership, with the support of settlement residents, opened dialogue with the municipality (still a part of the apartheid administration) to prevent the demolition of shacks and to provide services.

²² A *spaza* is a small tuck shop

²³ A taxi is a small passenger carrying mini-van; it is independent of municipal transport services which rarely serve informal settlements.

²⁴ isiZulu slang meaning "Shit River".

The municipality, unable to prevent the settlement of Cato Crest, agreed in early 1993 that if the settlement did not grow further, current residents would not be evicted and services would be delivered (Nkosi, 12/11/09). However, new dwellings were constructed, as early settlers called family and kin to come and settle in the area.

After making early gains in tenure security and services to the settlement (a mobile clinic visited the settlement from 1992, a school for local children in nearby Carrington Heights was established, and standpipes were installed in the early 1990s), a change of order in the settlement came through two decisive actions. The first, the end of apartheid and the appointment of a new post-apartheid municipal office in 1996, lessened the legitimacy of the old leadership, who many in the settlement saw as tainted by its past associations with racist white rule. The second was the so-called 'taxi wars', which broke out in 1995-99 and irreparably damaged the leadership. One of the ten early leaders proposed running a monopoly taxi service for Cato Crest. Such a trade would have been highly lucrative. While other leaders agreed on the need for a taxi service, they objected to the idea of a monopoly, preferring to invite several known taxi bosses to start a Cato Crest service. This difference split the leadership and led to one faction attempting to oust the other. There were many casualties of the taxi wars; three members of the leadership fled the settlement and two were killed, including Grace's husband, who was shot at point-blank range inside the shack in which she still lives.

Politically, Cato Crest is in an important location. The settlement is surrounded by traditionally white middle class areas that since 1994 have consistently voted for the Democratic Alliance (DA). The majority African residents of Cato Crest have traditionally voted for the ANC. This appears to strongly influence gerrymandering. Between 2006 and 2011, Cato Crest was divided into two political wards - Wards 30 and 31 - and as a result large numbers of African voters were divided between two traditionally white DA wards. Until the local elections in May 2011, both wards were under the control of ANC councillors. Prior to these recent elections, ward boundaries were once

more redrawn. Cato Crest now falls within Ward 29 and is controlled by an ANC councillor. If the decision to redraw ward boundaries through and around Cato Crest was politically motivated to secure party presence, an effect of that decision has been an interjection of party political agendas into local civic life and a reconstruction of how civic life is conducted.

The influential role played by the residents of Cato Crest in shaping the outcome of local elections has created more space for party structures and party political actors in the settlement. This has resulted in un-coordinated efforts in settlement-wide development and heightened competition for power amongst some individuals in the settlement, as leadership positions control the allocation of resources and create opportunities for patronage and self-enrichment. In recent years the ambiguity over the governance of the settlement has made it difficult for residents to distinguish state authority (the office of the councillor), from party political authority (the reach of the ANC party machine), and settlement authority (civic community committees). This ambiguity has weakened transparency and public monitoring of the upgrade and formalisation process. It has also obscured how the process ought to be implemented, giving rise to alternative theories amongst interviewees that centre on corrupt practices and abuses of power.

4.2.3 Zwelisha/Trenance Park 4B

Zwelisha is isiZulu for 'new land'. It is surrounded by northern Phoenix, Verulam and Ottawa – areas declared Indian-only under the Group Areas Act. The history of Zwelisha is contested by its current residents. The founding of the settlement is closely linked to a contemporary competition for leadership. Competition has heightened since the upgrade of the settlement, which started in 2005 and finished in 2010. The history presented here is based on the most common recollections of current residents, all of whom are former shack dwellers who are now residents of RDP houses, and most of whom describe themselves as ethnic Zulu.

The earliest settlers arrived in the mid-1980s from the old Transkei (now Eastern Cape). All were Xhosa-speaking. The early settlers cleared land at the bottom of the surrounding hills and established a settlement on the bank of the river which separated Zwelisha from northern Phoenix. These settlers established the first leadership structure. Many arrived without identity documents or the correct apartheid-era permits to live in KZN. By the end of the 1980s/early 1990s there was a growing presence of amaZulu in the settlement. These new settlers resented the influence and power of the Xhosa-speakers in a Zulu-speaking province. Since the mid-1990s, the ethnic composition of the leadership has altered, reflecting the changes to Zwelisha's ethnic demographic. The new leaders brought with them new ideas about tenure security and housing that directly clashed with the status quo and preferences of the old leaders. The contemporary contest for leadership is framed as a struggle between 'new' and 'old' settlers. The 'new settlers' currently dominate positions in the CDC. Broadly, 'old settlers' include members of the old leadership from the 1980s and the descendants of early Xhosa-speaking settlers, who tend to believe that their turn at the leadership was usurped by the 'new settlers'.

By 1997 at the latest, there was open tension and disagreement in Zwelisha over the issue of housing. The residents largely fell into two groups: one campaigning to the municipality for an upgrade and better housing, and the second committed to maintaining shacks. This second group are commonly believed to have some vested interest in the status quo. The assumption amongst many Zulu residents is that Xhosa-speakers staked claims to the largest plots of land when the settlement was first founded and are now the dominant shack-lords. In addition, it is claimed that they (or their families) own land in the Eastern Cape to which they will one day return, and so they do not need land in KZN.

In 1998, the leadership, composed mostly of new settlers, lobbied the local councillor of Ward 59, Councillor Mthanzi Dlamini, and obtained a commitment from him to support the upgrade of the

settlement. The Zwelisha upgrade project began in 2005. The leadership of the settlement has not changed since the mid-1990s. The current CDC oversaw the entire upgrade process. Following the upgrade and widely perceived resource advantages that accompany it, the displaced or aspiring leaders (old settlers) have heightened their challenge for leadership positions and are attempting to recruit a voter/support base amongst those still living in shacks in Zwelisha (those ineligible for an RDP house) and increasingly, residents of a nearby informal settlement called Amaoti, a large and notorious settlement. The politics of Zwelisha is almost inseparable from Amaoti. In Zwelisha, residents fear Amaoti. It is described as a lawless place where unpunished crime occurs frequently. This image of Amaoti is open to manipulation by current and aspiring leaders to frighten and persuade residents of Zwelisha to undertake a particular course of action, with the threat that an alternate course will drive Zwelisha down the same path as Amaoti.

The early ethnic divisions apparent in the leadership struggle in Zwelisha are not so obvious in the current power struggles. The people still living in shacks, for example, are not exclusively Xhosa or Zulu-speakers. However, the early Xhosa-speaking settlers were largely without proper documents. Therefore, during the upgrade process their paperwork was more complicated than others, which typically delayed their occupation of an RDP house.

Zwelisha is in the same political constituency as Verulam – a sizable, predominantly Indian town. There is little to suggest the struggles for leadership are tied to any competition for party political power. Zwelisha's CDC is too small to meaningfully influence ward politics, and the number of voters in Zwelisha is too small to swing an election outcome. The presence of the councillor in settlement politics is almost non-existent. His constituency is geographically large and he appears only periodically at settlement meetings. The politics of Zwelisha appears to be less influenced by party politics than by competition amongst groups of residents to secure resources and direct their allocation.

4.3 The process of upgrading informal settlements

This section traces the implementation of the process to upgrade informal settlements from KwaZulu-Natal province to eThekweni municipality and down to settlements in Durban (the process is also presented in **TABLE 4.1**). The information is based on a review of policy documents and frameworks including the 2004 Informal Settlement Upgrade Programme and interviews with people directly involved in the *in situ* upgrade of informal settlement in eThekweni municipality.

One of the tasks of the provincial Department of Human Settlement is to interpret the policy directives of the national government as per the needs of the province and to prioritise state support and investment based on these needs, thus there is some flexibility in how the state housing subsidy is applied. KZN is a predominantly rural province. Consequently, land tenure and housing priorities focus on rural residents. Approximately 70% of the province housing budget (an annual grant of R2.1billion) is directed to rural areas. For the DoHS this means working with the Ingonyama Trust, which administers large swathes of rural land in the name of the Zulu King; making KZN unique among the other provinces. The Planning and IT Manager at the DoHS suggested that in addition to the rural nature of KZN, another reason for the rural bias is it that offers “the path of least resistance”. No formal survey process is needed, no land acquisition and no titling. He reflected that this focus may be at the expense of urban informal settlements, which, by comparison, “are the hardest to work with” (Interview B, 09/11/2009).

TABLE 4.1 The process of upgrading informal settlements in eThekweni Municipality*

Level	Primary responsibility in site selection and housing allocation	Criteria for allocation of housing subsidy	Function	Monitoring Mechanism
Department of Human Settlements (Province)	Not directly involved in site selection or housing allocation	Individual eligibility for RDP assistance ²⁵	Monitor target to eliminate slums by 2014 Release funds from national to municipal at milestones	Municipality report on targets met
Housing Unit (feasibility) (Municipality)	Sites selected on technical ease of upgrade and political considerations; swing wards prime candidates. Housing allocation determined by settlement actors who are responsible for developing a list of eligible people.	Individual eligibility for RDP assistance	*Land acquisition studies *Impact assessment *Land surveys *Full costings *Plans and architectural drawings	Feasibility studies usually outsourced to contractors – monitoring against contract. Little monitoring of how housing list is developed.
Project Manager, Housing Unit (implementation) (Municipality)	PM appoints a community liaison officer (CLO), both work closely with community committees and local councillor to oversee allocation and coordinate upgrade work.	Individual eligibility for RDP assistance	*Implement upgrade *Manage and coordinate contractors and municipal actors *Principal municipal contact for community *Ensure eligibility from benefit area	Internal audit systems, feedback and reporting from contractors, CLO, community communities and councillor
Settlement	Area Committees, Ward Committees, CDC and councillor compiles housing list.	Individuals in settlement prior to a cut off date	*Decide names on the housing list *Facilitates on-site works	No official monitoring or scrutiny of who is on the housing list

*Table compiled from interviews with provincial and municipal officers (Interviews A, B, C, D 2009; and Interview E, 2010).

²⁵ The criteria for eligibility for a state subsidised house in eThekweni are: (i) must be a South African citizen; (ii) must not have received government subsidy before; (iii) combined household income must not exceed R3500; (iv) must not own or have owned property before; (v) must be married or cohabiting with long term partner or single with financial dependants; and (vi) must be 18 years of age or above. Other types of subsidy (of varying value) are available for higher income earners. [www] <http://www.durban.gov.za/durban/services/housing/accessing> (accessed 03/10/09).

Decisions to upgrade an informal settlement either through *in situ* upgrade or relocation are taken by municipalities: they “identify informal settlements to be upgraded within their areas of jurisdiction, and apply to the Provincial Departments for funding for projects under this [Informal Settlement Upgrade] Programme” (GoRSA, The National Housing Code, 2009:17). Of all KZN municipalities, eThekweni is the most capable of raising revenue (principally through rates) and self-financing any shortfall in the housing subsidy. eThekweni’s Metro Housing Unit has the strongest *in situ* upgrade track record across the country, having completed 60 informal settlement upgrade projects, currently implementing 95 and planning a further 317²⁶ (Interview C, 06/10/09). This means that in contrast to the national picture, where relocation appears to be the main approach to upgrading, despite the policy, KZN and specifically eThekweni Municipality is successfully shifting to *in situ* upgrading in practice.

eThekweni municipality effectively finances all upgrade projects, seeking reimbursement from the DoHS only at the end of a project. To release the subsidy the DoHS demands a D4 Handover Form (also known as a ‘Happy Letter’) from the municipality. The form shows that a former resident of an informal settlement has taken occupation of a subsidised (RDP) house. The form also acts as a tool for the province to monitor achievement of municipal targets under the Informal Settlement Upgrade Programme.

Sites for upgrade are selected by municipal planners according to two principles: first, how close the site is to infrastructure; and second, how easily available the land is. If the settlement is on municipal land it is given a higher priority (Interview C, 06/10/09)²⁷. A single informal settlement can be located on numerous different parcels of land. The Land Assembly unit (part of the Metro Housing

²⁶ A project does not necessarily correspond to any recognised informal settlement boundary. Large settlements are often broken up into several projects for planning and development purposes, some projects within one settlement will be *in situ* upgrade and some involve relocation.

²⁷ In the interim and to varying degrees, settlements are provided with basic sanitation, health services, roads and water by the municipality.

Unit) is charged with negotiating the sale, purchase and expropriation of land. This part of the process can take several years, especially if land owners cannot be identified or are unwilling to sell. There is also a political element to the decision to upgrade certain settlements first. According to a local councillor in eThekweni, an ANC councillor can expect to enjoy greater benefits for his constituency from an ANC dominated local and national government, as has been the case since 2004²⁸. Amongst ANC councillors whose wards contain informal settlements, those in marginal seats or swing wards are likely to be given priority (Interview D, 21/09/09).

In Durban additional consideration must also be given to the hilly terrain when selecting sites for upgrade and when planning the upgrade itself. Precariously located, high density, informal settlements on the edges of steep hills (such as Gum Tree Road) have technical challenges and budgetary implications in terms of sufficiently levelling the ground to build houses safely and to extend sewerage networks and water pipes uphill. There are also political concerns regarding the number of families that can be housed on the site following in an *in situ* upgrade which typically de-densifies areas. De-densification can improve perceptions of the area amongst those residents who continue to live in the settlement following an upgrade (see **chapters 6 and 7**); however, de-densification following an *in situ* upgrade where the settlement cannot be expanded necessarily pushes some subsidy-eligible residents into transit camps (temporary shelter while awaiting a subsidised house) or relocates them to another site.

Officially, the role of the municipality is to act as “developer”, that is “[T]he municipality undertakes all planning and project activities” (GoRSA, 2009:15). At the feasibility stage of the process, the Metro Housing Unit commissions various impact assessment studies, land acquisition studies, architectural plans and engineering surveys etc. Metro Housing appoints a project manager to each

²⁸ The 2004 national elections saw the IFP lose the province to the ANC for the first time. The IFP won 36.82% of the votes, the ANC 46.98% (Piper, 2009:403). For the first time in KZN history the ANC dominated the national, provincial and local governments.

upgrade project, who is responsible for monitoring the quality of commissioned work during both the feasibility and implementation phases. Many aspects of the upgrade project are sub-contracted (including sometimes the position of project manager). Sub-contractors undergo a competitive tender process and their work is monitored by a municipal employee. However, in the context of upgrading existing settlements to improve living conditions, Taylor (1994:209) argues: “the presence of the community not only creates logistical and risk problems but places a sharp focus on the processes of development rather than the rapid achievement of product delivery... [But] Attaching development imperatives to the construction process slows production and imposes an additional burden on consultants”. It is unclear if this is taken into account when sub-contractors are awarded contracts or subsequently monitored.

The project manager is also responsible for appointing a community liaison officer, and together they liaise directly with the local councillor and settlement governance structure (e.g. a Ward Committee or a CDC). The councillor and settlement committee are responsible for ‘raising the voice’ of shack dwellers to ensure resident participation in the upgrade process. There are three major assumptions here: first, the CDCs, which are in principle elected, are founded and organised in accordance with just and democratic principles; second, that councillors act in favour of shack dwellers in their constituency, sometimes over the interests of their middle class formally housed voter base; and third, that informal settlements are communities with a communal identity that incentivises residents to behave cohesively for the greater good. The latter assumption is refuted by Taylor (1994:202-203), who argues that, where there is an immediate threat, ‘communities’ behave in ways that will secure their survival, but beyond this basic level of cooperation there is little to suggest that people who coexist behave cohesively.

Under initiatives for greater ‘community participation’, settlement-level actors are very involved in the process of upgrading. These actors, with the support of the municipal project manager, help set

the parameters of individual eligibility for upgrade (e.g. they draw up housing lists and set the cut off date that excludes recent settlers from the list). They also facilitate the entry and movement of actors, including builders, engineers and water and sanitation officials, in the settlement. The role of settlement level actors is vital to the success of an upgrade project. However, there appears to be very little official and mandatory monitoring of how these actors operate, suggesting an under-acknowledgement of their power and their influence over which individuals benefit from an upgrade and which do not.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has set out the strands of historic development that have led to the current process of *in situ* upgrade in Durban. The process has been born out of historic conceptualisations of land and the importance afforded to capitalist ideology, expressed through policies that favour the social inclusion of poor and marginalised Africans through the creation of assets (a house and title deed). The implementation of the process is closely tied to competition for power and authority over the allocation of resources at a grassroots level –competition that can involve party politics. Although the process of upgrade is implemented with a degree of uniformity, the history, politics and character of an informal settlement mould the implementation of the process and affect the outcomes. The following chapters describe in further detail the three study sites: Gum Tree Road (**chapter 5**), Cato Crest (**chapter 6**) and Zwelisha (**chapter 7**), and present an analysis of how the process of *in situ* upgrade affects the lives of the residents of these settlements.

An introduction to the analysis and presentation of findings

The sequence of these three analysis chapters is intended to allow the reader to 'follow' the process of upgrade and formalisation and to follow the arguments developed through the chapters on how and why the relationship between tenure and vulnerability evolves and changes throughout the upgrade and formalisation process. The sequencing also draws attention to significant variations at settlement level in both implementation and its effects.

The first chapter is concerned with Gum Tree Road (**chapter 5**), a settlement that at the time of study had recently completed the 'pre-feasibility stage' and was moving into the 'feasibility stage' of the process. Eight residents of Gum Tree Road offered insights into how and why the prospect of upgrade and formalisation has instigated political and social manoeuvring, through investments in particular allegiances, so that individuals believe that they are best positioned to receive an allocation of resources including a RDP house, title deed, and access to utilities and services. The second chapter (**chapter 6**) introduces eight residents of Cato Crest, a settlement at the 'implementation stage' of the process. The experiences of these residents illustrate how the process can be manipulated and co-opted by settlement-level party politics and the politics of patronage and nepotism. These politics place a high value on the social relations between individual residents and influential people and institutions. In the third chapter (**chapter 7**) eight residents of Zwelisha, a 'post-upgrade' settlement, reflect on their experience of the upgrade and formalisation process. The award of what amounts to permanent tenure (through formalisation and the allocation of an RDP house) changes to varying degrees the importance once attached to certain social relations, aspects of identity and the conditions that contribute to vulnerability. The experiences of Zwelisha's residents illustrate how and suggest reasons why.

All three chapters follow a similar structure, which places individual residents at the centre of the description and analysis. Their personal histories, accounts of daily life in low income settlements,

and images of the future offer a nuanced perspective of life for the urban poor in Durban, and specifically the values applied by various individuals to concepts such as tenure security and resilience. The analytic framework adopted for this study focuses on informants' critical interpretations of aspects of identity (e.g. citizenship and 'foreignness') and aspects of social relations (e.g. definitions of 'neighbour' and 'community'). The values given by individuals to all these concepts are important in discerning their strategies for securing tenure and achieving resilience; they also offer a different (and often sharply contrasting) perspective on commonplace terms used by implementers of upgrade programmes and policy makers. Each chapter is structured around responses to the research questions (**section 1.3**).

CHAPTER 5

GUM TREE ROAD

5.0 Introduction

Gum Tree Road informal settlement in Kenville and Sea Cow Lake, northern Durban, houses approximately 400 households. The eight participants in the study were identified according to the contribution of their characteristics to a mixed group. Thus, amongst the eight people were three men and five women; representatives of the under 30s, over 50s and in between; landlords, owner-occupiers and tenants; and amaZulu, amaXhosa and foreigners (see **TABLE 5.1** for a list of the individuals and their characteristics). Following a description of the life and living conditions of all eight (**section 5.1**), the chapter proceeds to an analysis of what, for these individuals, constitutes secure tenure (**section 5.2**). There follows a discussion and analysis of identity and social relations and the relationship between the two (**section 5.3**). The purpose of this section is to illustrate how and the extent to which the two are intertwined, which leads to their joint treatment in the analysis of how identity and social relations affect tenure (**section 5.4**); and how identity and social relations affect vulnerability and resilience (**section 5.5**). The final section explores the relationship between tenure and vulnerability/resilience in Gum Tree Road, which is at the pre-feasibility stage of the upgrade and formalisation process (**section 5.6**).

5.1 The men and women of Gum Tree Road

There is one main thoroughfare into the settlement called 'Gum Tree Road', a dirt road built slowly by residents over a number of years. One end of this dirt road connects to a tarred road - Gum Tree Road in Ward 34 in Kenville and Sea Cow Lake, after which the settlement is named. At the other end, the dirt road concludes after approximately 300m at a turning circle. Its main offshoot, a concrete footpath, travels further and deeper into the settlement until it too ends after about 100m

at a communal standpipe. Beyond this point is a maze of narrow dirt paths that weave through shacks, and up and down the steep terrain on which the settlement was founded. All but two interviewees live off (or very close to) the main thoroughfare. This thoroughfare plays an important role in Gum Tree Road because it is the only route through which the settlement can be accessed. This means that everyone who lives in Gum Tree Road must walk along this route to enter or exit the settlement, continually passing faces and shacks that become familiar. The road also has a communal use, as the turning circle is used for community and other meetings. The road is the only 'public' space in Gum Tree Road accessible to all residents.

Mandisa Hintsa lives off the main road in a two room shack. On entering the shack there is a small living room with a sofa, chair and coffee table taking up most of the space. The interior walls are covered with sheets of plastic packaging fashioned into wallpaper²⁹. The bedroom is divided from this room by a curtain. Mandisa owns a large freezer, but for lack of space the freezer is kept in the shack of her nearest neighbour; who in exchange gets to use it (once she has borrowed from Mandisa the only key that opens it). Their reciprocal relations ease daily life for the two households.

Mandisa lives alone and was seven months pregnant when we first met. This pregnancy produced her fourth child. All her children live in Eastern Cape with her brother. Mandisa was born and raised in the Eastern Cape in a village close to Mount Ayliff; she is amaXhosa. To her, as a mother, the wellbeing of her children is best secured through a rural upbringing away from the influences of the city, and away from the dangers of Gum Tree Road (as noted by Obbo, 1975, in Kampala, see **section 2.3.1**).

Mandisa was forced by her parents to leave the family home in 1990 when at 19 she fell pregnant. In 1994, she left the Eastern Cape altogether for Durban to look for work to support her child. By then,

²⁹ Plastic packaging/wallpaper is found in most residents' shacks to beautify the interior. It is available in rolls also used in factories to package soap powder, cartons of milk and packets of crisps etc.

she was reconciled with her family and was able to leave the child behind with them. She moved to KwaMashu (a historic African township) and lived with an older married sister for a short while until she found work and a place to live. She found informal work in Kenville selling snacks to factory workers³⁰. Eventually she rented a small room in a formal house for R250 a month and moved to Kenville. Mandisa learnt of the informal settlement at the top of Gum Tree Road from a customer at her stall who encouraged her to see paying rent as a waste of money. The customer was from the Eastern Cape; he and Mandisa would converse in isiXhosa:

He asked me, 'I was enjoying [paying] rent, when there is space there to take for free?' I said, 'Sure?!' Then I talked to him. He said I must come here and talk to the community. I talked to the community and I found space, then I built my shack. All because this man was from Eastern Cape.

(Hintsisa, 29/03/10)

Mandisa quit her stall after growing competition eroded her profits. She is currently a domestic worker and works for two days a week. She spends most of her time in Gum Tree Road, listening to the radio in her shack, or on warm days sitting outside talking to neighbours, occasionally calling out greetings of '*Sawubona*' and '*Unjan*'³¹ to known passersby. Although Mandisa would prefer more work to fill her days, she knows her situation is better than it would be back at 'home'. Mandisa's conception of 'home' is with her children in the village in which she grew up. She had hoped to return some day. However, since the prospect of upgrade and a house entered her thoughts, she toys with the idea of calling her children to come and live with her.

Thulani Mabena is a young Zulu man from Ulundi in northern KZN. He identifies himself as an economic migrant. He moved to Gum Tree Road in December 2005 to seek employment, ideally in one of the factories in Kenville. Durban is not his first experience of life in the city. Thulani spent many school holidays in Johannesburg visiting family members. After matriculating from high school

³⁰ There is a direct train route that links KwaMashu to Kenville (the line continues to Durban city centre).

³¹ isiZulu for 'hello' and 'how are you?', respectively.

he realised that he would have to leave for the city to find a well paid job. Time spent in Johannesburg taught him that good family connections were essential to living in a city. He recalls:

Durban [was] not as difficult, like Jo'burg ... [because] my [older] brother was living with the rate-payers in Kenville³², I came to stay with him in 2005... I see a difference when I'm in Jo'burg and when I'm in Durban. I see that I can live with my brother, and because of that it was easy to find somewhere to rent here [through my brother's connections]. I am able to pay my rent. In Jo'burg it would not be easy to run these things.

(Mabena, 06/04/10)

Staying with his brother in Durban meant Thulani was initially able to save money, and then exploit his brother's connections to find affordable rental accommodation in a shack in Gum Tree Road (a pattern that continued, with Thulani later helping two other brothers and a friend settle also). Thulani relates job and income security to his tenure choices. His rent must be low and tenure conditions flexible because his employment is inconsistent and he needs to be able to move to where work is available. His last job, obtained through an employment agency³³, was working in a factory in Kenville. Having failed to secure steady employment, Thulani turned to running a *shebeen* (or tavern) from his shack. Following his Christian principles he does himself not drink alcohol or smoke, "I only sell beer to make money", he says (Mabena, 06/03/10).

Thulani's shack is a complex maze of at least four rooms with open doorways linking various rooms and blocked doorways trying to separate public and private space. Thulani lives alone in one room at the back of the shack. There is another room in which another couple live. They were directed to the shack by the landlord and there is little interaction between Thulani and the couple. At the front of the shack in the largest room is a red pool table, and in the room next to it are beers, cigarettes and large speakers hooked up to a hi-fi. Outside the front of the shack, half on – half off the concrete footpath, is a sunken orange sofa with missing seats and frayed edges. Thulani's exclusively male

³² Someone who pays rates on their property to the municipality; a term in common use to refer to predominantly Indian formal dwellers in the area.

³³ Agency workers are on short-term contracts that are easy to terminate.

customers lean, sit and stand by the sofa throughout the day, and especially at night, sipping beer and talking. *Shebeens* are predominantly male spaces for socialisation in Gum Tree Road.

Zanele Mhlongo's shack is half way between Mandisa's and Thulani's. She does not live on or particularly close to the thoroughfare. Zanele is an early settler (it is her recollections that inform much of **section 4.2.1** and the contemporary history of Gum Tree Road), a position that brings her some respect and power. Her family shack was built before the road, when Gum Tree Road was still covered in thick bushes. Zanele (a Xhosa) and her husband, Mr. Mhlongo (a Zulu) used to rent a room from rate-payers in Kenville. Mr. Mhlongo worked in Springfield Park (a light industrial area in Kenville) at that time, and still does so. The rent consumed most of their income and pushed them to move to an informal settlement. Zanele explains:

Most people who came here had run away from their places because of the violence; other people they came to look for a job; for me, I came here because of high rent where we were living. ... If my husband loses his job then we have no money to pay rent. So [now] it doesn't matter [...] if he's not working we don't pay anything, no rent, only the water³⁴.

(Mhlongo, 06/04/10)

Zanele, like Thulani, relates job and income security to tenure security.

Her family shack has three rooms: the main room has a large bed, at the end of which is a gas cooker. A TV sits in the corner. This room serves as a kitchen and living room during the day and a bedroom at night. Two bedrooms lead off from either side of this room. Eight people (three generations) live in the shack – the Mhlongos, five of their children, and a baby granddaughter. Their sixth child is 24 years old and lives in his own shack next to the family one. Zanele's shack is modest; other than the addition of a one-room shack for her son, there have been no extensions. This is because after 1994 many people moved to Gum Tree Road looking for space to build their own shacks. Zanele lives in a

³⁴ Before communal standpipes were installed by the municipality residents purchased water from the houses of formal dwellers. 50¢ used to buy three litres of water.

densely populated part of the settlement. She and her husband recognised the premium on space early on and set about exploiting it. They turned into property developers and landlords. They started to build shacks on vacant plots of land, helping to push the settlement deeper downhill and extend its boundaries. In the mid-1990s they built five shacks; three were sold to newcomers, and two are still rented out to tenants.

Lindiwe Shange inherited her shack in Gum Tree Road in 2000 when her mother passed away. Lindiwe had only been living in Gum Tree Road for two years prior to her mother's death. From 1987 to 1998 Lindiwe and her two younger sisters lived in a number of children's homes around central KZN. Born in a township in Inanda in 1979, Lindiwe is an urbanite. Throughout the 1980s, she and her sisters witnessed intense and brutal violence outside their front door, including acts such as necklacing³⁵. Lindiwe recalls her mother's efforts to save them:

My mum tried to care of us because we don't have a father. She always used her time to look for jobs to take care of us, but most of the time she was not living with us. She was a domestic worker; she had to stay in people's houses. We didn't have any aunts, uncles, neighbours or any family with us in the township ... The social workers came to discuss this issue with my mother. They said they [could] just take us because we were all young ... my mother agreed.

(Shange, 06/04/10)

Lindiwe's mother lived in Gum Tree Road because she worked in a factory nearby. Once she was able to provide shelter and a (relatively) safe environment, she called her daughters to come and live with her in a small one room shack; the same shack in which Lindiwe now lives. After her mother's death, Lindiwe's claims to ownership and validation of her tenure status rested with her mother's neighbours and friends accepting her inheritance claim.

Lindiwe's sisters no longer live with her, but they both live in Gum Tree Road. Lindiwe lives in one room with her three children (all under five years old) and her boyfriend (she has two older children

³⁵ Where a rubber tyre is placed around the victim's neck, doused in petrol and set alight.

who live with their father's family in Inanda). There is a large bed in the corner, a frayed sofa set, a make-shift table of beer crates, and dominating the room a fridge-freezer filled with beer. She has no inclination to return to Inanda, although she still has her old childhood house there. Lindiwe reasons that in Gum Tree Road "the schools are nearer [and the health] clinic is nearer. Things like crime and violence are much worse in Inanda. It is much better here" (Shange, 06/04/10).

Lindiwe started running a *shebeen* from her shack last year. Her shack-*shebeen* is on the opposite side of the concrete path to Thulani's shack-*shebeen*. Unable to find a secure job in the factories in Kenville, she "decided to make some money here from my room, and the community here supported me" (Shange, 06/04/10). Her 'community' are her mother's friends, her friends in the settlement and her immediate neighbours. Lindiwe's customers frequently spill out of her shack and move freely between her *shebeen* and Thulani's; almost all her customers are men.

One such customer is Siphiwe Msomi, who lives directly opposite Lindiwe and frequently crosses the concrete path to buy cigarettes from her. His part-time job in a factory in Kenville means that when he is not working he spends much of his time in Gum Tree Road chatting to friends. Siphiwe's small one room shack that he rents for himself, his girlfriend and their newborn son, is next to Thulani's. Siphiwe and Thulani are best friends from Ulundi; both realised that to find employment they needed to leave Ulundi for Durban. Siphiwe first heard of Gum Tree Road from his friend, who helped him to find a place to rent when he first arrived; they both had the same landlord.

Siphiwe's current shack is the second shack he has rented in the settlement. He claims the first shack he rented, which is a little further uphill, he now owns. During a municipal exercise to register shacks in 2008, Siphiwe claims that his former landlord (Thulani's current landlord) tried to register her friend as the owner of the shack, thereby placing her on the Gum Tree Road RDP housing list at his expense. Siphiwe first complained to the landlord and after failing to convince her that he should be the one to register as the owner of the shack, he involved the settlement leadership. The leadership

agreed with Siphwe and convinced her that Siphwe had been "...paying rent such a long time I should have a [shack] number... The landlord was not happy I went to the leadership, but she hasn't made life harder [since then]." (Msomi, 15/03/10). Since the registration, Siphwe does not acknowledge any relationship with the landlord and does not pay her rent. The authority of the settlement leadership, in this case, counteracted the absolute power landlords tend to have in their dealings with tenants.

Currently, Siphwe's younger brother lives in this shack. His brother arrived from Ulundi and failed to secure a job. As Siphwe was working and able to afford rent he moved into his current shack, leaving his brother to stay rent-free in the old one. Inside Siphwe's current shack are a number of electrical goods – a hi-fi, fridge, TV and radio. Illegal electricity connections are commonplace in Gum Tree Road. During the day the front door is kept wide open to allow fresh air to circulate in the otherwise hot and stuffy shack. From inside his shack, Siphwe sees most of Gum Tree Road's residents walk up and down the concrete path; he greets the ones who have become familiar to him, who since the registration dispute have included members of the settlement leadership.

The Chairman of the settlement leadership (which residents refer to as the Community Committee) is charismatic, engaging and appears tolerant of political, religious and ethnic differences; these traits are also apparent in his mother - 58 year old Katlego Moloji. Katlego is originally from the Eastern Cape. She grew up on a farm with five sisters and two brothers. They were effectively raised by her mother alone; their father (as was common practice at the time) worked in Durban away from the family and saw them infrequently. From a young age Katlego learnt to associate life in the city with employment and job prospects.

Katlego is amaSotho and lived in an area where amaSotho and amaXhosa freely associated without tension. Many marriages occurred between the groups. In this environment, Katlego learnt not to pay too much attention to tribal politics and ethnic distinctions between people. The lesson was

encouraged by her Dutch Reformist parents, who favoured religious devotion over and above tribal or ethnic cultural practices. In 1970, at the time of her marriage, she converted to the religion of her husband, and joined the Jehovah's Witnesses. From 1970 to 1996, when she and her family moved to Gum Tree Road, Katlego and her husband moved around eastern South Africa to wherever her husband managed to secure a job. Throughout these years of financial uncertainty, insecure tenure and a growing family, Katlego became more and more involved in the work of the Jehovah's Witnesses, finding comfort in her faith and enjoyment in socialising with likeminded people. Now, Katlego (who does not work due to poor health) attends Witness meetings twice a week in KwaMashu (her old church before moving to Gum Tree Road). These meetings provide an opportunity to leave Gum Tree Road, and for a few hours her large family. They also enable her to continue friendships in KwaMashu, despite moving away.

Katlego's eldest son (the Chairman of the Community Committee) lives with his wife and their two children in his own shack about 100m away from hers. Katlego and her husband live in a large five room shack with 15 other members of their family – all children or grandchildren. Katlego had five children; three daughters and two sons. All three of her adult daughters died recently, "of natural disease"³⁶ (Moloi, 12 April 2010). Their children range from 22 years to seven years old. All are being raised by Katlego and her husband, who are committed to sending those of school age to school³⁷ and encouraging those who have finished school to find employment in Durban.

Katelego was able to secure enough land to build a large five room shack because she arrived in the settlement fairly late, in 1996. At this time, much of Gum Tree Road was already densely populated. Katlego and her husband negotiated with the settlement leaders at that time and purchased

³⁶ Her use of 'natural disease' could be a euphemism for HIV/AIDS; she uses the expression to distinguish their deaths from cases of murder or road accidents.

³⁷ All schools in South Africa require the payment of tuition fees. The fee itself varies from school to school, depending on its population of historically disadvantaged children. The grandchildren's school fees are paid by their grandparents.

permission to claim a plot of land, an unusual practice. The leaders pointed downhill, beyond the periphery of the settlement; here, on uneven and steep land, Katlego cleared a large swathe of land and started to build her shack. The first room was built quickly to mark her ownership. Gradually, as materials became available, she extended both her dwelling and the size of the plot to which she lays claim.

At the opposite end of the settlement and close to the tarred Gum Tree Road lives Kafele Abdullah, a Zambian born Malawian who has lived in South Africa since 1987. He currently lives in a one room shack with his girlfriend and her teenage daughter. Kafele followed his older brother to South Africa. His brother trained as an Imam in Malawi and eventually gained a position at a madrassa³⁸ in Mayville, 2km from Durban city centre. Once established in Mayville, his brother called him to come to South Africa and said that he would help him to find a job (Kafele is a certified welder). So, Kafele arrived in 1987 and went to live in the Mayville mosque with his brother. The lifestyle and continual pressure to live piously eventually drove Kafele (who by this time had a South African girlfriend) from Mayville to Kenville, where he rented a room in a formal house with his girlfriend.

It was his girlfriend who first heard about Gum Tree Road from her work colleagues. She heard that there were a few people who had built shacks there (with the implication that the shacks were not being pulled down by the authorities). Kafele used to pay R300 a month for his room, and his landlord was about to raise the rent to R350; he reasoned that the rent was always going to rise. So, as a money saving measure, he and his girlfriend went to Gum Tree Road and received permission from early settlers to build a shack and live amongst them. They set about clearing 'the bush' and built their first shack in 1991. Later they built a second adjacent shack to rent to tenants.

Their life in Gum Tree Road was comfortable. Kafele found employment as a welder, and they had a child together; but in 2004 his girlfriend fell ill and died. To Kafele the loss was acute.

³⁸ An Islamic school

My girlfriend and child helped me to feel safe in this place – she was South African, that’s why I felt ok here. She brought me here. She knew the area and the people. It was easier for me to talk to the other people living here because of her.

(Abdullah, 27/03/10)

Kafele and his girlfriend were widely acknowledged by other residents as the owners of their shack.

In 2008, at the same time as the registration process,

...there was another problem [...], a war. The [South] Africans were fighting us [foreigners] and I ran away because I was scared, to Myran Hill. When I was away, someone else registered in my shack – this one and another one room shack I own. When I went to Myran Hill I asked the community leadership [in Gum Tree Road] to look after my house while I was away. But the lady I asked, she registered her daughter-in-law in my shack and she put someone else in my other shack. The lady who registered in this one has agreed to come with me to change the ID number back over. We must go to the municipality and register again. In the other house there is a young man and he refuses to change the number. He said ‘I am a South African. I need an RDP house. I am a citizen, not you’. I didn’t give him permission to come into the house. The community leader put him there. He is paying rent to the leader. The tenant said ‘this isn’t your house, it is hers!’ [...] I think it is because I’m not South African. But they cannot chase me away because I’ve been here so long.

(Abdullah, 20/03/10)

Kafele plans to go with his new girlfriend (also a South African) to the municipality and change the ownership details of the shack in which he currently lives from the settlement leader’s daughter-in-law. Following his recent experience with the settlement leadership, he feels confused about what he can expect in terms of a house from the municipality and the right to stay in Gum Tree Road. He says, “I think I deserve an RDP house – although I’m a foreigner I deserve to get something here. I’ve been living in Gum Tree Road and even Durban a long time; I’m like a South African. I even have children here” (Abdullah, 17/04/10). Since 2008, Kafele has kept a low profile in the area. His shack is close to the entrance to the settlement and he does not venture any further into the settlement or stray from the footpath between the main road and his shack.

Mona Ntuli was the last interviewee in Gum Tree Road. Mona is an amaZulu and a Christian from Mtubatuba (a township in northern KZN). She first moved to Durban in 1995 after matriculating from high school to study computing at a college in the city. After she completed her course and returned to Mtubatuba, she met her husband. In 1997, they moved to Gum Tree Road from an informal settlement in Effingham Heights (also in Ward 34). Her husband was determined to set up his own business, a *spaza* shop. However, their shop in Effingham failed to successfully compete with the other *spazas* in the area. They decided to relocate and try their luck in a new settlement and decided for business reasons on Gum Tree Road. They did not know anyone living in the settlement who could facilitate their entry, so they:

...asked [around] for the community leader. We found him, then we asked him for a place we can buy, not rent. Then he showed us a place – this house here – then we bought it. We sold the old shack in Effingham. It was not difficult to sell, there [are] lots of people looking for places to stay.

(Ntuli, 19/04/10)

In turn, Mona facilitated access to Gum Tree Road for three of her brothers, who now live nearby.

Mona's shack is directly off the concrete path, very close to the dirt road turning circle. It is a one room shack, in which she lives with her four daughters and a young boy from her husband's previous relationship. The shack is small. It is entered via three steep descending steps. Inside is a large bed, a TV and a small kerosene stove for cooking. An overhead ceiling fan means that the door to the shack (unlike other residences nearby) is usually closed, as the family can afford not to trade privacy for cool air. The shack is surrounded by other shacks; there is no room to extend the dwelling. The value of the shack is its location next to the family *spaza*, which is ideally located by the main settlement thoroughfare.

The speed and ease with which Mona and her husband purchased their shack inspired them. Once they had saved enough money from their *spaza*, they started to buy other shacks in Gum Tree Road,

at an average price of R2000-3000. They rented these shacks to the stream of newcomers arriving in the settlement in search of work in the factories of Kenville. Word of their business spread and soon they no longer had to search for tenants or shacks to buy; any newcomers were directed to them and residents looking to sell quickly would approach them first. Mona's husband was chiefly responsible for their property portfolio of (currently) two shacks, subdivided to accommodate five families. Mona's husband died in a car accident in August 2009. Since then, she has taken over as sole landlord and owner of the *spaza* (she employs a young man to manage the shop for her). These responsibilities and sources of income are in addition to her full time job as a clerk in a nearby police station. Mona's situation suggests class diversity amongst the residents of Gum Tree Road.

The following table is a summary of the residents who took part in the study.

TABLE 5.1 Gum Tree Road: overview of interviewee characteristics*

Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity/ Nationality	Resident since	Tenure status	Other characteristics
Mandisa Hintsá	Female	39	amaXhosa	1995	Shack owner-occupier	Lives alone; mother to three children who live in Eastern Cape; seven months pregnant
Thulani Mabena	Male	29	amaZulu	2005	Shack tenant	Lives alone; runs a <i>shebeen</i> from his shack
Zanele Mhlongo	Female	42	amaXhosa, married into Zulu family	1990	Joint shack owner-occupier; landlord	Lives with husband and five children (19 yrs – 9 mth); early settler; landlord of two shacks
Lindiwe Shange	Female	31	amaZulu	1998	Shack owner-occupier	Lives with three young children and her boyfriend; runs a <i>shebeen</i> from her shack
Siphiwe Msomi	Male	27	amaZulu	2005	Shack tenant	Lives with girlfriend and their newborn
Katlego Moloi	Female	58	seSotho	1996	Shack owner-occupier	Lives in five-room shack with 15 family members
Kafele Abdullah	Male	42	Malawian; waYao	1991	Owner-occupier; landlord	Lives with South African girlfriend, has two South African sons; landlord of one shack
Mona Ntuli	Female	32	amaZulu	1997	Owner-occupier; landlord	Widow, lives with 3 children; owns adjacent <i>spaza</i> shop; landlord of two large shacks

*Data correct at the time of the interviews. All interviews were conducted 10 March 2010 – 19 April 2010

5.2 States of tenure security and insecurity

The narratives of these eight residents reveal diversity in why people come to live in an informal settlement – some move to save money otherwise spent on rent, some to find affordable accommodation while they look for work, some to pursue business interests in the settlement. The narratives also reveal why they continue to stay in an informal settlement. Reasons include commitment to children’s schooling, because they have jobs nearby to which they can walk (saving on taxi fares), a steady flow of customers (as tenants and drinkers in *shebeens*), and because there is the prospect of securing an RDP house. Amid this diversity, two commonalities stand out: first, all the residents interviewed have lived in their shacks for at least five years; and second, they plan to continue living in Gum Tree Road. This means that all eight residents are tenure secure, albeit to varying degrees.

The theories behind what constitutes tenure security were discussed in **section 2.2**. The discussion explored neo-liberal and neo-customary approaches to securing tenure. The policy of upgrade and formalisation implemented in Gum Tree Road is strongly influenced by a neo-liberal argument that formalisation through issue of a title deed provides legal protection from the threat of eviction by the state and exploitation by others; it is thought to release people from the social obligations that had previously set the framework for tenure security (CLEP, 2007). The following sections explore the relevance of this argument to the residents of Gum Tree Road.

5.2.1 The constituents of tenure security

Over the course of four interviews, the eight interviewees were asked a number of different questions on tenure status, including what and who makes them feel secure or insecure where they live, and what difference they imagine formalisation and upgrade will make to their lives and the settlement as a whole. Their response to these questions builds a picture of what tenure security means in practice and as an ideal.

Zanele Mhlongo gives a longitudinal picture of changing appreciations of tenure security which relate to the nature of the threat to tenure. Initially, Zanele and her husband cleared the land and built a shelter. This experience translated into a strong sense of ownership and was tied to her claim of tenure security. She recalls, "I am the owner of the shack, with my husband. Me and my husband cleared the site ourselves of bushes and trees" (Mhlongo, 15/03/10). However, it had soon become apparent to them that their claim to own their dwelling and the land on which it is built was insufficient protection against the threat of state-led eviction. In the early 1990s, she remembered, the police regularly demolished any shacks they found in Gum Tree Road. Zanele and her husband decided to visit the landowner - an Indian man who lived nearby - and request his permission to stay. The landlord furnished a letter to this effect. This letter became the mark of group tenure security; Zanele believes all shack dwellers in Gum Tree Road were free from the threat of state-led eviction because of it. This widely held belief changed the way residents lived - shacks were no longer hidden deep under forest cover and families lived in them openly.

As the post-apartheid municipality started to acknowledge informal settlements through acts that included numbering shacks and installing municipal standpipes, the need for group tenure security diminished. Increasingly threats to tenure security for residents of Gum Tree Road became more specific and 'internal'. For example, Kafele Abdullah's tenure security was undermined by a member of the settlement leadership; and tenants fear landlords' power to evict or to raise the rent.

With the exception of tenants Thulani and Sipiwe, the interviewees who are owner-occupiers broadly regard tenure security as the extent to which ownership claims can be made and are acknowledged by one's peers in the settlement. The absence of disputes over one's land and shack ownership becomes the principal mark of tenure security. Mandisa says, "I don't have any papers. I [...] have nothing to show, but the shack is mine... I feel safe about my house - no one can take the house away" (Hints, 10/03/10). Katlego Moloi says, "There is no one who can come and chase me

from my shack. I don't owe anyone. Unless the municipality and leaders say there is an RDP house for you to move into" (Moloi, 15/03/10). Katlego's remark illustrates the changing value of claims to ownership. Initially her claim to ownership served to counter the fear of eviction; but since the prospect of upgrade, her claims to ownership are worth more - ownership of one's shack means eligibility for the upgrade process and an RDP house.

The upgrade process also impacts on tenure security directly. During the 2008 shack registration process, all the shacks in Gum Tree Road were (re)numbered. Shacks with a number are acknowledged by the municipality, their occupants are (usually) registered to receive an RDP house when the planned upgrade is implemented, and they therefore carry greater *de facto* tenure security than shacks without numbers. The residents of numberless shacks are at risk of losing their dwelling without any compensation when the upgrade is implemented. To Mona Ntuli, a shack number is the most important consideration when purchasing a new dwelling for rent or when helping family members to settle in the area; it is more important than location. She says, "A shack at the top of the hill is not better than one at the bottom, you look for a shack number, then the size" (Ntuli, 19/04/10). A shack is an investment like any other dwelling, and tenure security for the shack is important to making the investment worthwhile. A shack number, and the tenure security it confers, is a marketable commodity.

Tenants have the weakest claims to tenure security. Thulani and Sipiwe's tenure security is tied to their relationships with their landlords. Sipiwe says, "My current rental contract is only by talking. I'm not safe. But if the landlord tries to cheat me and change our agreement, I will go to the committee. I trust the committee leaders will resolve my problems" (Msomi, 15/03/10). Sipiwe defines tenure security in terms of his ability to withstand 'unfair' eviction. To him, unfair means anything that violates the terms of his verbal agreement with the landlord, which he believes extends no further than paying a fixed rent on time. He is aware that a verbal agreement is difficult to prove

and that leaves him in an insecure position. However, he is confident in the power and authority of the settlement leaders to resolve unfair tenant evictions. The leadership's ability to enforce rules of fairness in tenant-landlord relations is important in creating tenure security for those with weak or non-existent claims to ownership. This suggests that, in reality, intra-settlement power relations bear strongly on the extent of an individual's tenure security.

5.2.2 Sources of tenure insecurity

Strong claims to ownership, a shack number, and a fair authority that acts impartially in the application of social rules in the settlement aid feeling safe and free from the fear of eviction and exploitation. However, they do not mitigate against the fear and risk of shack fire, theft and communal violence, which all contribute to a risky climate in which there is the ever present possibility of total loss.

Earlier, it was noted that Mandisa claimed that she felt certain no one could take her house away; but she also claims, "I'm not secure staying here. Anyone can come and break my house. Especially during the day, because people are at work during the day [...] so no one is around to watch the shack" (Hintsisa, 10/03/10). Mandisa's shack and its contents are at risk from theft. The weekend prior to our first interview, early on a Saturday morning, she heard someone moving around outside her shack. Their footsteps, a short distance from where she was sleeping behind a thin wall of tree bark and cardboard, woke her. Immediately she sent an SMS to her aunt, who lives close by, so her aunt (a settlement leader) might send her son or another male relative to investigate and hopefully scare off the intruder. The tactic worked. Mandisa is a single woman who lives alone, which makes her particularly concerned about the safety and integrity of the dwelling both during the day and at night. Mandisa illustrates the heightened security risk for women living alone. This reflects a gendered dimension to exposure to insecurity and the approaches taken to manage it (this theme is picked up and further discussed in **section 5.4.2**).

Mandisa's shack is typical of most others in Gum Tree Road. They are built out of materials that are cheap and available, but structurally weak. This makes most shacks susceptible to destruction and damage caused by strong winds, heavy rain or fire. Mandisa says, "Sometimes if I'm staying in the shack and a big rain or storm is coming, that makes me scared. It can blow out my house, then where can I stay?" (Hints, 29/03/10). Lindiwe Shange, a mother of three children under five, shares her concern, "I'm not feeling safe because the shack can be burnt at any time. [...] Most of the time if this shack gets burnt, they all burn. [...] And if it is heavy rains, the roof can fall down" (Shange, 15/03/10). There are no strategies that Lindiwe feels she can employ to manage the risk of shack fires (specifically those that start in someone else's shack) or heavy rain. However, she is better able to cope than some with the consequences of such events because she has sisters living in Gum Tree Road, who could if necessary provide emergency shelter and some aid.

As discussed earlier in the cases of Zanele and Thulani, job and income security is related to tenure security. The lack of a secure job and steady income means many people are pushed to living in an informal settlement with its poor safety conditions, because that is all they can afford.

Kafele, unlike the other seven residents, faces additional insecurities because he is a foreigner. He risks the effects of resurgence in anti-foreigner sentiment. It is a continual hazard that predates the widely known 2008 xenophobic attacks that occurred throughout the country. He reflects, "by the time Mandela came out of jail [in 1990] there were other Malawians living here [in Gum Tree Road]. The people tricked them. They said, 'by the time Mandela comes out of jail we will kill you'. So the other Malawians ran away" (Abdullah, 17/04/10).

5.2.3 Strategies to secure tenure in Gum Tree Road

Insecurity, which affects the extent to which an individual can claim to be safe and secure in a specific space, has many manifestations. Legal or informal *de facto* tenure rights are insufficient to

mitigate the array of risks residents of Gum Tree Road face. Residents' strategies to secure tenure vary according to specific threats they face; not all residents face the same insecurities equally. Their chosen strategies appear to reflect a calculation of threats (prioritised by risk and its consequences) and the means available to enact mitigation measures.

All owner-occupiers emphasized ownership of the shack as the principal basis for any claim to tenure security. Those with the greatest need to obtain widespread recognition amongst peers of their claim to ownership are those residents who did not build their shack themselves. For these residents, there is a possibility of dispute over any ownership claim, as written records are not routinely kept of transactions. The provenance of a shack is captured through oral records. Neighbours play a crucial role as contributors to and sources of validation of oral records. For example, Lindiwe Shange inherited her mother's shack. The claims of a young, vulnerable woman who had just lost her mother and had two young sisters to raise single-handedly rested on the validation of her claim by neighbours – the people who had known her mother. The nature and strength of her mother's relationships with her neighbours assumed a high level of importance in determining Lindiwe's tenure security. Lindiwe's strategy for continued tenure security (and it is unclear if this is a strategy consciously pursued) is to maintain these relations. To Lindiwe, "a neighbour is someone close to me I can share a problem with" (Shange, 29/03/10); she clearly holds her neighbours in very high regard:

She speaks of her neighbours as family. Her neighbours provided her with information on jobs in the area using their connections (many work in factories in Springfield Park). Her neighbours would take her job hunting with them and they would visit the factories together. They also helped her get an electricity connection to the shack.

The only friends she records in Gum Tree Road are all her neighbours.

(Shange, notes from social relations map, 23/03/10)

For Mona Ntuli, who purchased her shack, the purchase was negotiated through the settlement leader (Chairperson) at the time. The strategy exploited the authority and power of the leader over other residents; he effectively sanctioned her purchase. The strength of her claim to ownership and tenure security was tied to the leader and his support of her claim. By the time the leader left office, a number of years had passed and her years of occupancy translated into a greater claim to ownership.

The authority of the leadership in securing tenure is a recurring theme for tenants. Tenants in Gum Tree Road have weak guarantees that so long as they pay their rent on time they can be assured reasonable tenure security (Smit, 2008, shows similar findings). However, the relationship between tenant and landlord in this informal settlement is about more than a simple financial relationship, it can also be about power. The prospect of an upgrade affects the power dynamic, as tenants are emboldened and in a position to use their status as occupants of a shack to claim an RDP house, at the expense of the landlord, who may prefer to exploit the process by registering a friend or relative instead (as happened to Siphiwe Msomi). For some landlords, the upgrade may not inherently upset the balance of power between them and their tenants. Zanele, a landlord of two shacks, expects the financial obligation of her tenants to be replaced by a social one. She says, "I have no problem with them getting a house, but I will lose money. [But I also] know when they get a house it is because of me. They are here because of me, and I have some power over them" (Mhlongo, 23/03/10).

Often mediating the relations between landlords and tenants is the settlement leadership. Establishing a basic relationship with the leaders by, for example, greeting them on sight is a useful strategy for tenants (who are usually temporary residents in Gum Tree Road) to employ, as it makes it easier for them to approach the leadership with problems they experience with landlords who are often well established. From their shacks along the concrete path, Thulani and Siphiwe see settlement leaders almost daily and make an effort to greet them. The unclear rules on the position

of landlords and tenants in the upgrade and formalisation process strengthen the potential roles leaders play in arbitrating on entitlement and eligibility for the upgrade.

In the face of a settlement-wide threat from physical insecurity, such as the possibility of burglary, mugging and violence, Gum Tree Road residents created a Community Forum. The Forum of ten young men patrols Gum Tree Road (Thulani Mabena is a member) and are on 'standby' to respond to calls for help from any resident; the members are nominated by other residents in a community meeting. The Forum is mostly reactive. Its greatest value is the confidence it inspires in people; its very presence helps people to feel safe. The composition of the Forum reflects distinct gender roles in Gum Tree Road: the public protection of others is an exclusively male business.

To the eight residents of Gum Tree Road studied, 'tenure security' as an ideal is rarely conceived with respect to legal rights. The threat of eviction and fear of exploitation are not exclusively legal issues of land tenure, but continual hazards that have to be negotiated daily, primarily through one's social relations. Security and insecurity can better be conceived of as a spectrum, on which an individual's position can shift or be shifted at any time. With this in mind, the strategies residents adopt to ensure that they have sufficient tenure security are broad and often overlap with their strategies for increasing resilience.

5.3 Identity and social relations

In this section 'identity' and 'social relations', as they relate to the eight residents of Gum Tree Road, are treated in a way that shows that they are distinct yet interrelated concepts.

5.3.1 Identity

Public and private displays of ethnic, political and religious (or spiritual) identity shape the social environment of Gum Tree Road and help determine rules of behaviour. For newcomers especially,

adherence to these rules usually means changing their expressions of identity in order to 'fit in'. This can contribute to the suppression of minority or marginalised identities.

Gum Tree Road is a majority Zulu settlement, in a majority Zulu municipality, in a majority Zulu province. Yet, it seems that when young Zulu men migrate there, they change their expressions of ethnic (or tribal) identity, as do non-Zulu migrants. Sipiwe Msomi is a young Zulu man who migrated to urban Gum Tree Road from his rural *emaki*³⁹ in Ulundi, northern KZN. Sipiwe says, "My culture is Zulu. When I was younger, I celebrated cultural things – I used to do the tribal dance and sing the Zulu songs. I still do that now, but only when I'm at home, I don't do it here because here I don't see anyone else do that" (06/04/10). This is evidence of what Bucholtz and Hall (2004) would call "denaturalisation", a conscious shift away from practices that would otherwise identify him as either Zulu (presumably not a problematic identity in Gum Tree Road) or pastoral/rural. Sipiwe, along with most other interviewees, relates expressions of ethnic identity as predominantly rural expressions. For young migrant men, the desire to 'fit in' and avoid the embarrassment of being regarded as rural (and possibly as unsophisticated) seems to prompt changes to public and private displays of ethnic identity in the settlement.

Minority ethnic identities in Gum Tree Road are equally wary of cultural displays that identify them as different to the majority. Mandisa is amaXhosa, from the Eastern Cape. She places great importance on knowing her ethnic background; it is the source of her connection to land in Eastern Cape, and the basis of her affiliation with other Xhosas. She reports, "on 26th October [Transkei Independence Day] we celebrate [...] when we celebrate we all, all Xhosa, meet in a certain place and celebrate" (Hintsisa, 29/03/10, author's emphasis). On moving to Gum Tree Road, all outward expressions of her identity diminish: "we can't do our own culture here" (Hintsisa, 29/03/10). The

³⁹ Roughly translated to 'farm'; but a closer definition would be ancestral or family home.

social rules of the area demand that there are no public displays of ethnicity, especially non-Zulu displays.

In terms of political identity, Gum Tree Road is an ANC stronghold, and the widely respected leadership are all ANC party members (**section 4.2** discussed the gradual political homogenisation of the seven informal settlements in the area). Any intra-party political contestation does not appear to affect the eight residents studied. Their political identity, where it is discussed and expressed, refers to state programmes that improve daily life, such as the award of an RDP house and access to state welfare. Six of the interviewees are ANC members, two claim to be apolitical. Lindiwe, an ANC member, says,

I see the ANC is doing a good job. There is progress in other places – I can see RDP [houses], water, electricity. Old ladies get pensions, children who are orphans get a grant, even I get R200 child support grant – so I think it [the ANC] is a good thing.

(Shange, 06/04/10)

Lindiwe regards state programmes (including the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements) as ANC programmes. She does not believe that ANC membership yields her particular advantage; but her perspective breeds strong and often uncritical party loyalty.

Christianity and institutions such as churches are a powerful force for women in Gum Tree Road. Christian beliefs and attendance at a church provide moral guidance, counsel from others and space for socialisation. The faith of Mandisa, Zanele and Katlego predated their move to Gum Tree Road and was largely unaffected by it. It is a constant feature in their lives. They are not (yet) concerned by the effect the upgrade might have on their religious practices, although it is likely that the upgrade will involve the destruction of the church Mandisa and Zanele attend just outside the settlement, and that relocation to a transit camp will disrupt their religious practices. These events may well affect where and how these women socialise and express their religious identities.

5.3.2 Social relations

Broadly, the social relations of residents that are crafted (i.e. those not determined by birth, like family) can be categorised by two types of connection: visual and non-visual. This description captures how social relations are built, maintained and can break down in Gum Tree Road; they also allude to why.

The most obvious visual or space-based relation is with neighbours. Relations with neighbours varied from cordial lukewarm relations, to neighbours, friends and 'community' amalgamating into one. To Kafele Abdullah, only those visible from his shack door are identified as neighbours (Abdullah, notes from community map, 10/04/10). Some of these neighbours he also considers friends. The basis of their friendship is living close to one another, seeing each other daily and cooperating for security e.g. when one is away during the day, the other keeps an eye on his shack. Through continuous visual contact, eventually trust has been built between Kafele and his neighbours. Lindiwe, as discussed earlier, has very strong relations with her immediate neighbours, with whom there is daily visual contact, which aids her tenure security. Mona Ntuli meanwhile is keen to stress the distinction between a neighbour and a friend: "a neighbour is someone close to the shack, but you do not talk about everything with them. Whereas a friend is someone you can talk to about anything" (Ntuli, 14/04/10). Mona, landlord and *spaza* owner, has no friends in Gum Tree Road; in fact, she says, "I think people are jealous of me, some people" (Ntuli, 19/04/10). The friendships she chooses to maintain are not based on seeing the people concerned in the course of everyday life; they are with people with whom she shares common interests but sees infrequently because they live in different settlements. While Mona does not look upon her neighbours as friends, they do help each other out. If she is away at work during a settlement meeting, her neighbours will tell her what happened, for example (Ntuli, notes on community map, 14/04/10).

In the absence of continual visual connection, and where there is no strong shared common interest, relationships tend to break down. All the interviewees reported that, over time, they had lost contact with friends from their childhood home, people with whom they once worked, or neighbours from previous settlements. Unless such relationships are replaced, the effect can be a narrowing of a person's social world.

The relationships interviewees have with their neighbours affect their spatial conception of 'community'. Although the parameters and value of a 'community' vary across individuals, there are similar patterns. A 'community' is largely crafted to include people and spaces that matter to the individual. For example, the 'community map' drawn by Thulani (29/03/10) includes his neighbours (those with shacks closest to him along either side of the concrete path), and the boundary of his community is marked by the ends of the concrete path (the turning circle at one end and the standpipe at the other). Thulani says that he does not go further into the settlement than the standpipe. The boundary of his 'community' is also the boundary of his knowledge of Gum Tree Road. Similarly Kafele, who lives closest to the entrance to the settlement, does not go further into the settlement than the turning circle (which is where settlement meetings are held). He says, "I have no reason to go any further and so I don't" (Abdullah, 10/04/10). To Kafele, his 'community' in Gum Tree Road is made up of the neighbours whose shacks he sees as he walks in/out of the settlement; non-neighbours are excluded from this 'community'.

Spatial conceptions of 'community' affect movement within the settlement. Residents do not venture further than the boundary of their 'community', because there is no reason to do so. So, although Gum Tree Road is a relatively small settlement of 400 households, it is broken down further by residents into smaller functional units that include people who know each other and are prepared to help each other out. There is very little knowledge of people or places in the settlement outside of one's own 'community'. This finding challenges the use, understanding and possibly value of the

term 'community', which in the current upgrade and formalisation policy discourse is often assumed to be coterminous with an entire informal settlement.

5.3.3 Identity and social relations

Identity and social relations are interrelated. Certain identities facilitate access to social groups. These groups can offer emotional and financial support, companionship, and access to power and influence, which in turn affect one's vulnerability and resilience.

Kafele Abdullah is a member of a minority in Gum Tree Road - he is Malawian and a Muslim. Both these identities dictate his membership of and position in certain social groups. When newcomers from Malawi arrive in Kenville/Sea Cow Lake, they are often directed by others to Kafele. The newcomers typically speak little isiZulu and come to depend on Kafele's language skills and knowledge of people and services in the area to get settled. Kafele helps them to find landlords who have no problem renting to foreigners. Rarely does his assistance develop into a stronger relationship with the newcomer. However, to newcomers from Malawi, he is an influential figure in the area, who helped them negotiate access to the settlement.

Kafele is one of few shack dwellers in the area who is Muslim. Every Friday he attends *Jumah* (Friday) prayers at one of the mosques in Kenville, originally built to serve Muslim formal residents in historic Indian Kenville and Sea Cow Lake. *Jumah* prayers provide Kafele with an opportunity to cultivate longstanding relationships with rate-payers. He says:

Being a Muslim makes me closer to the Muslim rate-payers, like NJ [who owns the local supermarket]. I am very connected to the people at NJ. When I'm fasting they know that I'm fasting and they give my girlfriend the things she needs for my fast, because they know she should not be cooking... We know each other from Friday prayers.

(Abdullah, 17/04/10)

The relationship is important to Kafele during specific times like Ramadan and Eid, when food is shared between him and Muslim rate-payers. Also, it means that his religious identity bridges barriers that his nationality places on his interactions and socialisation with South Africans in the area.

Thulani Mabena is a young Zulu man. His identity ensures that he is eligible to be a member of the Community Forum, which is composed predominantly of young Zulu men. Community Forum members are nominated by residents. Being a young man and seemingly trustworthy (his brother is also well known in the area) were sufficient reasons for him to be nominated. In his position in the Forum, Thulani has access to power and authority; this is unusual for a tenant. He has the authority to ask people who they are and where they are going. His exercise of power is justified by the principle of safety, “We want to know who is living here because of the crime, we need to monitor the area” (Mabena, 06/04/10). Through this position, Thulani has extended his social networks. For example, he is able to identify the shacks of other Forum members – which, apart from his friends and family, he is unable to do for anyone else (Mabena, notes on community map, 29/03/10). His position provides access to the leadership and means the leadership know who he is. It may mean, at some point in the future, that they will be motivated to assist him to reciprocate his services to the settlement. Thulani insists that he does not use his position to gain favours from the leadership. However, through his position he has been able to build a relationship with the settlement leaders that ordinary residents cannot.

5.4 The relationships between tenure and identity; and tenure and social relations

This section moves on to explore the relationship between identity and social relations, and tenure. The analysis focuses on two aspects of tenure: access to land and tenure security. The analysis also examines if, how and why the upgrade and formalisation process is affecting the relationships between these concepts.

5.4.1 The role of identity and social relations in forging access to land

The rules governing access by newcomers that apply in Gum Tree Road are similar to those found in many other informal settlements (see Makhatini, 1994; Smit, 2008). The earliest arrivals built hidden shelters and were widely spread. Zanele, the earliest settler, recalls, “There was no one here to ask [permission]. [Back then] you just clear the bush and build a house” (Mhlongo, 15/03/10). Later, as more settlers arrived, they had to ask neighbours and those already settled in the area for permission to stay. Kafele and Mandisa were the next to arrive. Kafele’s girlfriend negotiated their access by asking permission to stay from other residents. Mandisa says, “I talked to the community and I found space, then I built my shack” (Hintsisa, 29/03/10). As Gum Tree Road grew, a settlement committee was established to help manage the flow of new arrivals (amongst other things). Permission to settle was granted by the leaders, who would identify a plot of land or shack for sale to prospective newcomers. Katlego and Mona gained permission to settle in this way: Katlego paid the leadership and was directed to a plot of land; Mona purchased her shack through a settlement leader. Over time, the rules became more established and elaborate:

Our committee decides who can come and stay. You ask the committee for permission to build your shack. They ask you for a letter to say where you come from and why you have come here (the letter should be from the leader of your old community). Sometimes at the end of the day we don’t welcome people from outside because they don’t come with a committee letter saying where they come from. Leaders give a piece of land, then they call a meeting to call people to say there is a newcomer.

(Mhlongo, 15/03/10)

These rules are widely recited by residents. However, depending on how one gains access to the settlement, the rules are flexibly applied. Sipiwe, who arrived in 2005, says, “By the time I came here my brother took me to the leaders to report me. They didn’t ask [for] anything like permission because they know my brother” (Msomi, 15/03/10). For tenants, landlords tend to determine access to the settlement; Mona, a landlord to five families says, “When the newcomers come here, I first

ask where they are from, if they know someone here, then I give them a room. Sometimes I say no, if they don't know someone here. You must know someone" (Ntuli, 20/03/10).

An individual's social relations are vital to gain access to Gum Tree Road; exceptions are the earliest settlers and those who purchase permission from the leadership. As previously illustrated by Mandisa Hintsa, in her story of how she first learnt of Gum Tree Road from a customer from the Eastern Cape at her stall, and Kafele Abdullah's experience of finding accommodation for recent Malawian migrants, one's identity can help to develop the necessary connections to gain access to land. On the whole, however, access for both tenants and non-tenants is tied principally to their social connections with existing residents, often family but also friends.

The prospect of upgrade and formalisation has driven residents to consider their strategies to access land and housing post-upgrade. Aspects of identity and the social relations that enabled the eight interviewees to initially settle in Gum Tree Road appear to still hold value for some. For example, Zanele Mhlongo believes the RDP housing list developed by the settlement leaders "is based on who came here first" (15/03/10). Her position as an 'early settler' leaves her confident that she will receive access to land and housing, but in the event "others invade the RDP houses I will not wait, I will move into a house too" (*Ibid*). Zanele has a strategy, just in case her identity alone does not secure land or housing.

For others, however, their identity (or the value of their identity) and/or social relations has not held constant over the years. For some, the social relations that permitted initial access have broken down; for example, settlement leaders at the time Katlego and Mona purchased permission to stay have long lost power and moved on. For Katlego, this is not a problem. She believes (like Zanele), "Community leaders decide who goes where according to who came first" (15/03/10). Her son is Chairman of the leadership; she trusts her son and is confident of her place on the list and her access

to Gum Tree Road post-upgrade. Mona is a little more sceptical of the process and her ability to affect it. She says:

I don't know what will happen [in the future] because there are so many promises. According to the promises it [Gum Tree Road] will change. [...] A few years ago they said we will go into houses, but others from another area went into the RDP houses instead and we are still here.

(Ntuli, 20/03/10)

Mona's approach to her future tenure is not tied to events in Gum Tree Road. She owns a house in Mtubatuba (where she is originally from) and intends to move back there eventually. If she cannot access post-upgrade Gum Tree Road she will expedite her move.

The upgrade and formalisation process has redefined the value attached to national identity in determining access to land and housing. All but one interviewee believed that access post-upgrade should be restricted to South Africans only. In Gum Tree Road, which includes residents of different ethnic backgrounds, 'citizenship' is an important basis for discourse. It is a powerful tool for inclusion, which is perhaps necessary in a settlement with not only amaZulu but also many amaXhosa. However, inclusion based on citizenship means the exclusion of non-South Africans.

Zanele Mhlongo (an amaXhosa) frames her entitlement to the formalisation process entirely in terms of her citizenship. To her, voting is an act of buying into the state and thus becoming eligible for any benefits the state has to give. She says, "I need an RDP house. I am voting here, I am the citizen of South Africa, that is why I need the house" (15/03/10). Mandisa Hintsu (an amaXhosa) reiterates, "You don't get [a house] if you don't get ID, if you are not a South African citizen. But I have ID, I am a South African citizen" (Hintsu, 10/03/10). Mona Ntuli, an amaZulu landlord, goes further, "I think it's good that tenants get the RDP house. But foreigners, I think that is not good. It's fraud. It's not good to give to foreigners. I think they come here to look for work only, rather than the people who are living here. If they are working they should only work..." (Ntuli, 19/04/10). Mona came to Gum

Tree Road to set up a business i.e. for work, as did many of the people currently living in the settlement; certainly she identifies her tenants as job seekers. Her rationale, unlike Zanele and Mandisa's, focuses on the foreigners' lack of entitlement to participate rather than their ineligibility.

Lay discussions of the upgrade process thus unequivocally tie the discourse of 'citizenship' to 'entitlement'. Foreigners fare badly, because of the belief that as foreigners they are entitled to nothing. In Kafele's case, this means disregarding whatever civic contribution he has made, his ownership of two shacks, and that his sons (for whom he wishes to provide) are South African. There is a danger that the upgrade process may (unintentionally) play to the general fear of foreigners, and provide a legitimate basis for permanently excluding them from low income settlements.

5.4.2 The role of identity and social relations in securing tenure

Tenure security and insecurity is experienced differently by men and women; largely because a woman's experience of life in an informal settlement is different to a man's. Picking up on an earlier theme of gendered roles in security (**section 5.2.2**), public protection (like the Community Forum) and private protection within the home are the preserve of men. Both men and women interviewees felt that men have a mandate to protect elderly men, women and children from physical insecurities and tenure insecurity (as previously defined by the interviewees in terms of confirmation of shack ownership and protection from unfair eviction). Being a man does not in itself confer authority over others and the right to protect people, but the positions of protection and authority are predominantly male positions. The study does not examine intra-household power and gender dynamics, which are undoubtedly another aspect of the safety and security of (especially) women and girls in informal settlements.

The Community Forum, as an organisation for public protection that exists to help manage the risk of physical insecurity, is composed entirely of young men. As previously discussed, the Forum is largely

reactive and its principal value seems to be that its existence helps residents to feel safe. The Forum has few powers, but to residents who are largely unable to access the police or state assistance, it is the only form of organised protection accessible to them. Kafele explains, “It [is] not easy to call the police... The police want us to call them only if we know who it is [who committed the crime] and where they live” (Abdullah, 17/04/10). These are the conditions that residents in Gum Tree Road must meet for police assistance. Many residents, therefore, are pleased to have a Community Forum, but place greater importance on personal relations that will aid their physical and tenure security.

For women interviewees, security is managed principally through their relations with men – their husband, brothers, and/or adult sons. Zanele Mhlongo feels safe from violence and crime in Gum Tree Road and in her house because she is living with her family (including her husband) and her adult son lives next door. Over the years, she has also called kin from Eastern Cape to live in the settlement. They live in three shacks that surround hers (Mhlongo, notes on community map, 30/03/10); she feels she can call upon any of these people to help protect her. Lindiwe Shange feels safer in her shack since her boyfriend moved in. Prior to him moving in, she lived with her sisters and her young children. Having her sisters close by still helps Lindiwe feel safe. Close, accessible and trusted family relations are especially important, given that she runs a *shebeen* from her shack, which can be a dangerous business. Katlego Moloi lives with her husband, adult son, teenage grandsons and others in a five room shack. Her eldest son (Chairman of the settlement committee) is the only person who lives outside the shack that she trusts. He lives nearby and she sees him daily. Being surrounded by immediate family is the source of her safety and security.

Neither Mandisa Hintsu nor Mona Ntuli lives with an adult man. Mona’s husband was an important source of safety for her and her four daughters. His presence allowed her to feel safe. Since his death she feels greater tenure and physical insecurity, because she is now solely responsible for

collecting rent, managing the shop, and looking after the household income. Her relative affluence increases her vulnerability to petty crime, violence and possibly disputes with her tenants. In response, Mona's three brothers, who live nearby, play a growing role in her life and her relationships with them are important to helping her feel safe from a range of threats.

Kafele stands out as a contrary example to women's dependence on men for protection, because his tenure security is tied to his relationships with South African women. His first girlfriend facilitated his entry to Gum Tree Road and legitimated his claims to shack ownership. His current girlfriend is an important figure for his future tenure security; he hopes to register for an RDP house through her.

Amongst male interviewees, especially Thulani and Sipiwe, who are in their late 20s, bravado may mask threats to their physical security. They insist that they are not scared or fearful in Gum Tree Road, even at night. Thulani says, "I'm not scared in my shack. If something wrong is happening I'll pick up my phone and call my neighbours, who will come quickly. In my shack, no one can hurt me here" (Mabena, 10/03/10). Sipiwe is most likely one of the neighbours Thulani would call. Sipiwe, Thulani and his brothers in the settlement are a close social network who trust and know one another from Ulundi. This network, to Sipiwe, is dependable in a crisis and he is confident that should something happen to him, his girlfriend and baby would be well looked after by his brothers (Msomi, notes on social relations map, 30/03/10).

Risks to physical security tend to be managed through relations with immediate family or close friends living nearby. In terms of tenure security, Thulani and Sipiwe, as tenants, are more dependent on the settlement leadership than their support network. Different types of security threats call for different social relations. Relations with the leadership appear to be gender neutral and are called upon to deal with a variety of specific threats to residents' security.

Mona, a landlord to five families, has a functional relationship with the leadership. She reports that she calls them whenever she needs particular assistance and they respond. For example, two men dressed as policemen came to her shack, “but they were not police. They came wanting to rob me. I know this because I called the committee and they checked with the police” (Ntuli, 20/03/10). She did not call the police and check herself and nor did it occur to her to do so. This is particularly interesting, given that Mona works in a local police station. It may illustrate the extent to which the leadership mediates residents’ access to the police and indicate the level of control they exert over the settlement.

Kafele’s relations with the settlement leaders and his recent experience with tenure insecurity highlight limitations in the system of settlement leadership. The system appears to work well when the trusted leadership of the settlement acts in a trustworthy manner. Residents are inclined to abide by the rules set by the leadership and any ruling they confer when arbitrating disputes (e.g. between landlord and tenant). However, if trust between a resident and a settlement leader breaks down, the resident is left exposed to higher risks of tenure insecurity. Kafele used to trust the settlement leadership until he was ‘cheated’ by a leader who registered a relative of hers as the owner of his shack. He still believes that the leadership is there to help residents and prevent crime in the area. However, since his own incident, he has become more mindful and wary of the leadership and does not approach them for any reason.

The leaders of Gum Tree Road are in trusted and powerful positions; they are also (with minimal fear of reprimand) able to exploit their position for personal gain. Kafele’s case illustrates that those with minority identities are particularly at risk from unscrupulous settlement leaders. As greater resources flow into the settlement through the upgrade process, increasing the opportunities and temptation for unscrupulous behaviour, it is possible that the risk of insecurity will heighten for minority residents.

5.5 Vulnerability and resilience, and their relationship to identity and social relations

The modified asset vulnerability framework (discussed in **sections 2.4 and 3.3**) asks what assets or resources people have and control, what they think about them, and how are they able to use them in relation to their aspirations. The analysis has thus far explored tenure, social relations and aspects of identity as assets/resources that people have and control to varying degrees. The analysis has also considered the value interviewees attach to these concepts, both in the abstract and in practical ways that improve daily wellbeing. The next two sections go on to explore how these concepts are used in relation to people's aspirations. First, this section presents an analysis of the vulnerability and resilience of the eight residents of Gum Tree Road. Resilience is explored through the strategies people adopt for long and short term wellbeing, contextualised by individual aspirations. Vulnerability is explored through looking at an individual's exposure and ability to respond to shocks, and identifying factors that limit agency.

5.5.1 Resilience and vulnerability

Living and working in Gum Tree Road is a part of individual strategies for resilience. There is not just one strategy, but many strategies, which evolve with changes to personal circumstances and the wider environment. Some strategies are well thought out, others less so. Most strategies seem to develop as a specific response to a shock.

Kafele Abdullah moved to South Africa from Malawi during the dictatorship of Hastings Banda. He was forced to flee and was attracted to South Africa because of the possibility of finding a job that paid well and made use of his welding qualifications, as well as having a place to stay because his brother lived in Durban. Kafele imagined returning to Malawi only after 1993, when Banda's rule came to an end. When he now discusses his plans for the future, he says, "I'd like to go back home" (17/04/10). His image of 'home' is where his family live in Malawi. Kafele aspires to follow in the footsteps of his father, who worked in the copper mines in Zambia and returned to his family in

Malawi on his retirement. However, it seems unlikely that Kafele's future plans will materialise. He is increasingly responsible not just for his own resilience, but for that of his immediate and extended family, for example:

At home my sister is suffering, her husband has passed away and she has many children. I'm working here so I can support them at home... I have two children here – one in Port Shepstone. Twice a month I go to Port Shepstone to give clothes and things to my son. My other son is in Empangeni, but it's better because his mother is still alive, not like the one in Port Shepstone.

(Abdullah, 17/04/10)

His responsibility to and for others affects his aspiration to retire to Malawi; instead he is driven to work for as long as possible to support his family. In this context, his struggle to qualify for an RDP house can be seen as another strategy to secure resources for his family.

Aspirations, like resilience strategies, also change with personal circumstances and the external environment. Sipiwe, a young man at 27, has had many career aspirations: "When I was younger, I wanted to be a soldier. I'd like to be a soldier because if there is something wrong the government can call the soldiers to resolve the problem. I like that. It was a dream, now I don't think it will happen to me, so I've changed my mind. Now I want to be a panel beater" (Msomi, 06/04/10). His career aspirations are flexible, so that he can respond to whatever job prospects are available to him and the responsibilities he has to others. As a child in Ulundi, an IFP stronghold, and with only himself to look out for, soldiering might have been an attainable career goal. In Gum Tree Road, with little education, part-time employment, and a new family to support, Sipiwe sees his future as a panel beater. His strategies for resilience are interwoven with his aspirations for his newborn son. His goal is to make as much money as possible. He cannot imagine a future, nor plan for the future, without money. There is little to indicate what he plans to do with this money. Simply having it and meeting immediate needs seems enough, for now. This may reflect the uncertainty in his life that comes with job insecurity and limited employment opportunities.

The upgrade and formalisation process affects Siphwe's resilience strategies and his aspirations. He says, "I need an RDP house ... It will change my life. I will be safe. I can extend and decorate it the way I like. I won't live in one room anymore" (15/03/10). However, Siphwe still needs to work and provide for his family and he acknowledges, "It is difficult to find a job here. Even now I'm working under a agent, in almost two years I haven't registered as permanent, I'm still as an agent" (06/04/10). Siphwe is engaged in balancing his short and long term needs for resilience. He is concerned that if he moves elsewhere, he could miss out on the upgrade. Siphwe's lack of information on the upgrade encourages ill-informed decision making on his strategies for resilience.

Parenthood, for Kafele, Siphwe, Lindiwe (a mother to five children, three of whom live with her) and Mandisa (a mother to four children who do not live with her), tends to mean that strategies for employment, tenure and future investment focus on how best to help their children. Mandisa's aspirations are bound to the success of her children; "I would like my children not to be like myself, stupid ... They must be more than I was wishing to be" (Hintsisa, 29/03/10). For Lindiwe, this means staying in Gum Tree Road close to schools in the area and future employment opportunities in the city for her children. The prospect of the upgrade complements her strategy, as it means that she will be able to secure shelter and tenure close to the city for the future generations of her family. An RDP house is considered by Lindiwe as an inheritance to pass on to her children; it means that she will be able to provide for them if she were to die. This sentiment echoes her own experience of her mother dying and bequeathing her shack to her daughter.

The death of a partner, parent or child seem to be frequent occurrences in the lives of the eight residents. Mona's husband died in car accident, leaving her solely responsible for the wellbeing of their children. Their shared diverse portfolio of financial assets (property and a shop) meant that the family did not experience a loss of income and Mona was able to provide for her children's wellbeing. Katlego Moloi lost all three of her daughters in adulthood; she is now responsible for raising her

grandchildren. Her ill-health means that she continuously worries for their wellbeing: “I’m a little bit scared about passing away while I’m in the informal settlement, because I have to look after my grandchildren. But if I have an RDP house, I will be less scared because my grandchildren will have somewhere safe to live if I die” (12/04/10). An RDP house is now an important part of her aspirations and plans for her family’s resilience.

When Siphwe’s father died in Ulundi, he was forced to drop out of school and find work to support his family; the search for work eventually led him to Gum Tree Road. Similarly, Zanele was forced to leave school at a young age when her father died. Her parents lived apart (this was not unusual under apartheid) because they worked in different parts of the country. Zanele was forced to move from her home in Bizana, Eastern Cape, to Verulam to live with her mother. She recalls, “I had lots of family there [in Bizana] – aunts, uncles – but they did not look after me. They had their own family. It is not like if someone passes away they [relatives] will take care of their children; no it’s not like that” (Mhlongo, 06/04/10). Zanele illustrates that family relations are no guarantee of help when it is needed.

In addition to shocks resulting from the deaths of immediate family members, in Gum Tree Road there is the continual threat of violence – interpersonal and state violence - fear and intimidation. Negotiating violence is a part of daily life. In the early years, out of fear for her husband’s life, Zanele destroyed a letter from the land owner granting permission for the settlers to stay. According to Mandisa, fear of violence affects basic decision making on who is allowed in the settlement, she says, “You can’t chase anyone away. If you push them away and make them stay in the bush they will become your enemy and they will rob us” (Hints, 10/03/10). Kafele has experienced both targeted and random attacks. He recalls:

These guys with the gun came during the week, last Thursday. We don’t know the people, they do not live here. We saw the same people here by the [water] tap when we were going [to the shower block]. The guys then met four children and were robbing

them. The children ran away into the informal settlement. When we were coming back we saw them here. They pointed a gun at us and told us to give them our mobile phones. After, they ran away. We didn't call the police. It was not easy to call the police.

(Abdullah, 10/04/10)

Death and violence, and the many uncertainties they bring into a person's life, means that people have few considered long term plans to which they can work. Aspirations and long term resilience strategies are usually vague ideas that change and adapt to shocks, stress and risk from the external environment. That individuals still develop aspirations in this environment may be an example of enduring resilience and hope. All eight interviewees have hopes for the future, often embedded in hopes for their children. Many hope an RDP house will fundamentally change their way of life, and moreover provide a useful long term asset for their progeny.

5.5.2 The relationships between identity, social relations, and vulnerability and resilience

Identity and social relations can be sources of resilience; tools to move individuals closer to their aspirations. They also help to develop aspirations but can also be sources of vulnerability if they play out in power relations that oppress and subjugate individuals. In Gum Tree Road, a dominant theme cross-cutting resilience, vulnerability, identity and social relations is gender. This concept affirms an identity, helps determine social relations and, when contextualised in traditional rules of behaviour and cultural norms, can set the parameters of aspiration. The values ascribed to gender can increase the resilience of some and the vulnerability of others. This section explores how gender affects vulnerability and resilience at key periods in the lives of Gum Tree Road residents. Although the analysis focuses on gender, other dominant identities, including age, marital status and parenthood, are of consequence for the incidence of vulnerability and resilience, as are intra-household relations, which illustrate power dynamics between parents and children, and husbands and wives.

As a young woman in rural Eastern Cape, Mandisa was exposed to certain risks. At 19 she fell pregnant and was pushed out of the family home by her parents. She reflects that her behaviour was not so different from her peers at the time, “I was 19 when I was pregnant, in 1990. It’s not so young, most of the girls get pregnant when they are 16, 15, or 14 years” (Hintsisa, 10/03/10). What Mandisa identifies as the social norm differed from the social rules applied by her parents. To her father especially, Mandisa had ruined all his expectations of her. As a consequence, she was instructed “to go and work ... They cannot give me food ... I must leave the school ... [and] look for a job now” (10/03/10). Bound by her sense of social obligation, Mandisa “was working and taking the money to my father at home” (*Ibid*). Her parents’ attitudes softened over time and gradually she was allowed back into their lives, although by this time it was too late for her to return to school and matriculate. These early experiences and her exposure to joblessness, homelessness and motherhood appear to have developed the strength of character needed to deal with future vulnerabilities.

An individual’s plans for the future are gender sensitive. When a Zulu, Xhosa or seSotho woman marries, she changes the location of her ‘home’ or *emaki*. ‘Home’ is where funeral rites are performed, where *lobola* (bride price) is paid, and where traditional ceremonies are performed. At a woman’s marriage, there is a shift in space-based identity that affects her future plans. When women in Gum Tree Road think about their retirement and old age, by and large they think of returning to their *emaki*. For a married woman, her *emaki* is that of her husband. However, her sole connection to her husband’s *emaki* is her husband. If that connection is lost through the breakup of the relationship or death, then she is left with fewer tenure options in old age and is more vulnerable. Zanele Mhlongo’s future tenure options are entirely dependent on her husband. She says, “I don’t have any family in Bizana now. Since I was married I visited home in Bizana, but I married into Newcastle, so everything I’m doing now I do in Newcastle” (Mhlongo, 06/04/10). Since moving to Gum Tree Road 20 years ago, Zanele has visited Newcastle on only a few occasions. It is

possible that because the upgrade offers secure tenure in a more comfortable environment, it may increase the tenure options of older single women who have lived in city (i.e. away from their *emaki*) for a long time.

Mona matriculated from high school in 1995. Her father encouraged her to attend school, but was cautious about encouraging any other activities, “He said only go to school, come home and do your work” (19/04/10). After some persuasion and the assurances of Mona’s cousin in KwaMashu, Mona left home in Mtubatuba and lived with her cousin in order to complete a computer course in Durban. Mona clearly valued education and at that time aspired to be a doctor or a nurse. However, she says, “My dream to be a doctor finished because I got married. My husband refused for me to study, I don’t know why” (*Ibid*). Mona’s story illustrates that aspirations are affected by traditional gender roles, but also that the city provides opportunities for further education that are not available in smaller towns. Mona believes, “If you are educated it is easier to get a job. That is what I teach my girls” (*Ibid*). To her, the value of the location of Gum Tree Road is not only its proximity to primary and secondary schools to meet the current education needs of her children, but the further educational opportunities that living in a city brings.

The aspirations of these women in Gum Tree Road are mindful of others’ expectations of them. Tradition, custom and cultural norms ascribe the value of a women’s identity at different stages of her life and provide her with a position and power within a family. Living in Gum Tree Road and its accessible, low cost, urban housing, can help challenge these traditions and norms. Mandisa is able to live independently in her shack, head of her own household and physically separated from her family and their rules on behaviour. Following the upgrade, Zanele may increase her resilience by having tenure options that minimise her dependence on specific social relations. Mona made an association between further education and the opportunities in a city; living in Gum Tree Road means that these opportunities exist for her children.

5.6 Tenure and vulnerability and resilience

In Gum Tree Road, individuals engage in a trade off between tenure (the urban location, tenure security and physical safety) and vulnerability (exposure to violence, crime, poor living conditions and limited access to services) as part of their resilience strategies. There are four main reasons why people enter the trade off: to save money, to take advantage of future opportunities for resilience, for improved safety, and to seek a comparatively better quality of life.

For Siphwe Msomi, living in an informal settlement is part of a strategy to make and save as much money as possible. He says, “The reason I’m staying here is because of money – I don’t have the money to pay rent, so I stay in the informal settlement. If I got a job elsewhere and they pay me more then I have to rethink... It depends on how much I am paid monthly or weekly, if I can afford to pay rent” (Msomi, 06/04/10). The cost of formal living is directly tied by Siphwe to the type of job and regular income he can count on i.e. job security. Living in the informal settlement is a means to save money and manage his resilience i.e. his ability to cope with shocks like job loss is easier because he is already living in a low cost place and is able to save money so that he can manage during times of uncertainty. Zanele, Thulani and Mandisa were similarly attracted to living in Gum Tree Road because of rent-saving in the light of job insecurity (discussed in **section 5.1**). Low living costs help them to manage the possible effects of job loss and an uncertain monthly income. It is part of a wider resilience strategy.

The location of Gum Tree Road – close to Durban city centre and very well served by public transport links all over central and north Durban – is an advantage to job seekers and those seeking further education, like Mona Ntuli. The location of the settlement provides opportunities for improved resilience over the generations. Katlego, for example, is unable to work due to ill health, but wants to stay in Gum Tree Road because she feels her grandchildren will be able to take advantage of the location of the settlement in their search for education and jobs.

Gum Tree Road and the surrounding settlements are dangerous, violent and can harbour criminals. For some, however, the risk of crime and violence in the informal settlement is assessed against the risks of remaining in their previous area of residence. Lindiwe lived in Inanda, and compares life in the settlement with life in a township: “things like crime and violence are much worse in Inanda. It is much better here. Here no one can catch me and rob me, but in Inanda they will. Even [at] midday they can come by my house and do what they want to do” (Shange, 06/04/10). Katlego, who lived in a township in Inchanga, fled “because there was war between IFP and ANC ... My children are members of the ANC. The Inkatha members came to our house and they wanted to kill my children, so we ran away ... This was after the elections, because people knew who was an ANC member and who voted for them” (Moloi, 06/04/10). Katlego exchanged living in a township for living in an informal settlement in her safety trade off.

When Katlego reflects on her historic tenure movements, she concludes that each move improved her quality of life. Living on a farm in Eastern Cape, she says, “was too hard – I had to walk to the river to get water and cook on paraffin. Here I am using water from the municipality and getting electricity to cook. Here is it much better... Even if you are sick when you are at home, you have to hire the car to take you to hospital, here I can just call an ambulance and it will take me.” (Moloi, 06/04/10). For all the difficulties and dangers of living in an informal settlement, for Katlego, who recalls a harsh rural life, there is easily accessible water and (illegal and unsafe) electricity. Although she did not move to Gum Tree Road in order to access improved services, she looks upon them as a fringe benefit.

There are two main factors that influence the trade off: having tenure options, and the process of upgrade and formalisation. Tenure options, that is having a second (or more) dwelling somewhere, are ways to manage risk. If vulnerabilities in Gum Tree Road become unmanageable, then it is possible for individuals like Mona and Lindiwe to leave. They are not trapped in an informal

settlement. Mona has a second house in Mtubatuba where she would be able to live with her children. For her, staying in Gum Tree Road is not a zero-sum game, but a calculated risk. Lindiwe also has her family home back in Inanda. However, her tenure options are not equal in the risks they carry. In Inanda the risk of crime and violence is much higher than in Gum Tree Road and, because she has young children to consider, for her a move to Inanda is a risk not worth taking, for the moment.

The process of upgrade and formalisation influences the tenure - vulnerability trade off, because it changes the risks and potential gains involved. At this stage of the process, those individuals with tenure options (including tenants who can leave fairly easily) are gambling that they will benefit from the upgrade in ways that make it worth the risk of living in an informal settlement in the meantime. Thulani, a tenant, says, "If I get any improvement, or I'm progressing, then I'll continue to live here. If I'm not progressing, I'll leave. I will try another place" (Mabena, 06/04/10). In order to build his resilience, he is prepared to consider changes to his tenure. However, the prospect of the upgrade creates an incentive for him to stay in Gum Tree Road and try to claim an RDP house.

The programme of upgrade and formalisation in Gum Tree Road means full services, a house and a freehold title. The gains from a gamble to stay in Gum Tree Road are sizeable. However, living in an RDP house is likely to increase the cost of living (electricity and water bills, and eventually rates) and the programme does not explicitly aim to tackle crime, violence or public safety. Money saving and relative safety are two major reasons why people in Gum Tree Road enter the tenure and vulnerability trade off. A greater insight into how the nature of the relationship between tenure and vulnerability and resilience changes as the process of upgrade and formalisation progresses is offered in the analysis of Cato Crest and Zwelisha.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter gave a description of life for eight residents in an informal settlement about to embark on the process of upgrade and formalisation. It also gave an analysis of hermeneutic appreciations of key concepts in this study: tenure, identity, social relations, and vulnerability/resilience, before moving on to explore the relationships between these in the lives of the interviewees. Key findings are that 'tenure security' is understood by many residents as 'ownership' of one's dwelling. However, confidence in one's ownership does not necessarily lead to secure tenure, because tenure is multifaceted and sources of tenure insecurity go beyond ownership disputes. The value ascribed to ownership claims can vary over time and in relation to specific circumstances. In Gum Tree Road the value of ownership is heightened by the upgrade and formalisation process.

Many identities change over a lifetime, and at given points, some become more important than others. At this stage in the upgrade, the importance attached to nationality and citizenship challenges minority identities in the settlement. Gum Tree Road has a very strong settlement leadership that is widely trusted; however, the prospect of upgrade has seen one leader's behaviour change in an attempt to seize resources from someone on the margins, a foreigner. Like many identities, social relationships and the value attached to them also change over a lifetime. At the pre-feasibility stage of the process, when there is still much uncertainty amongst residents over whether the upgrade will happen, there is a subtle manoeuvring amongst residents (who are uncertain whether they will receive an RDP house) to build stronger relations with the leadership.

In Gum Tree Road, risks that increase vulnerability are a daily hazard. As a result, resilience strategies (and aspirations) are flexible and plans for the future change depending on resources in the present. The upgrade and formalisation process has started to impact on people's aspirations and resilience strategies. As will be seen in the next chapter, in Cato Crest, a settlement in the implementation stage of the process, some of these findings recur, some develop to become new

findings, and some are challenged by findings that emerge in another settlement with its own history, environment and political dynamics.

CHAPTER 6

CATO CREST

6.0 Introduction

Cato Crest is approximately 5km from Durban city centre; it is the closest informal settlement to the CBD. The upgrade and formalisation process is being implemented through a phased approach that started in 2000 and is ongoing. As a result, at the time of the research, some areas of Cato Crest were RDP residential areas with tarred roads and legal electricity connections, parts were a transit camp with basic shower blocks and one room tin 'houses', and most parts were still an informal settlement with shacks, mud footpaths and no services except communal standpipes and infrequent municipal refuse collection.

The eight interviewees in the study were identified according to their type of dwelling and the contribution of their characteristics to a mixed group (see **TABLE 6.1** in **section 6.1** for a list of individuals and their characteristics). Following a description of their lives and living conditions (**section 6.1**), the chapter moves on to analyse conditions of tenure security and insecurity in Cato Crest (**section 6.2**). There follows a description and analysis of the identity and social relations of residents and the relationship between them (**section 6.3**). The extent to which identity and social relations affect tenure is explored in **section 6.4**; and how identity and social relations affect vulnerability and resilience in **section 6.5**. The final section focuses on the relationship between tenure and vulnerability and resilience in Cato Crest at the implementation stage of the upgrade and formalisation process, and thereby continues narrative threads from the previous chapter (**section 6.6**).

6.1 The men and women of Cato Crest

The estimated household population of Cato Crest is three times that of Gum Tree Road (see **TABLE 3.1**). Its area is far larger: it spreads over parts of two constituencies (Ward 30 and 31) and is divided into 12 sizeable 'areas'. Each area has representation through an Area Committee to a settlement-wide committee, often referred to by residents as a 'Ward Committee' or a 'Community Development Committee'⁴⁰. The boundaries between areas are marked by footpaths, roads and specific geographical markers like a well-known building or a distinctive feature in the terrain e.g. a particularly steep slope. Usually, the boundaries of an area are well known only to residents of that area, and are only vaguely familiar to other Cato Crest residents. Knowledge of the geographical divisions within Cato Crest is gained through experience, which usually (whether intended to or not) excludes outsiders.

Bongani Mabuza, a 42 year old Zulu man, lives in an RDP house in Area 10 of Cato Crest. He is a member of the Area 10 Committee. Area 10 is at the bottom of a hill atop which most of the settlement sits. His house is at a crossroads of two main roads with no names. Taxis frequently run up and down the larger of the two roads, ferrying passengers to the Umkhumbane Community Health Centre on the periphery of the settlement, and running back uphill picking up passengers from deeper in the settlement before continuing on to the CBD.

The location of Bongani's house has opened many business opportunities for him. He has built a fruit and vegetable stall on the edge of his plot alongside the main road and picks up passing trade from taxi passengers and pedestrians. He sells little packets of cannabis from inside his house - the location makes it convenient for buyers to reach him and easy for them to leave unnoticed. He has also built three small wooden shacks behind his house as far from the roads as possible, which he

⁴⁰ Strictly speaking a Ward Committee would include representatives of residents who live outside Cato Crest in formal areas of housing in Wards 30 and 31. 'Settlement-wide leadership' or 'Settlement-wide committee' better captures the ruling elite who residents are usually referring to.

rents to tenants who are attracted by the location. The continual flow of newcomers into the settlement inspired him to subdivide the interior of his house to create more space for tenants. Bongani lives alone in one half of the (originally one room) RDP house; the other half is rented to a family. His half of the room is dominated by a bed and two sofas, there is a kitchenette in one corner and a door to the bathroom in the other, which is shared with his tenants (they have access through a second door outside). The concrete walls are unfinished and large cracks are visible from inside. The roof is sheets of corrugated tin.

Bongani moved to the RDP house in 2004, but has lived in Cato Crest since 1994, which makes him a relative latecomer to the settlement. By 1994 the settlement was well established and there was no space left for newcomers to build a shack, unless they were invited to build on someone else's plot. Bongani, however, lacking the kinship networks Gugler (1992:159) and Nederveen Pieterse (2003) describe as essential to secure residence in informal settlements, bought his way in. In the mid-1990s, Bongani was working as a security guard at a building site less than 1km from Cato Crest. He says he never planned to come and live in the area, but,

I was staying in town on Victoria Embankment. I was paying [rent] there, but the money was not good. Someone I was working with was staying in Cato Crest. I told him he must check a room for me here. He found a room [...] for R50; [in Victoria Embankment] I was paying R800 a month. So I decided to come here. It doesn't matter it was a cabin or what, what was important was money, saving money. I stayed here until I bought [a shack] ... [Then] I paid no more rent. I never paid anything after that, just paid cash, once.

(Mabuza, 22/10/09)

A few months after Bongani moved to Cato Crest as a tenant, he became the owner of a shack. To him, the shack was a money-saving investment that eventually enabled him to claim an RDP house. Some time in March 2004, an official from Metro Housing gave him a key and instructions to wait by the roadside on a specific day with his belongings, "then a truck came, loaded my things and moved me the same day into this new house", about 300m away (29/09/09). On that day, he was given a

House Handover Certificate and told to await a title deed (for which he is still waiting). His old shack was destroyed soon after to make way for a new road.

The main road that passes by Bongani's house travels uphill and snakes through the settlement. Its many off-shoots provide access to and from the centre of the settlement at the top of a hill, to surrounding areas. In the centre is a high school, public library and the offices of Ward Councillor 31. Towards the bottom of one of these roads with no name is Helen Ngcobo's house. Helen is originally from Nkandla in northern KZN; she is amaZulu. Helen received her upgraded house in 2001 under a slightly different upgrade process to Bongani. From 1993-2003 the Cato Manor Development Association (CMDA), a 'Section 21 Company'⁴¹, implemented greenfield and *in situ* upgrades in parts of informal settlements within Cato Manor (including Cato Crest) under major re-development plans for the area. Helen's shack in Area 2 was on land planned for redevelopment. "CMDA moved us all [in that part of Area 2] because they were going to build a road; they didn't [build it] in the end", she said (Ngcobo, 27/03/10). Helen and her neighbours were relocated to a greenfield development in another part of Cato Crest. The area is now known as 'Greenfield'. It is an area with named roads, house numbers and a postal delivery service. The houses are in neat rows that undulate with the hilly terrain.

Helen's house is an early example of an RDP house. In 2001 when she moved in, there was a relatively large plot of land with a breeze block rectangle in the middle. She reflects:

I [was] not satisfied with the condition or size of the RDP house. The original was one room for lots of people. Eventually we were forced to build shacks and squat in front of the house. Some of my family had to go back to renting in the shacks. I extended my home in November 2009. Before then we all lived in one room.

(Ngcobo, 27/03/10)

⁴¹ Refers to companies set up under Section 21 of the 1973 Companies Act. They are companies registered to provide a service and not make any profit.

Helen's dwelling is now a four room single storey house. Helen had four children, two of whom died in recent years; her daughter was murdered on the outskirts of Cato Crest in 2009. She lives with her two adult children and all her grandchildren. Behind her house, barely visible from the road, are two small shacks that she rents out. She was also a landlord when she lived in a shack. Opposite her house is vacant land, which residents in the area have taken use of to grow food (Helen identifies the land as belonging to the municipality). She also grows medicinal herbs and plants, which she uses to heal people; Helen is a *sangoma* (witchdoctor). However, "People of Cato Crest don't really know me as a healer. Most of my patients come from outside" (Ngcobo, 20/04/10). Helen conceals this part of her identity for her safety and that of her family. *Sangomas* are revered by some and feared by others. Helen considers herself deeply spiritual. She goes by her Christian name as a display of her faith and commitment to the Zionist Church in Cato Crest; the only Church she believes to accept *sangomas* in their congregations⁴².

Close to the offices of Ward Councillor 31, in an area of recently built RDP houses, lives Andrew (Andy) Dlamini; he is 22 years old and the youngest interviewee. He speaks English rapidly, with an American twang that reflects his exposure to American movies and music. Andy's father moved to Cato Crest from Umlazi (a mixed township and informal settlement in southern Durban) when Andy was four years old. His mother had left them two years prior to the move. Andy's aunt (his father's sister) owned a shack in Cato Crest. When she bought a house in Umlazi in 1992, she gave her shack to Andy's father. The father and son had lived in Cato Crest for only a year before violence and the threat of forced removal by raiding parties of local white residents pushed them back to Umlazi until the threat had passed. In 1997, this time with a younger brother, Andy and his father returned to Area 7 of Cato Crest. Andy, born in Umlazi and raised in Cato Crest, is an urbanite.

⁴² Christian Zionist churches are found all over southern Africa. Church members are usually active participants in faith-healing and believe that pastors (or church leaders) are able to perform supernatural acts in the name of Christ. Some denominations accept polygamy.

In 2006 Andy's father died, two years before the upgrade process came to Area 7. He recalls:

When the project came to this area all my neighbours were moved into RDP houses just downhill from here, but this didn't happen to me. I think the Area Committee was trying to take advantage of me. They knew I was alone and they wanted to move me to Mount Moriah [16km north of Cato Crest] ... I went to one area meeting to tell them I'm not going to Mount Moriah. The neighbours here knew my father and they fought for me to not move.

(Dlamini, 24/03/10)

Following an intervention from the local councillor (Ward 31), who was alerted to the dispute by sympathetic members of the Area Committee, Andy moved into a transit camp with the remaining residents of Area 7 for three months before moving into his current dwelling, also in Area 7. The new Area 7 is a neat cluster of single storey housing units that are of a different design to preceding RDP houses. All have red terracotta roof tiles and are painted in various pastel shades. Houses are positioned in twos, side by side, and resemble semi-detached properties, but for a gap of 30cms between them. Patches of vacant land surrounding the remaining three sides make it possible to build extensions. Andy is currently building a concrete extension at the front of the property and surrounding his plot with a wire mesh fence. He plans to run a *shebeen* and *spaza* shop from this extension. The fence is to protect his neighbour's property.

Andy's business idea was developed in part with his uncle, who also lives in Cato Crest but in the informal settlement. His uncle runs similar businesses and is clearly a role model and trusted figure for Andy. When the upgrade came to his area, Andy was only 20 and one of the criteria for eligibility for an RDP subsidy is that claimants must be 21. "So, I asked my uncle", he says, "He wrote his name to register for a house on my behalf. I'm now 22, so I can claim to live here in my own right" (Dlamini, 24/03/10). Andy and his uncle are still awaiting a title deed for the property.

Margaret Gumede lives in a transit camp, she and others call it a 'tin house', on the periphery of the settlement in Area 10. Margaret arrived at the transit camp on 11 November 2008, from her shack in

‘Stop 9’⁴³; she does not know when she will leave. Margaret had six children, two of whom had recently died. Her eldest son is eligible for a housing subsidy in his own right; he lives in his own room in another part of the same transit camp. For two years, Margaret has lived with her three teenage children in one room, where all the walls and roof are made from corrugated tin. Raindrops outside (a constant feature in Durban’s rainy season) fall against the tin and reverberate throughout the room, pounding the ears of those inside. There is one small window next to a wooden door; this is the only source of light and ventilation. The room is crammed with all the family’s belongings – two beds, shelves, mismatched chairs, torn boxes of cooking utensils and piles of clothes.

As often as possible, Margaret sits outside her room on a homemade wooden bench. She has recently opened a crèche and looks after two to three toddlers daily. The toddlers tend to play outside, making piles of dust. Her neighbours are the same neighbours from Stop 9 and include most of her closest friends. They often sit outside with her. Margaret’s room is one of ten in a tin oblong. At one end of the oblong is a shower block with no doors on the toilets or showers, and missing taps, bowls and sinks. At the other end there are a few pit latrines, beyond which the informal settlement resumes. Margaret’s oblong is at the top of a hill and looks over six vertical oblongs stretching out into the distance, each twice the length of hers. Margaret’s view is obstructed only by a tree, off which multiple wires carry illegal electricity connections to transit camp residents.

Margaret is originally from Ndwedwe in northern KZN; she is amaZulu. Following the breakdown of her marriage, she left Ndwedwe and “came to Durban to look for work so I could raise my children” (Gumede, 13/04/10). Initially she stayed with her brother in KwaMashu. However,

Because I was married by then, traditionally I was not supposed to live with my family. I should have been in my own place, in my own property, under my new family name.

⁴³ Some parts of Cato Crest are colloquially known as ‘stops’ (this is in addition and with some overlap to the 12 Areas). ‘Stops’ refer to places where taxis stop to pick up/drop off passengers. Margaret lived close to the ninth stop taxis would make inside the settlement. The reference to a ‘stop’ is part of a language only residents of Cato Crest understand.

So I decided I needed to look for a place for myself. [And] because eventually my kids would grow and they would eventually want to come to Durban to look for work. My brother's kids also would eventually grow and want to come to Durban to look for work. I saw space will be quite small if my kids and his kids were all there. So that is why I wanted my own place and why I came to Cato Crest.

(Gumede, 13/04/10)

Margaret learnt of a shack in Cato Crest from a colleague when they worked as cleaners together. In 1996 she bought a shack and moved in, until this point her children were living with their grandfather in Ndwedwe and Margaret was travelling home every weekend to raise them. Throughout the hardships she has endured, Margaret's commitment to Christianity has strengthened. She attends a Zionist church in Cato Crest, which brings her great comfort; she says, "being a Christian gives me natural happiness" (Gumede, 13/04/10).

Nkosinathi (Nathi) Zondi is a 29 year old Zulu man, and lives in a shack in Area 2, adjacent to the transit camp, with his two brothers, a sister and her child. Nathi's shack is accessed from a concrete footpath that runs through much of Area 2. It was built by the CMDA in the early 2000s as part of their plans to develop basic infrastructure in the settlement. His wooden shack is comprised of three large rooms and is sparsely furnished. On the front door are several shack numbers; all but the latest number have a line struck through them. Nathi's shack looks out over hundreds of other shacks squashed together further downhill; they go all the way up to the edge of the settlement. By comparison with others, Nathi's shack is spaciouly located. There is vacant land in front of his shack which becomes a space for him and his immediate neighbours to meet and socialise in the evenings and at weekends. Nathi's immediate neighbours are also his family: his uncle lives directly behind his shack and his aunt next to his uncle.

Nathi's mother was a *sangoma* and, in his recollections, was deeply attuned to spirits around her. In 1991, "she told us about this dream she had about a piece of land, no one believed her... a week later she meets her friend [and learns of Cato Crest]. Then we came here, cleared out the bush, erected a shack [and] moved in" (Zondi, 31/03/10). The family moved to Cato Crest on the basis of his

mother's revelation. Nathi's family were early settlers. However, as with Andy's family, they temporarily fled in early 1990s, amid efforts by local white residents to forcefully evict African squatters. His mother eventually returned, but she judged the place too unsafe for her children (forced evictions were followed by violence around the 1994 elections, and then 'taxi wars' in 1995). Nathi continued to stay with his father in nearby Mayville until 1999, when his mother judged he was old enough to be responsible for his own safety. Nathi's parents both died within a few years of each other in the mid-2000s.

As a teenager, Nathi had excelled in school and after matriculating he decided to pursue further education at a college in Durban in order to become a journalist. He has since completed a number of internships for various media companies, but is yet to secure permanent employment. He spends much of his time in the Cato Crest library (built by CMDA) searching online for jobs and reading the newspapers. He was involved in settlement politics as a member of the Area 2 Youth Committee and the ANC Youth League (ANCYL), but in recent years has curtailed his involvement. He remains on friendly terms with committee members and the local councillor (Ward 31).

Deeper into the settlement from Nathi's shack, is one of the oldest shacks in Cato Crest. It belongs to Grace Nkosi who moved to Cato Crest in 1989 with her husband and young family, after fleeing political violence in Greytown, northern KZN. A description of the settlement at this time, Grace's first few years as an early settler and her experience as a settlement leader was given in **section 4.2.2**; in this section her current life is the focus. Grace lives in one room of a two room shack in Area 4, surrounded by her surviving family, including two adult sons, adult daughters and their families. Grace's youngest son was killed in a car accident in 2000. Her eldest son lives in the room next to hers, her other children and nieces and nephews live in separate shacks of a similar size to Grace's. The configuration of the cluster of shacks means that there is a small open space, like a courtyard, onto which almost all the shacks face. In this open space family members socialise, and the women

in the families cook, wash clothes and hang them to dry. Behind her shack are six smaller shacks which she rents to tenants.

Inside her shack is a mattress pushed up against a wall to create space inside during the day, and laid flat on the ground at night. There is a frayed armchair in a corner. On the walls are two adornments – a large poster of Jesus Christ is stuck to one wall, and the horns of a small goat are nailed to another. The horns, in Zulu tradition, are hung to protect one's home, the poster because "I have a Church in my house on Sundays" (Nkosi, 12/11/09). Grace is a Zionist.

Grace was an early settlement leader and active community worker (she worked for an NGO providing outreach services to residents), she was therefore involved in settlement goings on and had access to various communiqués on settlement developments. She has not been employed since 2002, and feels increasingly marginalised from settlement politics. Her last remaining political association is membership of the South African Communist Party (SACP). She attends weekly SACP meetings. However, unlike during her time as settlement leader, she is removed from any internal SACP discussions and unaware of the content of any discussion between settlement representatives of the SACP and the ANC, and so is unable to influence settlement politics. Her knowledge of developments in the settlement is primarily based on gossip carried by her children and grandchildren. Grace does not know when the upgrade will come to Area 4. She is critical of the process and believes the entire programme is twenty years too late, but acknowledges that there will be potential benefits; "A house will make a big difference - there is damp in the current house... [Although] an RDP house is too small, [...] half a log is better than nothing" (Nkosi, 29/09/09).

Hlengiwe Ndebele lives in Area 2, not far from Nathi's shack. Her place is reached from a concrete footpath through a downhill maze of dirt paths that, on occasion, run between two shacks less than 20cms apart. Fruit trees, bushes and pot plants mark the precarious entrance to her dwelling. Half a metre from the main door is a steep 2m drop to another level of shacks. The surrounding area is

densely packed with wooden shacks; the majority belonging to Hlengiwe's relatives. The steepness of the terrain is apparent inside Hlengiwe's shack - its two rooms slope uphill. The first room has two beds in it, lots of luggage stacked up at the sides, a TV, and Zulu trinkets hanging from the ceiling and walls. This room leads onto a second room used for cooking. The inside is very dark. The few windows in the dwelling are boarded over to prevent overheating.

In every interview, Hlengiwe's frail elderly mother, adult daughter and 4 year old granddaughter sit in a row next to her, quietly listening to the conversation, contributing dates and facts Hlengiwe cannot remember, such as her age - a number that does not seem important to them to know. Hlengiwe was born and raised in Msinga, a village in northern KZN, into a traditional Zulu family. She recalls, "Back then, when I was growing up in Msinga, we relied on [subsistence] farming and livestock, so we kept livestock to survive" (Ndebele, 31/03/10). While in Msinga, Hlengiwe had a calling to become a traditional healer or *sangoma*. During her training she met and married her husband; she moved to Umlazi in southern Durban to be with him. To Hlengiwe the decision to move closer to Durban was also a spiritual decision because it enabled her reach more people to heal.

Following a breakdown of her relationship, Hlengiwe decided to leave Umlazi with their four children. She was working at a fruit stall in Durban city centre and observed shacks in Cato Crest on her way to work. She decided to come and build a shack for herself. In 1995, with the help of her half-brother, she built a small wooden shack; her brother built his own around the same time a few metres from hers. Over the years, as her children grew, she built more shacks around hers and the children eventually moved into them with their families.

Hlengiwe believes her family (collectively) will be able to claim up to four or five RDP houses because all the family shacks have shack numbers on them. However, she is not sure when the upgrade will come to Area 2. She says, "We're getting empty promises for a long time. [But] as long as I get a

proper house I don't mind where I go, I'll go anywhere." (Ndebele, 12/03/10). Hlengiwe's statement reflects her desperation and inability to affect the process. In a phased *in situ* upgrade, she is willing to relocate if it means she will receive an RDP house; this choice, however, is not an option that has been put to her or anyone else. So, Hlengiwe continues her daily routine of healing people in Cato Crest, in between domestic chores and looking after her grandchildren, hoping the process will reach Area 2 at some point.

Tsepo Moroka also lives in Area 2. Since 2007, Tsepo, who is originally from Lesotho, lives in a room that he shares with ten other tenants. The room he sleeps in is in a complex of wooden shacks built by landlords (who typically live outside Cato Crest) to rent to as many tenants as possible. Most of the other tenants in his area are single male foreigners. The complex appears poorly constructed and is accessed only through a narrow maze of walkways, which because of shacks built on either side, are perpetually dark. The pit latrine for the tenants is far away from the shacks. At night especially, it is a dangerous trip to make.

Tsepo was born in Maseru, Lesotho, and moved to South Africa as a child with his parents. He was raised in Qwaqwa (a former homeland area on the Lesotho - South Africa border). He is ethnic seSotho. Tsepo left Qwaqwa when he was 13 or 14 years old. He recalls:

I left Qwaqwa because life became hard. There was no money to send me to school, so I knew I had to go and get a job, that's why I came to Durban. I went to my half sister [who lived in Inanda] ... From Inanda I moved to Clermont [where I have an uncle], I was still young. It was 1989. I left at the time of the ethnic violence – when the Zulus were fighting the Xhosa. I left because of the violence.

(Moroka, 23/04/10)

As he grew older, Tsepo wanted his own space independent of his family. His best friend from Qwaqwa, who had been working in Durban, told him about cheap places for rent in the settlement in which he was staying (Cato Crest). In 1994, Tsepo moved from his uncle's shack in Clermont to Cato

Crest. He was a young man without dependents and had no clear future plans, living in rented accommodation suited his needs at the time. For one year, Tsepo rented a room in Cato Crest, before returning to Qwaqwa to join the military⁴⁴. He remained in Qwaqwa for several years before returning to Cato Crest in 2007, leaving a 10 year old son behind.

For his first few months in Cato Crest, Tsepo lived with the friend from Qwaqwa who had initially introduced him to the settlement. This friend helped Tsepo to find a place to rent. Cheap rent was an essential criterion for Tsepo, who as a day-labourer is uncertain how much money he will make in a month. Tsepo ties his tenure decisions to job security (as residents of Gum Tree Road did), this affects his future plans and his take on the upgrade. He says:

[Following the upgrade] I will go somewhere else and rent someplace else. I will still stay in Durban because that's where I find jobs and where I look around for jobs. It doesn't have to be Cato Crest, but [it] must be Durban.

(Moroka, 23/04/10)

Tsepo, as a foreigner and a tenant, has no expectations of benefitting personally from the upgrade and formalisation process.

The following table is a summary of the eight residents who took part in this study.

⁴⁴ Tsepo is evasive and unclear on his military service including which country he was serving at the time.

TABLE 6.1 Cato Crest: overview of interviewee characteristics*

Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity/ Nationality	Resident since	Tenure status	Other characteristics
Bongani Mabuza	Male	42	amaZulu	1994 (in CC**) 2004 (in RDP)	RDP house owner; Landlord	Lives alone; subdivided his RDP house lives in one half, rents the other
Helen Ngcobo	Female	59	amaZulu	1991 (in CC) 2001 (in RDP)	RDP house owner; landlord	Early RDP resident (under CMDA scheme); <i>sangoma</i> , lives with many children and grandchildren
Andrew (Andy) Dlamini	Male	22	amaZulu	1992 (in CC) 2008 (in RDP)	RDP house resident; held in trusteeship by his uncle	Lives with his younger brother; starting a <i>shebeen</i> from his house; orphaned at 18
Margaret Gumede	Female	50	amaZulu	1996 (in CC) 2008 (in transit camp)	Transit camp resident	Lives with husband and three children; runs a crèche from her dwelling
Nkosinathi (Nathi) Zondi	Male	29	amaZulu	1999	Shack owner	Lives with three siblings in a three room shack; a student-journalist
Grace Nkosi	Female	57	amaZulu	1989	Shack owner; landlord	Early settler; lives close by immediate family in a cluster of shacks
Hlengiwe Ndebele	Female	57?	amaZulu	1995	Shack owner	<i>Sangoma</i> ; lives with 11 immediate family members in a cluster of shacks
Tsepo Moroka	Male	36	seSotho/ Lesotho	2007	Shack tenant	Shares one room with 10 others; lived in Cato Crest for a brief period prior to 2007 as a tenant

*Data correct at the time of the interviews. Interviews were conducted over two phases. The first phase ran from 29 September 2009 - 12 November 2009. The second phase ran from 12 March 2010 – 20 April 2010.

**Cato Crest

6.2 States of tenure security and insecurity

The narratives of the eight interviewees illustrate the largeness and diversity of Cato Crest. Up until 2001, when the first interviewee moved into an RDP house, almost the entire settlement was made up of shacks. Since that time, patches of the settlement have been upgraded, resulting in a mix of physical environments that jar at the extremes – for example, the latest RDP house model sits amidst a huddle of shacks. Amongst RDP residents, there is also great diversity (and occasional jealousy). The earliest houses contrast starkly with later ones which have benefitted from an evolution in RDP house design, increased budgets and increased minimum mandatory plot size. An individual's

housing type and the physical environment around the house (tarred roads, street lights and indoor toilets) affects their feelings of personal safety and tenure security. Therefore, this section explores definitions and experiences of tenure security and insecurity by interviewees' housing type.

Over four rounds of interviews, interviewees in Cato Crest were asked different questions on their tenure status, experience and definitions of tenure and physical security and insecurity, their thoughts on title deeds and the effect they believe the upgrade has had on all these things. The following section presents the constituents of tenure security as an ideal and in reality, sources of tenure insecurity, and the strategies employed to secure sufficient tenure in Cato Crest.

6.2.1 The constituents of tenure security

To RDP residents - Bongani, Helen and Andy - security of tenure is tied to confidence in their proof of ownership. Proof takes the form of a formal letter from the municipality that contains at least their name, ID number and door number/address. Between these interviewees, the content of the letter varies from a letter of occupation, deed of transfer, and in Andy's case an inventory on municipal letterhead. None has yet received a title deed, although they expect to do so.

Initially, when Helen came to Cato Crest to build a shack, she and her family's physical labour clearing the land and constructing a dwelling meant that they had a strong sense of ownership over the land and property (as in Gum Tree Road). This ownership protected her from rival claims to 'her' land from other shack dwellers. Despite changes to her dwelling type, her conception of tenure security is still tied to notions of ownership, although the type of evidence required to prove ownership has changed because she did not build the RDP house. In 2001, when Helen moved into her RDP houses, she recalls "I was given a receipt ... That is some sort of title deed, but I've been told by the authorities it is not a title ... It's proof I own this land and can do what I like. I have evidence that I am the owner" (Ngcobo, 27/03/10). The award of a title deed, she anticipates, "won't make any

difference” (Ngcobo, 27/03/10). It will not endow her with any privileges or rights that she believes she does not already hold. To Helen, a Deed of Transfer (the “receipt” she refers to) is sufficient proof of ownership to enable her to live securely and act freely with respect to her land and property use. The value she places on a “receipt” indicates her acceptance of the authority of the municipality to issue and verify her ownership claims; it signifies a change in the relationship between a former shack dweller and a municipality that at one point might have evicted her.

Andy Dlamini’s tenure security is also conceived in terms of the strength of his claims to ownership. However, his tenure security and ownership claims have an additional dimension because of his age and the circumstances under which he obtained an RDP house. He says:

I don’t have a title deed yet. I am safe without a title. I have papers to say I live here, although they are in the name of my uncle. We were given a paper that says this house has this and this - an inventory. My name [...] appears as a minor.

(Dlamini, 24/03/10)

Andy’s tenure security is directly related to his relationship with his uncle, as well as his confidence in the papers that confer ownership. His confidence leads him to assert, “I don’t think there is nothing I can’t do now, because soon I will have a container here for my tuckshop [a concrete extension in front of his house]” (*Ibid.*). Despite not yet receiving a title deed to the house and based on what is essentially an official inventory, with his name, his uncle’s name and the house address, Andy feels he has sufficient proof of ownership to make investments in the property. The confidence is based, in large part, on basic functions he can perform with the inventory and the details that appear on it. In the past, when he lived in a shack, Andy would require a letter from the local councillor to prove his residence. He says “Now I can use the papers that came with my house [for] many different things” (Dlamini, 24/03/10). Official proof of residence is essential to open a bank account and access electricity and water from legal service providers.

Confidence in RDP dwellers' ownership claims can be shaken, however, if basic details on the formal letter are incorrect. For example, Bongani, who lives in Area 10 of Cato Crest, was given a House Handover Certificate that says "Chesterville Incremental Phase 2" - Chesterville is another upgraded settlement in Cato Manor. Bongani refers to the certificate as "this stupid paper" (29/09/09). The effect of this mistake is that it causes Bongani to doubt the strength of his ownership claim i.e. he feels less tenure secure than the other RDP residents. It also causes him to mistrust the municipality. He believes that "The three (the councillor, Ward Committee and municipality) may change their mind, I may get thrown out, [and] new people may move in" (29/09/09). However, his lack of confidence in his ownership claim has not prevented him investing in the property - he has built shacks and a fruit stall and changed the internal layout of the dwelling. This suggests that, even in the absence of strong written proof of ownership, physical occupation may deliver sufficient tenure security to prompt investment.

Margaret Gumede currently lives in a transit camp. At each stage of her relocation in the upgrade process, the evidence she requires for any ownership claim and related tenure security changes. When she lived in a shack, Margaret's claim to own her shack was strong enough for a shack number to be issued, making her eligible for the upgrade process and a subsequent move to the transit camp. In the transit camp she has no ownership claims on her room. Of greater value is a letter that proves her right to occupy a transit camp room. She says, "I am safe here because I have that paper. Without that paper I will not get a house. The municipality must check that paper, then I get a house" (Gumede, 12/03/10). While she is living in the transit camp, a letter of occupation guarantees both tenure security in the camp and eligibility for an RDP house thereafter.

Without formal letters (the ideal proof of ownership), shack dwellers' claims to ownership are tied to their experience of obtaining a dwelling. Those who cleared the land and built a dwelling themselves have a greater sense of ownership. For example, Hlengiwe Ndebele, who built her shack with her

brother, displays confidence in her claims to ownership through the demarcation of her land with trees and plants. Similarly Grace Nkosi, who built her shack with her husband, demarcates the boundary of the land she claims to own with plants and in places a fence. However, in the current political climate in Cato Crest, where there is deep mistrust of settlement leaders, informal proof of ownership does not translate into tenure security and a shack number provides no guarantee that she will receive an RDP house. Grace, a former leader, is particularly worried because of her often confrontational relationship with the current settlement leaders. She says, “my relationship to the structures is not good, I fight too much. They [the leaders] can take down the [shack], I believe this because I have seen it happen to others... [With a title deed] I will know I have legal ownership now, and nobody can do anything to me” (Nkosi, 29/09/09). To Grace, a title deed affords a level of tenure security independent of the nature of her relationship with settlement leaders.

Tsepo Moroka, a shack tenant, has no ownership claims and the weakest tenure security of all the interviewees. His tenure is dependent almost entirely upon his relationship with his landlord. He says, “The owner is the only one who can chase me from this place. I feel safe the owner won’t chase me, but I’m not confident, because there are many people outside looking for a place to stay” (Moroka, 20/03/10). Currently, Tsepo has no reason to fear eviction, but he is conscious that he is in a weak position to negotiate his tenure with the landlord, who holds greater power in their relationship.

Across dwelling type, secure tenure is broadly regarded as the extent to which ownership claims can be made and substantiated. The stronger the claims, the more secure people feel. The strongest claims are those of RDP dwellers with formal letters indicating their ownership; while the weakest claims are held by tenants. Confidence in one’s ownership of a dwelling and plot of land (across dwelling type) appears to raise aspirations and prompts investments in the land and property, such

as extensions to living space and beautification of the surrounding land. Confidence is not dependent on a title deed.

6.2.2 Sources of tenure insecurity

The extent to which individuals feel safe and free from the threat of eviction and fear of being 'chased away' ties security of tenure to other securities, especially personal safety and physical security, which are both strongly related to housing type. Outdoor latrines, penetrable walls and roofs, and overcrowded residential spaces with lots of dark alleyways contribute to a sense of fear and personal insecurity amongst shack dwellers, and places people at greater risk of destruction caused by shack fires. Tsepo, a shack tenant who lives with nine other tenants says, "I'm not safe where I am. The owner of the house does not renovate the house, so I can't buy what I want for the house because it might be stolen. The toilet is far away and I'm scared to go there at night" (Moroka, 23/04/10). The nature of his tenant-landlord relationship means he cannot make demands for a rental contract (tenure security), nor improvements to the dwelling (personal security). He feels insecure, based on the possibility of eviction, theft or violence. Both personal insecurity and weak tenure security adversely affect Tsepo's attitude to investments in the home.

For RDP residents, the house itself and the upgraded area in which it stands is a tool for improved safety. Andy observes, "It's hard to break into an RDP house. There is now an open space, it is harder to run, not like in the shacks. In shacks you can just run away, enter one simple shack where they cannot find you. It's kind of hard to break into here. Also people have better guards on their house." (Dlamini, 14/04/10). However, Andy is keen to stress that the reduced risk of violence and theft from an RDP house does not necessarily mean improved public safety. He says, "it's not like the criminals around this place can stop doing what they are doing, they will find a new way, so they just won't have as much advantage as they did" (Dlamini, 14/04/10). Andy's perspective confirms transit camp resident Margaret Gumede's concern. She worries, "The new look will be great. There will be

less crime I hope, but then people who do crime will not change. So maybe at night it will still be unsafe” (Gumede, 13/04/10). The upgrade of Cato Crest, to Andy and Margaret, reduces opportunities for crime and violence, but has little effect on the motivations of perpetrators; consequently residents’ perceptions of a lack of public safety persist post-upgrade.

Outside the protection of one’s dwelling, people face the risk of personal assault and violence, which seems unaffected by the upgrade. In 2010, Andy Dlamini was walking back to his house one night from a friend’s place. He was shot with a gun: “We didn't know the guys who did the shooting ... Young men here are always taking pot shots for no real reason” (Dlamini, 14/04/10). Without any apparent motive for the violence, there seems little action that residents can take to mitigate this risk, except to stay inside, especially at night.

In addition to the risk of crime and violence against an individual, there is the ever present threat of indiscriminate communal violence. This fear largely stems from people's historic experiences of such violence. As a child, Nathi Zondi witnessed IFP and ANC instigated conflict in Inanda. This conflict pushed his family to Cato Crest. In Cato Crest, he and his family were never physically safe. Violence between Cato Crest residents and the formal residents in Manor Gardens, and intra-settlement violence around the rights to run taxi routes, created an environment of fear and insecurity that he feels could return. To residents, tenure security is inconsequential to managing the risk of communal violence, because, as Bongani Mabuza says, “things change all the time when there is the violence. Some people run away this side, others that side” (Mabuza, 22/10/09).

6.2.3 Strategies to secure tenure in Cato Crest

Strategies for tenure and physical security are entwined and often tied to individual strategies for resilience. Shack tenants and owner-occupiers are at greater risk of tenure and physical insecurity in Cato Crest than RDP residents; their physical environment and dwelling increases exposure to

specific crimes like burglary and attacks in/near their shack. Their strategies therefore tend to differ from those of RDP residents. A greater emphasis is placed on certain social relations and the role they play in aiding security; there is also a gender dimension to the relationship.

For residents living in shacks (those currently living in shacks, and when RDP residents lived in shacks), the extent of one's tenure and physical security is related to the proximity of close and trusted relations, especially immediate family. Early settlers such as Grace Nkosi, Hlengiwe Ndebele, and the mother of Nathi Zondi, were able to claim large plots of land and subsequently settle their families in shacks around them. Immediate family members, who are also neighbours, strengthen the ability of the family to act cohesively to see off threats to their tenure and personal insecurity. Family-neighbours, interviewees felt, are people who will quickly respond to calls for help, and provide extra protection by listening out for people moving about at night, which helps to mitigate the risk of burglary and personal attack.

Grace, Hlengiwe, Margaret and Helen – all women interviewees, feel safest when adult males are part of the family-neighbour set up. These men tend to perform a number of duties, including help to build or repair their dwelling, and they generally help these women to feel safe. Grace's eldest son lives in the room next to her, she cites him and her other relatives nearby as a dependable source of security for her (Nkosi, notes on social relations map, 13/10/09). Hlengiwe's brother, who lives a few metres from her shack, is cited as an important and constant source of support (Ndebele, notes on social relations map, 17/03/10). Margaret lives with her husband and her adult son lives nearby. Since moving from her shack, Margaret feels displaced from her former neighbours (although they still live close by) and her former environment; knowledge of both had helped her feel safe. The unfamiliar environment of the transit camp causes her to depend on her immediate family for safety more than before (Gumede, notes on social relations map, 17/03/10). Over the years she

had lived in Cato Crest, Helen has lost her husband and adult son. She feels exposed and vulnerable to danger within her home since their deaths (Ngcobo, notes on social relations map, 08/04/10).

For shack-dwelling tenants in Cato Crest, as in Gum Tree Road, strategies to secure tenure appear to be tied to job security. Earning a good salary means tenants are in a stronger position to exercise agency when deciding where and how to live. Tsepo says, “When I’m right – with a secure permanent job, I will move from Cato Crest, somewhere better, or somewhere safer” (Moroka, 23/04/10). His decision to stay in Cato Crest, with its poor tenure security and unsafe living conditions, is a compromise he makes because it is what he can afford in a location close to the city centre.

RDP residents, by contrast, are more tenure secure than shack dwellers and their dwelling affords a greater degree of protection from fire and theft. However, as Helen Ngcobo notes, the environment in which people live and children are raised does not change:

I wouldn’t differentiate between the RDP homes and the shacks, an informal settlement is not a good place to raise kids. Children raised in the shacks then move to the RDP homes and take their behaviour with them. Their behaviour gets even worse. I wouldn’t say the informal settlement is a better environment than the RDP homes, or that RDP homes are better than the informal settlement.

(Ngcobo, 20/04/10)

The greatest threat to RDP residents comes from a general lack of public safety in Cato Crest which affects both the informal settlement and upgraded areas. To manage this threat, all residents take calculated risks when going out at night, factoring in the distance between where they want to go and their dwelling, the route they will have to take, and the purpose for being outside at all.

6.3 Identity and social relations

Over the course of the lives of the eight residents of Cato Crest, aspects of their identity and certain social relations have changed - as was the case with residents of Gum Tree Road. This section

explores the upgrade and formalisation process as a catalyst for change to aspects of an individual's identity and social relations; it also identifies those aspects that appear unaffected by the process.

6.3.1 Identity

No interviewee was born in Cato Crest (although Andy was raised there); for the majority notable changes to their political identity and expressions of ethnic identity coincided with moving to Cato Crest. Depending on when they moved there, some interviewees, in their attempts to create a space for relatively peaceful co-existence, suppressed overt displays of their political and ethnic identities (these settlers had typically fled political and ethnic violence in the late 1980s/1990s). Such attempts have had some success in normalising interactions between individuals e.g. Grace Nkosi (an early settler) recalls the story of an IFP member in a shack near her who, when she heard a mobile phone had been stolen, knocked on all the doors in the area, asked questions, and got the phone back. Grace says, "We are ANC here, IFP there, but we still help each other" (Nkosi, 29/09/09).

However, incidents of political and ethnic discrimination and targeted attacks are a constant risk in Cato Crest. Nathi Zondi, who witnessed the 2008 xenophobic attacks in the settlement, says:

I expect this xenophobic violence to happen again. In Zulu we have an idiom: where water once ran, it will come through and run again. So with these attacks, there is a danger they will come back again, and even be bigger than before. Because there are still these issues. There is no smoke without fire. You know the problem that these Africans have with foreigners is that they get paid less than we do, so we lose out on jobs. These issues are there.

(Zondi, 31/03/10)

On ethnic-based discrimination between South Africans, he explains further:

Tribalism is a different animal from xenophobia. ... Back in the 1980s/90s it was the Zulu guys instigating – 'ah the Pondo... Eastern Cape!' But nowadays, what I've noticed [is] the Eastern Cape people themselves have grown attached to the idea, 'I must not get along with a Zulu person' ... I'm not sure why [it's not addressed], I sense it's fear or actually when you try to address this situation, eventually higher up the hierarchy there

are people who are not into what you are trying to do. 'Reunite the Xhosas and the Zulus, you are crazy!' It is political orchestrated higher up.

(Zondi, 31/03/10)

Nathi believes the contemporary ethnic unrest in Cato Crest and elsewhere is part of a historic narrative that pitches amaZulu against amaXhosa. He also believes the conflict continues because of party political interests. Nathi has no evidence to support this belief, it is based on stories he and other young people have been told so often that they are convinced of their authenticity. Nevertheless, the effect of wide belief in this narrative is that in contemporary Cato Crest, ethnicity is seen as sufficient cause to attack or be attacked.

The continual possibility of attack based on aspects of one's identity means that later arrivals alter or conceal parts of their identity to 'fit it' and avoid unwanted attention (later settlers in Gum Tree Road too altered expressions of their identity to 'fit in', although under different social pressures). For example, Tsepo Moroka, the most recent arrival in Cato Crest and a non-Zulu and foreigner, is mindful of the xenophobic violence in the past and the occasional occurrences since then. He, therefore, does not engage in public displays of his culture and nor do other non-Zulus or foreigners he knows in his area. He says, "On Heritage Day people go and celebrate cultural things in the townships, but here in Cato Crest it is not that popular ... I think maybe it would make other people angry if we did it. I think it is safer not to do it." (Moroka, 23/04/10).

The upgrade and formalisation process currently being implemented in Cato Crest does not seem to affect social rules on expressions of ethnic identity (**section 6.3.3** discusses changes to political identity). The effects of the process on identities seem to be confined to changes to the labels attached to people, such as 'shopkeeper' or 'landlord', once they have received an RDP house. Receipt of an RDP house appears to raise aspirations and prompt investments in the dwelling (**section 6.2.1**). Since occupying his RDP house, Bongani Mabuza has set about maximising his

livelihood options by realising the financial value of the space within the house and the value of the plot of land surrounding the house. This has changed his identity in the area in terms of how he is known and labelled by others in the settlement. Through his livelihood portfolio, he is now known as the local grocer, drug dealer and landlord. Similarly, Andy Dlamini is currently building a *shebeen/spaza* shop in front of his RDP house; this will change the labels others assign to him – he will become a shopkeeper and *shebeen* owner. Since moving into her RDP house, Helen Ngcobo has erected shacks behind her property to rent to tenants, so she is a landlord. However, Helen was a landlord before the upgrade. This suggests that, while the upgrade and formalisation process *can* be a catalyst for changes to identities or labels, there is little reason to believe that identities cannot change without the upgrade process.

6.3.2 Social relations

The continual displacement and relocation of most residents during the upgrade and formalisation process (from shack, to transit camp, to RDP house) strains an individual's social relations, especially those principally based on frequent visual contact and daily interaction, but to surprising effect. Findings from Gum Tree Road suggest that where visual connections between individuals diminish or are lost, certain social relations break down (**section 5.3.2**). For example, relations with former neighbours lose their relevance when a person moves from the area (neighbours keep an eye on one's shack). Also, if a person does not make investments in time and cost (transport) to visit friends close to their former home, the friendships usually break down. The effect can be a narrowing of one's social world, at least until new relationships are formed in the new settlement. It may be fair to assume that in an upgrade process that demands continual movement, each movement in the process tears one's social fabric.

Helen Ngcobo lives in Greenfield, in an upgraded part of Cato Crest. She does not interact with her current neighbours (those who live at either side of her house) and in the nine years she has lived in

Greenfield, she has made only one friend in the area. She says she does not want to know anyone else who lives there, other than her former friends and neighbours from Area 2. Helen believes “The allocation was an error, it didn’t happen on purpose ... The [house] numbers are all jumbled. So 28 is not near 29. All my neighbours from Area 2 had numbers in a row, but we are not together here” (Ngcobo, 27/03/10). As a result of this allocation error, Helen lives far away from a cluster of former friends and neighbours. Living apart has not prompted her to befriend new people. Instead she frequently walks past her new neighbours to another part of Greenfield to continue social interactions with her former neighbours and friends from Area 2.

Helen’s behaviour suggests that some space-based relationships (i.e. neighbourly relations) are transferable to new spaces, but only where it is possible to easily access those relations (without major time and other costs). The experience of moving to Greenfield was shared with her former neighbours and has served to strengthen the relationship between them, seemingly leaving Helen unwilling to invest in building new relations. Her behaviour may also reflect a change in the conditions that demanded closer interaction with one's neighbours e.g. moving to an RDP house makes it less important for neighbours to mind each other’s dwellings.

Margaret Gumede moved to the transit camp alongside her neighbours and friends from Stop 9. Some of her friends have since moved from the transit camp into RDP houses in different parts of Cato Crest and Margaret makes the effort to visit them. These friendships were initially built through visual familiarity. Once the friendship is established, it seems that continuous visual connection and living in close proximity are less vital for friendships to be maintained, although living in the same settlement does enable visits. To Margaret, the spatial distribution of her friends has expanded the spatial boundaries of her ‘community’ (which were limited first to Stop 9 and then to the transit camp). That is, the upgrade gives her a reason to enter parts of the settlement she would not have

previously entered - it has broadened her spatial world (Gumede, notes on social relations map, 24/03/10).

As the momentum behind the upgrade and formalisation process increases, all the interviewees were able to identify changes to their relationships with members of the local elite, especially at the Area level. The interviewees generally concur with Nathi Zondi's description of the current hierarchy of authority in Cato Crest⁴⁵:

The Area Committee informs the people and the people inform the Area Committee. The Area Committee members go to the BEC [Branch Executive Committee of the ANC]. The Deputy Councillor and [Ward] Secretary are part of the BEC. The BEC goes to the [ANC] Ward Councillor. The Ward Councillor goes to the municipality.

(Zondi, 12/03/10)

Nathi's description illustrates the entwining of local and party politics in Cato Crest and residents' apparent acceptance of this structure. He also describes a dialectical relationship between the Area Committee and ordinary residents. He says, "in Area Committee meetings [...] there is a debate. [In] Community meetings [there] are no debates, people are just being spoon-fed" (Zondi, 12/03/10). In the past, Nathi explains, members of the Area Committee used to act as mediators to resolve disputes between residents. If there was a conflict, he expressed confidence that the Committee was able to resolve it. However, "Now their function has changed and they are only responsible for giving information about what is happening in the settlement" (Zondi, notes on social relations map, 17/03/10). Helen Ngcobo agrees with Nathi. To her, the Area 2 Committee used to be an authoritative source of information. They used to be able to answer the questions of residents and engage in debates about local development. Over the years, she feels, they have lost their importance and have become only a means to deliver information for the BEC and Ward Councillor.

⁴⁵ Although for some residents the Ward Committee is the ANC BEC. Grace Nkosi says, "there is no ward committee, there is only one political committee, the ANC, driving development in the community" (29/09/09). Meth (2011) gives a good description of the variety of governance structures in Cato Crest, and uncovers some (e.g. street committees) that the interviewees did not mention.

The more their remit diminishes, the less she trusts them (Ngcobo, notes on social relations map, 08/04/10).

Bongani Mabuza is an Area 10 Committee member and has been for several years. He has no direct relationship to the local councillor, Ward Committee or the BEC. His few attempts to contact his local councillor directly have failed (he says the councillor's wife or children field phone calls and say the councillor is unavailable). Interviewees have noticed a change in the function of the Area Committee and the increasingly insignificant role it plays in people's lives. The change has been accompanied by a breakdown of trust and confidence in the institution. It is unclear what caused the change, although Bongani speculates that it may relate to the allocation of resources tied to the upgrade process. He argues, "maybe 60% of houses are allocated to people the councillor decides on. All three (municipality, Councillor, Ward Committee) sell the other 40%." (Mabuza, 29/09/09). Because of these practices, he believes, residents and Area Committee members are excluded from all decision making opportunities regarding the allocation of resources and Area Committees are reduced to relaying information from above. The reduced role of the Area Committee means residents are unable to meaningfully participate in any part of the upgrade process; this disengagement seems to give rise to alternative theories on how the process works and how it can be manipulated.

6.3.3 Identity and social relations

Certain identities facilitate entry to social groups that are significant to an individual - these are groups that offer emotional and/or financial support, provide companionship and can offer access to power and influence. Some identities (such as a political or religious identity) can be altered to enter a group; some cannot (such as ethnicity). For example, Grace, Helen and Margaret (older women interviewees) are Christian. Their religious identity facilitates access to a church, which they have found is an important physical space to meet people and socialise outside their families. Tsepo

Moroka, a seSotho foreigner, lives in an area of tenants from all over southern Africa. This cluster builds a sense of 'community' based on minority identities. Tsepo says that the tenants share an understanding of the difficulties of life in Cato Crest and show great compassion for each other (Moroka, notes on community map, 14/04/10). This compassion forms the basis for interaction and mutual respect, the foundation for friendship, and helps to strengthen his sense of security.

The remainder of the section explores whether the upgrade and formalisation process provides an incentive to change aspects of one's identity and subsequent membership of a social group in order to gain greater power and influence over the process. Margaret Gumede and Hlengiwe Ndebele gave two narratives that illustrated how political identity can facilitate access to power and influence. Margaret Gumede is 59 years old and witnessed some of the worst party-political based violence in KZN. It is her belief that tenure security and personal safety are affected by political allegiance. On the basis of this belief, Margaret joined the IFP when she lived in Ndwedwe. She recalls: "I had no interest in any political party. Eventually I did have to get a card. We lived in a side that was predominantly IFP. So eventually I had to buy an IFP membership card. Not that I believed in the IFP, just for safety. I don't know even one policy." (Gumede, 13/04/10).

Some time after moving to Cato Crest in 1996, Margaret joined the ANC. Her pragmatic attitude to party political membership is part of a narrative of safety, in which changing a political identity to suit the prevailing political environment is done out of necessity, in order to affect survival and opportunities in life. Margaret's current experience of the upgrade and local politics in Cato Crest adds evidence to support her belief. She claims, "[in] this transit camp area, people will join the ANC because it is an ANC dominated area" (Gumede, 13/04/10). In the upgrade process in Cato Crest, relocation to the transit camp is determined by the local ANC councillor and ANC dominated Ward Committee. Margaret's claim implies that there are no non-ANC members (or they are concealed) who live in the transit camp; and that this may be a non-official eligibility criterion for relocation to a

transit camp and eventually to an RDP house. Margaret's behaviour suggests that she became an ANC member because her personal safety demanded it; the link she makes between her political identity and the upgrade process is most likely retrospective.

Hlengiwe Ndebele provides a different narrative to Margaret Gumede's pragmatic changes to her political identity. Hlengiwe lives in a shack and is uncertain when the upgrade process will reach her area. She is a member of the IFP and has been since childhood; her Zulu identity is key to her membership and is tied to her sense of 'Zuluness'; she would never consider changing this identity. Although she is in a political minority in Cato Crest, she believes her association with the IFP enables her to influence opportunities in other people's lives. To her, the IFP is a group of likeminded people who act cohesively to support other members of their group. For example, Hlengiwe mobilised fellow IFP members in Cato Crest to raise funds to pay for a funeral for another IFP member. Hlengiwe is able to influence her political leadership but does not seem motivated to use her relations with the party elite to try to advance her position in the upgrade process. Instead, she uses her access to power and influence for what she thinks is important - helping people, especially fellow Zulus. To her, the upgrade process is something that will come, in time.

This section explored the upgrade and formalisation process as a catalyst for change to aspects of an individual's identity and social relations. While the process affects changes to labels such as 'landlord', aspects of political identity and some social relations (with friends, neighbours and the Area Committee), it does not seem to cause the changes. Interviewees had similar labels before the upgrade, political and ethnic identities were suppressed and managed when people first moved to Cato Crest and adapted to the prevailing social rules, and the decline in relations with the Area Committee seems part of a wider trend whereby power and authority is being concentrated away from the grassroots.

6.4 The relationships between tenure and identity; and tenure and social relations

This section proceeds to look at how aspects of an individual's identity and social relations relate to tenure. The analysis focuses on two aspects of tenure: access to land (and within this access to the upgrade and formalisation process) and tenure security.

6.4.1 The role of identity and social relations in forging access to land

In order to gain access to land in Cato Crest, settlers first had to know about the settlement and then negotiate available land and/or a dwelling. The pattern of settlement in Cato Crest is similar to Gum Tree Road. As in Gum Tree Road, there are broadly three types of settlement pattern: in the first, early settlers identify and mark their ownership of a plot of land. Typically, after arrival they seek out landowners to request permission to stay and secure a measure of group tenure security. In the second, later arrivals either ask the permission of existing settlers directly to build their own dwelling or they buy permission through the purchase of a plot of land or shack from an existing settler. The third pattern refers to those who inherit land and a dwelling through the death of (usually) a parent – they are at least second generation residents of Cato Crest. The eight interviewees fitted into one of these types of settlement pattern. Instrumental to their ability to settle in Cato Crest were their social relations and aspects of identity, in recent years these are also perceived to facilitate access to the upgrade and formalisation process.

In the late 1980s, when the current wave of settlers first arrived, Cato Crest was already a well known settlement. Nathi Zondi's grandfather was a tenant of an Indian landlord about 50 years before his mother moved to the settlement in 1991; Cato Crest is a part of his family's history. Nathi says, "He came for the same reason as we did, for jobs in town" (Zondi, 12/03/10). The draw of Cato Crest to most settlers was and remains its location. This, alongside large swathes of vacant land and the basic infrastructure of an earlier settlement (roads, paths, drinking water from a nearby factory), appealed to early settlers. Grace Nkosi and her family arrived at the same time as many other

families fleeing political violence in the province. These early settlers initially worked together and negotiated with the Natal Provincial Administration for permission to stay in Cato Crest, which was granted in 1991. Until the number of residents dramatically increased in 1994 around the time of the first democratic elections in the country and renewed political violence, these early settlers formed a 'community' of common interest based on issues of tenure and security.

Although Hlengiwe Ndebele arrived in 1995, after the settlement was well established, she acted like an early settler. On her trips from Umlazi into Durban, where she worked at a fruit stall, Hlengiwe had witnessed shacks in Cato Crest. This prompted her, and her brother, to find an unsettled area and start to build their shacks. The area may have been unsettled because the very steep terrain made it undesirable to those who had settled before her. Hlengiwe did not ask anyone for permission.

Helen Ngcobo heard about the settlement in 1991 from a friend who worked on the same vase stall she did, before it was widely known as a settlement. Helen and her family, when they decided to move to Cato Crest, acted like early settlers and built a shack without asking permission from neighbours (there were none) or the authorities. Margaret Gumede and Bongani Mabuza also heard of Cato Crest through work colleagues who were living in the settlement. Margaret arrived in 1996 and Bongani in 1994, they followed the second settlement pattern and bought their way into Cato Crest. Margaret recalls:

A work colleague [...] told me about Cato Crest. She and her mother lived here until they moved to Inanda. When they moved, the work colleague asked her mother if I can move into their house ... I paid for the site in Cato Crest.

(Gumede, 13/04/10)

Bongani initially lived in Cato Crest as a tenant, after a work colleague identified a room that he could rent. Tsepo Moroka also found a room to rent through his friend who lived in Cato Crest.

Interestingly, in the cases of Helen, Margaret, Bongani and Tsepo, the social relations used to gain access to the settlement tend not to feature as important for any other tenure need, including tenure security, repairs to/construction of the dwelling and tenure transactions. Only where family facilitated the entry of other family members (e.g. as Grace and Hlengiwe did) did the relationships continue to be of any importance for tenure-related issues.

Nathi Zondi and Andy Dlamini both inherited their shacks on the death of a parent. Nathi inherited the shack with his three siblings, who all still live there; he considers them all to have joint ownership. Their ownership was uncontested; his immediate neighbours are also close family (his late mother's siblings). Andy's ownership of the shack was also uncontested. He too had family members nearby and neighbours sympathetic to his circumstances tried to look out for his best interests, as they still do. Hlengiwe Ndebele's experience when settling in Cato Crest is the exception to an otherwise general rule that "Anyone can come and settle here. [But] They must ask their friends, and then build next to their friend's house" (Nkosi, 29/09/09) i.e. one's social relations determine access to the settlement and specific plots of land. Adherence to the rules means established settlers in turn facilitate access for others, in practice usually family members and kin.

The upgrade and formalisation process has altered the perceived application of this rule in some parts of the settlement. Grace says: "The councillor decides who get RDP houses, [while] here in the informal settlement, only the residents decide" (Nkosi, 29/09/09). Grace distinguishes two types of authority over access to the settlement – residents' rules in the informal settlement, and the councillor's rules in the formal upgrade sections. Interviewees widely believe that the upgrade process is being implemented by corrupt actors, and so, in addition to legitimate channels, access is perceived to be achieved through relations with current settlement leaders, because they are responsible for drawing up housing lists and allocating RDP houses.

Bongani says, “People can be taken off the [housing] list for no reason. [I know] because new people have been allocated houses and the old people [those who have lived in Cato Crest longer] are in transit camps. Who is on the housing list and stays there depends on their relationship with the Area and Ward Committee and the Councillor” (Mabuza, 29/09/09). Even after a housing list has been drawn up, Bongani believes the local councillor of Ward 30 and the settlement committee manipulate the allocation of houses. He says corner houses are the most desirable because there is more space to extend them, “these houses are given to friends of the Committee and Councillor. That’s why we can’t choose our houses” (Mabuza, 29/09/09).

In Gum Tree Road, residents believe housing lists will be fairly composed by settlement leaders on the basis of possession of a shack number and taking into account whoever has lived there longest. In Cato Crest, Margaret Gumede and others believe that the housing list, composed by various committee members and the councillor, is not composed in a ‘fair’ way. She says that on the list “is a mix of people with a CC [shack] number and people without a CC [shack] number. It is not done by people who have been here for longer” (Gumede, 12/03/10). Residents do not trust the official eligibility criteria for a housing subsidy. Although none of the interviewees (in RDP houses or the transit camp) had experienced this method of access themselves, they strongly believe that, for those otherwise ineligible, the only way to be put on the list or fast-tracked is through social connections to the current leaders.

6.4.2 The role of identity and social relations in securing tenure

In Cato Crest, certain identities seem to be concealed, celebrated or actively promoted in order to strengthen tenure claims, secure tenure and manage risks to physical security. Minority identities often appear to be concealed to manage fear of others and the repercussions of that fear for tenure security and personal safety, for example, *sangomas* conceal themselves to avoid witchcraft trials, foreigners to avoid xenophobic attacks, and shack dwellers to avoid ostracism in mainstream society.

Celebrated or promoted identities such as citizenship or political identity tend to contribute to a dichotomous discourse on citizen versus foreigner, ANC versus other political party identities, and shack dweller versus formal dweller.

Helen Ngcobo is a *sangoma* - a witchdoctor, an identity that she conceals in Cato Crest. At the time she arrived in Cato Crest, *sangomas* were being identified, tried in a mock court, and chased away as witches. The fear was that, if a *sangoma* can heal people, she can also kill people. Helen recalls:

People of Cato Crest don't really know me as a healer. Most of my patients come from outside of Cato Crest ... I don't even have a sign here. Several times I was suspected of witchcraft, here in Cato Crest. Several times I had to go to a gathering of community members and defend myself. They said if they find out I have been using witchcraft they will kill me ... Even today there are people who accuse me of witchcraft.

(Ngcobo, 20/04/10)

Helen was tried several times as a witch and had to defend herself against accusations of performing witchcraft against fellow residents. Today, she continues to hide her identity. This illustrates the power of traditional beliefs amongst Cato Crest residents and their fear of witchcraft and *sangomas*. Helen has had to hide or defend her *sangoma* identity in order to continue living in Cato Crest (her tenure security) and to live in relative peace (personal security).

Certain identities are also concealed outside the settlement. Andy Dlamini recalls that some of his classmates in school would lie about living in an informal settlement. Amongst his peers, it was a source of shame; housing type speaks to differences in family wealth amongst children. Andy recalls:

In school some children lied about where they came from if they came from the informal settlement. Imagine being at school knowing other children are better than you. There was shame to living in the informal settlement - the informal settlement is always bad ... Children were teased for living in the informal settlement, so that is why children think it is a good idea to lie about it.

(Dlamini, 14/04/10)

Bucholtz and Hall (2004) would call this 'denaturalisation' – Andy's peers teased him and other children who lived in informal settlements, so they relied on suppressing or lying about this aspect of their identity in order to fit in. The behaviour of these children reflects wider values in a society that stigmatises and on occasion vilifies shack dwellers (discussed in **section 2.1**).

As in Gum Tree Road, national identity and citizenship is promoted amongst South African residents to justify their entitlement to state resources, but it is a discourse based on the exclusion of others. Bongani Mabuza believes that he deserves the benefits of the upgrade because he is a South African. He says, "I'm a SA citizen, I'm not born outside, I'm not a foreigner. I was born here, my culture is here" (Mabuza, 22/10/09). He goes further to elaborate his entitlement claim, "I have earned this plot. Not because I am an Area Committee member, but because I am South African. I know my rights" (Mabuza, 19/10/09). This sentiment is popular amongst all the South African interviewees in Cato Crest. However, for Bongani, this discourse of rights, entitlements and citizenship has a historic dimension. He experienced and participated first hand in anti-apartheid activism in the 1970s and 80s. Bongani recalls:

On [May 1st, worker's day] 1985, I refused to go to school. The children refused to go to school. They were crying 'No - this is a *Bantu*⁴⁶ education' ... There was violence and burning of school at that time. I participated; I could not duck and hide ... All the things that were government's, at that time, we destroyed it ... To [destroy] we plan together, because we had no weapons at that time. Our weapons were stones. The government was the target. The reason was against the government - because it was racist and because of apartheid.

(Mabuza, 22/10/09)

Bongani's participation in 'stay-aways' and *toitosis* (protests) has had a profound effect on his conception of citizenship, which he relates to his direct contribution to the creation of a post-apartheid South Africa. That is, his activist background has forged a South African identity that leads

⁴⁶ Here '*Bantu*' is used pejoratively to refer to African education and black South Africans in general under apartheid.

him to believe he helped to create and is therefore entitled to resources from the post-apartheid state. Foreigners, to Bongani, did not participate – or at least not to the same extent that he did – and therefore have no entitlement claims.

Bongani and others assume that foreigners feel entitled to state resources. Tsepo Moroka is a foreigner who has made no investments in his dwelling or any land in Cato Crest. His situation contrasts with that of Kafele Abdullah in Gum Tree Road, a foreigner who owns two shacks and has two South African sons for whom he is committed to financially provide. Commenting on the upgrade process, Tsepo says, “I have no problem, there is nothing I can do about the upgrade coming and me not benefiting” (Moroka, 23/04/10). It seems that where a foreigner has made no investments in a dwelling or land, he/she has no expectation that the upgrade and formalisation process will improve his/her situation, and no belief that he/she should receive a housing subsidy.

This section looked at how aspects of an individual’s identity and social relations relate to tenure – specifically access to land, access to the upgrade and formalisation process, and tenure security. The evidence presented here strongly suggests that social relations are more important than aspects of identity in securing access to land and in recent years to the upgrade and formalisation process. In terms of securing tenure, manipulating aspects of identity feature more strongly. While this difference seems coincidental, it highlights the different strategies individuals are required to employ to gain initial access to land and housing (getting there), and then to secure themselves from threats to tenure (staying there).

6.5 Vulnerability and resilience, and its relationship to identity and social relations

The analysis thus far has focused on the value interviewees place on ‘tenure’, ‘social relations’ and ‘identity’ as concepts and as assets that they hold and are able to direct for a range of purposes including tenure security. This section aims to explore how, why and under what circumstances

interviewees apply their identity and social relations to withstand shocks and manage risk in order to move them towards their aspirations of, for example, financial security and in some cases survival.

6.5.1 Resilience and vulnerability

The resilience strategies adopted by the eight residents of Cato Crest shape and are shaped by their aspirations. Both aspirations and resilience strategies change over time; they are flexible and responsive to changing circumstances and the environment. As a teenager, Bongani Mabuza wanted to be a lawyer. Gradually, as anti-apartheid efforts increased and with them his role as an activist and protester, his education was disrupted and whatever professional aspirations he had for himself fell by the wayside. As an adult, he has held a number of low-skilled and low-paid jobs. Prior to moving to Cato Crest, he worked as a security guard, but failed to earn enough money to match his growing costs (incurred by an expanding family). Bongani was without social connections that he could exploit for a better job, he was getting older and he lacked qualifications. His resolve has been to do anything for financial resilience - "I could choose before, but I can't choose now. I will do anything." (Mabuza, 22/10/09). This attitude reflects a situation in which, without connections and education, the livelihood choices available to him are restricted. The 'anything' that he does (shack landlord and drug dealer) has resulted in a high risk livelihood strategy that has increased his vulnerability.

Grace Nkosi was a teacher before being forced to move to Cato Crest because of political violence that threatened the lives of her children. Her aspirations and resilience were tied to the move; she says:

[When moving to Cato Crest] my hope was I was going to have a big house here with my family. Each and every person was going to have his own house. But it couldn't happen. And I thought also we were going to get some good jobs, but we couldn't find jobs. Most of the people here thought they were going to get jobs because they are staying next to town, but it didn't happen.

(Nkosi, 21/11/09)

Grace's move to Cato Crest was part of a strategy for survival and then resilience. However, all of her (modest) aspirations for life in Cato Crest failed to materialise. She has since been compelled to change how she conceives her family's wellbeing; no longer is there an emphasis on good jobs in a good environment, instead her focus is on her grandchildren finishing school and being relatively healthy. Most of her grandchildren have dropped out of school – three because of teen pregnancy. Her concern for their wellbeing is heightened by the fear of HIV/AIDS in Cato Crest and its prevalence amongst sexually active and often ill-informed teenagers.

The threat of HIV/AIDS makes all residents feel vulnerable, if not for themselves then certainly for their children and grandchildren. In the latter cases, it is a risk that many feel they cannot mitigate; it is an additional layer of insecurity and, in terms of the devastation it causes, is equal to the perpetual threat of crime and violence. Margaret Gumede lives with the dual fear that her children might contract HIV and the severe consequences for her own life if they were to become infected. She says:

These young people die, and they leave the babies behind with the grandparents. Maybe they die because of the virus, and leaving their babies behind is not fair. These babies will know why their parents died and maybe they will die because of the virus too ... AIDS has affected me personally, back home in my family. Two girls have passed away already leaving their babies behind.

(Gumede, 13/04/10)

When her children were younger, Margaret tried to educate her daughters especially to the dangers and implications of pregnancy at a young age. Her children are now adults and she has less influence over them. Consequently, she feels that these are risks that she is unable to mitigate or manage. Having lost two children as adults, Margaret hopes for the best and does whatever she can (which she feels is not a great deal) to increase the longevity of her remaining children's lives. Such a feeling of helplessness, or lack of agency, is pronounced in older women, who fear contemporary threats to their children from random or targeted violence, disease and young pregnancies. Their response to

the risks and vulnerabilities in their lives has been to revise their aspirations so that they are more modest, attainable and focus on the wellbeing of their families.

For young men in the settlement, aspirations tend to focus almost exclusively on making as much money as possible. To 22 year old Andy Dlamini, life is full of uncertainty; this uncertainty affects all the young men in Cato Crest and their ability to plan their future. He says:

My hopes and dreams – I hope, I hope, I hope, I hope that I grow older. ‘Cause when you stay here, you can’t plan much. You can maybe plan for the future but you’re always worried for how long you can live. It’s unlike any other place. You can’t think, ‘look I’m in a house, the only thing that can kill me is a car accident’. Here you can even get shot by people shooting each other ... Many people my age are worried they will [not] reach [...] 30 years old – first of all there is HIV; then there are other incidents all the time. So, what we are worried about is how long we’re going to live. And what I wish for is to live long.

(Dlamini, 14/04/10)

Central to Andy’s aspirations to live a life beyond 30 is to avoid criminal influences and any lure of crime. To him, this does not mean leaving Cato Crest (a place he likes), but it does mean being free of material want and free of pressure to partake in activities and associate with people he does not want to. He regards sufficient money as a means to enable agency for himself and his brother. Therefore his strategies for resilience revolve around earning as much money as possible through his *shebeen* and *spaza* shop.

6.5.2 The relationships between identity, social relations, and vulnerability and resilience

The relationship between one’s identity and resilience and vulnerability is important for survival and setting aspirations. Aspirations have been linked to education (e.g. Moser, 2009) and gendered identities can affect the experience of education and the value attributed to it. Three of the eight interviewees are illiterate – all are older Zulu women raised in traditional homes in rural areas. Hlengiwe Ndebele explains “I didn’t really go to school ... Back then when I was growing up in Msinga we relied on subsistence farming and livestock, so we kept livestock to survive. We didn’t see school

as something so necessary” (Ndebele, 31/03/10). For Margaret Gumede and Helen Ngcobo, poverty meant that their parents had to select which children went to school and for how long. Margaret and Helen never attended school. Grace Nkosi, another older Zulu woman raised in a traditional rural home, belonged to a family that was also too poor to afford her schooling. However, as a devout Roman Catholic at the time, a mission school took pity on her and admitted her and her brother, in exchange for which Grace had to undertake domestic labour at the weekends. Education was regarded as a predominantly male experience, yet on moving to the city all these women altered their perception of the value of education, for girls as well as boys.

Hlengiwe Ndebele, whose rural upbringing made schooling appear to be a redundant pastime, “Now, tr[ies] to teach them [my children] that education is important” (Ndebele, 31/03/10). Hlengiwe has consciously encouraged her daughters to attend school and to change their attitudes to education for girls. Similarly, functionally illiterate Margaret, on moving to the city, saw that education was necessary for her daughters, as well as her sons, to find work other than domestic labour i.e. traditional urban African jobs during apartheid. She says:

My concern is about employment and jobs. There are some jobs that you simply cannot get without an education. That is why I look at education as very important to people’s lives. All my children have matriculated.

(Gumede, 13/04/10)

Margaret’s investment in her children’s education is something she expects to recoup in retirement. She says, “My eldest girl is now working. She can even support me now. There is a reversal – before, I worked to support them, and now I’ve watched them grow and now be able to support me” (Gumede, 13/04/10). Acknowledgement of the value of education for girls especially can be seen in the light of the challenges of living and prospering in the city and the different sets of skills required. Education has become a means for raising both the aspirations and the resilience of entire families.

In Cato Crest especially, aspects of identity are essential for survival. Some of the strategies employed to conceal, promote and celebrate one's identity to achieve tenure security, are also employed to manage risk and advance resilience. For example, during the 2008 xenophobic attacks across the country, a Zulu mob armed with sticks, knives and *nkrei*⁴⁷ roamed Cato Crest looking for non-Zulus to intimidate. A common tactic employed to identify non-Zulus was to ask them to say the isiZulu for 'elbow' (*indololwane*) – its difficult pronunciation, the mob believed, would identify non-native Zulu speakers. One night in May 2008, Andy Dlamini was walking home from a *shebeen* in the settlement. He had been drinking with friends and was staggering along when, he explains,

There was this group of people coming up the road – one of them knew me, he knows me very well, he knows I'm a Zulu. I thought it was some kind of joke. He asks me, 'what is this?' [points to elbow]. I was totally angry about this because I was against what they were doing to those people. And I like swore at him really bad, also because I was drunk. Then the crowd... I wasn't doing what they asked. So maybe they thought I was one of the people hiding those people in this area. Then I got hurt. They hit me. I even went to hospital. [But first] I came here and grabbed a knife (because my house was very close by and also I was drunk). When I grabbed the knife I ran after them. They ran away because they thought it was a gun. When they realised it was a knife they stopped and they turned back ... They left me on the road and one of the neighbours then took me to hospital. So, I was one of the victims [of the attacks]. They didn't stab me. They hit me. I was drunk so I didn't notice how much they had hit me. They had weapons as well. They had [used a] *nkeri* to knock [me] down.

(Dlamini, 14/04/10)

Andy was attacked for not disclosing his ethnic identity. Had he promoted his Zulu ethnicity, it is likely that the attack would have been averted. Andy's concealment of his identity at that moment reflected his anger with the discrimination and intimidation levelled at non-Zulus in the settlement:

If you are a Zulu [in Cato Crest] you are being treated good! This place is surrounded by Zulus. If you are from Eastern Cape, you are ok, but those kind of criticisms [insults] are said to you all the time. It's better to be a Zulu here. [If you are from Zimbabwe] then bad for you! Very bad for you.

(Dlamini, 14/04/10)

⁴⁷ A traditional Zulu fighting stick made of wood with a large knob at one end and thin tapered body.

A foreigner is continuously at risk of threats of violence and provocation on the basis of his or her citizenship and ethnicity alone. Some of the risks to safety caused by aspects of one's identity can be managed through an individual's social relations and networks i.e. belonging to a 'community' can aid resilience through managing vulnerability and improving wellbeing.

Conceptions of 'community' and the value of belonging to a 'community' differ between interviewees irrespective of housing type. A 'community' was defined in both spatial and non-spatial terms, although in no instance did anyone's conception of 'community' correspond to settlement boundaries. Andy Dlamini believes that a 'community' based on social relations between residents in a specific space can be a source of resilience and laments its absence in Cato Crest. He says:

[I] wish Cato Crest was just like Chesterville. In Chesterville there is something amazing. In that place they know each other – I don't know how, but they know each other. You can find somebody from Chesterville and lie and say you're from that place, and they will say, 'where in Chesterville are you from? ... Somebody else lives there, not you'. Here, if I'm in the rank waiting for a taxi, there are so many new faces I don't know. I don't know everyone in [Cato Crest], that's just how it is ... I don't wish to be there [in Chesterville], I just hope that will happen here. Maybe it can happen if everyone just started to care for each other. Everyone here cares for him or herself.

(Dlamini, 14/04/10)

To Andy, Cato Crest is a highly individualistic place. His own approach to helping others is to help only if specifically asked, and then only if it is possible without too much inconvenience.

Non-spatial conceptions of 'community' tend to relate to common interest groups based in Cato Crest, where the common interest is the basis for interaction e.g. a church or other faith-based group. Of particular relevance to wellbeing are *stockvells* - savings groups where (most commonly but not exclusively) money pooled by members is invested and the interest shared between them at an agreed time. Grace Nkosi is a member of two *stockvells*, one for money, and one where food is pooled and shared. These *stockvells* have ten members each, and she has been a member for one

year. She regards her membership as part insurance/part investment. There is no relationship between members outside of the *stockvell* (Nkosi, notes on social relations map, 13/10/09).

For several interviewees, their most important relation for resilience was space-based and centred on family living close by. When shocks, such as the death of a parent or main household income earner, occur, family members living close by are very important to provide financial assistance and emotional support e.g. Nathi Zondi's aunt and uncle live in adjacent shacks and provide continual support to him and his siblings, while when his father died, Andy Dlamini was able to rely on his uncle who lives close by. Even when there is no significant shock, daily life for older women especially is improved by having family members nearby, between whom exchanges of meals and household chores are frequent. Both Hlengiwe Ndebele and Grace Nkosi live in shacks surrounded by their immediate families. The resilience strategies of these older women depend in large part on frequent reciprocal relations with family members. The upgrade and formalisation process could potentially change relations that are dependent on space and proximity between individuals; this may especially affect how family relations are used for resilience. Findings from Zwelisha, discussed in the next chapter, may offer a greater insight into the effect of the process on space-contingent family relations.

6.6 Tenure and vulnerability and resilience

The settlement of Cato Crest itself is an integral part of people's strategies for resilience – they escape to it, take advantage of its location for livelihoods, recreation and education, and they act to safeguard tenure rights in Cato Crest so that the settlement becomes a part of their children's strategies for resilience. Cato Crest can also be a source of vulnerability – crime, violence and perpetual threats to public and personal safety contribute to a risky environment. Resilience, vulnerability and tenure interplay in the lives of the residents of Cato Crest.

As in Gum Tree Road, individuals currently living in Cato Crest appear to engage in a trade-off between tenure (staying in the settlement) and vulnerability (the risks of living there) as a part of their resilience strategies. During the implementation of the upgrade and formalisation process, the terms of the trade-off are altered by widespread belief in the real possibility of major improvements to life now and in the future. Unlike in Gum Tree Road, residents of Cato Crest have experienced firsthand or directly witnessed the award of RDP houses in their settlement.

Helen Ngcobo, Andy Dlamini and Bongani Mabuza all own RDP houses and are confident enough in their tenure to make plans for the future use and value of their houses. When her grandchildren are old enough, Helen plans to retire – rather than simply retiring from work, retirement to Helen means moving from Cato Crest and being relieved of the responsibility of raising any children. However, she adds, “If I move I wouldn’t sell this house. My children would use it because they work in Durban. My children live with me now” (Ngcobo, 20/04/10). Although Helen is the ‘owner’ of the house and any title deed when it is issued will most likely be issued in her name, she thinks of it as her family’s house. The RDP house is a shared family asset to be used by successive generations for their resilience.

Margaret Gumede, currently living in a transit camp, similarly frames her future ownership of an RDP house in terms of her family’s future resilience. She says:

Even though I will return to Ndwedwe [when I retire], the reason I still want a house in Durban is my kids. I don’t want to see them being tenants in someone else’s house, or lacking a place to live when they are here in Durban looking for work. I want to give them a house they can depend on, where they can live. I really don’t know if my children will return to Ndwedwe. That is their choice; I don’t know.

(Gumede, 13/04/10)

Margaret believes an urban base endows her children with livelihood options, without any expectation that it will bind successive generations to a life in the city. Andy Dlamini illustrates how

inheriting an RDP house can increase one's ability to manage exposure to vulnerability in the settlement and increase resilience. Andy's grandmother lived in an upgraded rural settlement in Inlovu, north-east of Durban. When she died in the mid-2000s, her house was left to her son – Andy's father. When he died, in accordance with social custom, the house was inherited by Andy. Two years ago at his uncle's suggestion Andy visited his grandmother's house in Inlovu, which was vacant after her death. He discovered that "the councillor there [had] put in another person, just to look after the house. What they told me was, 'we know the house belongs to you. And when you come back this person is going to move out. We just put this person in because that was all we had.'" (Dlamini, 14/04/10). With two RDP houses in his family,

My plan is that me and my brother will both have our own places. As he's growing up he's going to meet a woman of his own, and he can't stay here ... Or maybe I could make a deal; maybe with some people staying here, older people. Older people don't like staying here. Some of them don't like it because of the violence in this place – guns, shooting and stuff. So if someone is interested, we could swap the places. Because these are two rooms and that is one room, then I'll have to give him or her that money. As long as I have a house of my own and my brother has a house of his own, then it is ok.

(Dlamini, 14/04/10)

Even for RDP residents or pending RDP residents without immediate family to consider, an RDP house can itself enable livelihood options. For example, all Bongani's livelihood strategies are tied to his house and its location.

Cato Crest, as the closest settlement to Durban's CBD, is unusual and an attractive place to live for both the earliest settlers and more recent arrivals. Tsepo Moroka arrived in the settlement in 2007 as a tenant and has no expectation of gaining an RDP house from the upgrade and formalisation process. His tenure - vulnerability trade off is independent of the process and balances the value of Cato Crest's location and his proximity to job opportunities against his personal safety as a foreigner and non-Zulu in the settlement, and his weak tenure rights. To Tsepo, the trade off is both

worthwhile and a necessary part of his resilience strategy, which is to save money to put towards future homeownership, possibly in Qwaqwa.

The common experience of all the shack-owning interviewees who expect an RDP house is that they have lived in the settlement a long time; the last shack owner to settle in Cato Crest was Margaret Gumede in 1996⁴⁸. During the same period of time, other vacant, habitable land in or near to the city was occupied by other settlers. To Hlengiwe Ndebele, Nathi Zondi and Grace Nkosi, the risks of staying in Cato Crest tend to be weighed against the potential cost of losing out on an RDP house and their investment of many years commitment to life in the settlement. In such an equation, the idea of a 'trade-off' is a misnomer that implies choice and agency in determining one's tenure and exposure to vulnerability. Grace Nkosi says, "[This place] it's really very very bad. If I'm rich I would have moved from this place by now. But you can't just move if you haven't got a place [to move to]" (Nkosi, 12/11/09). Grace's tenure options are limited; in effect she and other shack dwellers in a similar position are tied to the land. They are unable to exercise any agency in tenure decision making due to lack of money and opportunities to buy a comparable dwelling elsewhere. They are reliant on the upgrade and formalisation process to improve their resilience.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter described the lives of eight residents in a settlement in which the upgrade and formalisation process is currently being implemented. Some of these residents have directly benefited from the process and are now occupants and owners of RDP houses, some are waiting for the process to reach them and look forward to occupying their own RDP houses, and one – a foreign tenant - is hoping for a chance at homeownership elsewhere some day. The narratives of these residents illustrate how an external intervention such as the upgrade process affects individual aspirations, livelihood options, future plans, the risk of being a victim of certain crimes, and daily

⁴⁸ Although Nathi Zondi settled in 1999 his mother had settled in 1991.

routines that involve washing, obtaining drinking water and using a safe supply of electricity. Settlement-wide, the narratives reveal how the upgrade process can be manipulated and co-opted in ways that appear to heighten the importance of political and ethnic identities and social relations with people and institutions of influence.

The settlement leadership strongly affects individual experiences of tenure security and insecurity. Unlike in Gum Tree Road, the leadership is not widely respected and is often implicated by residents in the manipulation of the upgrade process. Many residents therefore regard a title deed as a means to de-link tenure security from settlement leaders. A title deed allows individuals to circumnavigate the power of settlement leaders as guarantors of tenure rights and, in effect, shifts power and responsibility for aspects of tenure security to the state. However, the process itself and resulting ownership of an RDP house is not enough to build confidence in the state and its intentions, leaving some RDP owners still concerned that they may yet be evicted or their tenure threatened by the state. While the process of upgrade undoubtedly causes major changes in the lives of residents who have received or are about to receive an RDP house, for shack dwellers uncertain when they too will participate in what has turned into a 10 year process with no apparent end date, the promise of an RDP house, title deed and improved living conditions is just one of many they have heard over a lifetime.

The settlement of Zwelisha (or Trenance Park 4B) is in the post-implementation stage of the process. The residents there offer further insights into how the upgrade and formalisation process affects citizen-state relations once shack dwellers are no longer, in terms of the official definition, shack dwellers.

CHAPTER 7

ZWELISHA

7.0 Introduction

The settlement of Zwelisha is approximately 35km north of Durban. It is close to the historically Indian towns of Verulam and Phoenix. Zwelisha is 10km away from a new redevelopment zone which houses Durban's recently opened King Shaka International Airport. The settlement, although far from Durban city centre, is well located for jobs and public transport both to the city and further north into the province. This chapter reflects on the upgrade and formalisation process and considers its effects on the contemporary lives of residents in Zwelisha. The process began in 2005 and all building work was completed in early 2010 (the process will be fully complete in a couple of years once title deeds are awarded). The majority of Zwelisha's 513 households were eligible for an RDP house and now live in neat rows of pastel shaded houses with royal blue mail boxes lined up alongside tarred roads.

This chapter begins with an introduction to the eight interviewees in the study, who all live in RDP houses in the part of Zwelisha also known as Trenance Park 4B (there is also a 4A, 4C and 4D); they were identified according to the contribution of their characteristics to a mixed group of research participants (see **TABLE 7.1** in **section 7.1** for a list of individuals and characteristics). The introduction explains their reasons for moving to the settlement, and describes their house and living conditions, salient aspects of their identity and their experience of the upgrade process (**section 7.1**). This is followed by an analysis of their appreciations of tenure security and insecurity in a post-upgrade environment, and the value of higher tenure security achieved through the upgrade and formalisation process to Zwelisha's residents (**section 7.2**). The chapter moves on to describe and analyse the identity and social relations of residents and the effect of the process on these concepts

and the relationships between them (**section 7.3**). This is followed by an analysis of how and why identity and social relations affect and are affected by tenure post-upgrade (**section 7.4**), and vulnerability and resilience post-upgrade (**section 7.5**). The final section resumes narrative threads on the relationship between tenure and vulnerability and resilience, and how the relationships between these concepts have evolved throughout the upgrade and formalisation process (**section 7.6**).

7.1 The men and women of Zwelisha

The settlement of Zwelisha lies in a valley, with rows of RDP houses in grid-like formation stretching mid-way up the valley sides. A few inhabited shacks are scattered throughout the settlement – they were either built after the upgrade, or somehow escaped being torn down. Most shacks that remain in the area are at the top of the surrounding hills – they mostly belong to people displaced by the upgrade and formalisation process i.e. the ineligible. A tarred main road with no name runs along the edge of the settlement separating RDP houses from the majority of shacks. Municipal refuse trucks run along the road weekly, and both taxis and buses⁴⁹ run frequently linking Zwelisha to Verulam and Phoenix (the closest towns). The road passes a community centre that doubles as a drop-in health clinic twice a week, a church, a few *spaza* shops and every 200m or so a communal standpipe for those households awaiting connection to the main water supply. Eventually the road crosses a river that separates Zwelisha from northern Phoenix; prior to the upgrade the river formed a physical barrier between the informal and formal settlement. Beyond the road, on the other side of the hills that surround Zwelisha, is Amaoti – one of the largest informal settlements in KZN. Police cars are regularly spotted on Zwelisha’s main road on their way to or from patrols in Amaoti. Tarred minor roads taper off the main road deeper into Zwelisha and along rows of RDP houses. Several of

⁴⁹ Historically, taxi services tend to be run by Africans for Africans and bus services by Indians largely for Indians. Post-apartheid in some places the stereotypes are still relevant. The presence of both services in Zwelisha and the absence of any obvious conflict is somewhat unusual.

the houses appear to have seamlessly grown with extensions built in the same style, with the same materials and in the same colour as the original house.

Njabulo Mathebula's RDP house is close to the main road that runs through the settlement. It is pale green, rectangular and un-extended. Electricity cables hang high overhead carrying legal supplies to houses in the area. Inside is a living room with a fridge and sink in the kitchen half of the room, and matching sofas, a small table and TV in the other half. The room leads onto a bedroom and a bathroom. The walls are built in concrete breeze blocks and the roof is made from corrugated sheet metal. Njabulo's house stands out in the row: it is the only one with a fence. The fence is made from mesh wire and provides little security or protection, it is not aesthetically enhancing, but to Njabulo it is essential and marks a different period in his life to when he lived in a shack:

In the *mjondolo* [informal settlement] we stayed without knowing our place from where to where. But now we know our place is where. The surveyor has come and told us. It's important because you don't have to build a big house up to and on your neighbour's place.

(Mathebula, 13/05/10)

In the informal settlement it was difficult and contentious to identify the boundaries of one's plot and mark ownership. The early history of Zwelisha is dominated by competition for land and resources between early settlers and later arrivals (see **section 4.2.3**). Encroachment on another's land could have been a highly political act. To Njabulo, erecting a fence where a surveyor has indicated the boundaries of his property marks confidence in his ownership and leads to good neighbourly relations; the act also sanctions the authority of the municipality (via the surveyor) which set the boundaries in the first place.

Njabulo is originally from Umbumbulu, a rural town in southern KZN; he is amaZulu. The grandson of the chief of Umbumbulu, violent conflict over succession to the chieftaincy forced him to flee to Eshowe in the late 1970s. Njabulo practices polygamy and has two families. As a young man in

Umbumbulu he met and married his first wife; she still lives there in his family home with their four surviving children. He met his second wife on his journey to/from Umbumbulu to Durban where he worked at the Toyota factory. His second wife is originally from Eshowe and her family provided him with refuge in the 1970s. Eventually he settled with his second wife and their two daughters in Zwelisha, after hearing of the settlement from his wife's relatives who lived nearby. Njabulo believes he moved into an RDP house in 2003, although this seems unlikely as others moved into the area where he lives around 2007-08. Both his daughters live in their own RDP houses – his eldest lives diagonally behind Njabulo and the younger daughter further down the road. Njabulo, who is now retired, frequently travels between Umbumbulu and Zwelisha to visit both families. When in Zwelisha he spends his days looking after his grandchildren while his daughters are at work. He also helps to run his eldest daughter's *spaza* shop, which is on the edge of her property next to the main road.

Further along the main road heading east towards Verulam lives Celesile Moyo, her husband Farai and their six month old baby⁵⁰. The Moyos are in their early 20s, are from Zimbabwe and are fluent English speakers. They met in Zwelisha. Celesile's sister also lives in Zwelisha – she rents an RDP house, and was the first of Celesile's family to come to South Africa in search of better job opportunities than those available in Gokwe (their home town in southern Zimbabwe). Second to arrive were Celesile's two older brothers, who lived in Zwelisha until they married and settled in another settlement nearby. Last to arrive was Celesile in 2007. She lived with her sister for two years until she met Farai at her sister's house. Farai's brother lived in Zwelisha and knew many of the Zimbabwean families in the area; they socialised together. Soon after Celesile and Farai married in

⁵⁰ On a number of occasions during interviews, Farai interrupted Celesile and added to her responses. Although the interviews were intended to solicit Celesile's thoughts and opinions, I have not excluded Farai's contributions. Quotes and opinions attributable to Farai are indicated in the chapter and are referenced separately to Celesile.

2009 they returned to Zwelisha to find a place to stay because of their close family ties in the area, ties that helped them secure a tenancy. She says:

There are lots of people looking to stay here, not everyone is successful. I was because my sister is well known. People around here like her.

(C. Moyo, 13/05/10)

Celesile's landlord - a South African woman - was awarded an RDP house in 2008. She moved from Zwelisha to Inanda soon after, but her sister still lives in Zwelisha and every time the landlord visits she drops by the house to check on Celesile and collect any rent due. The house is well furnished by Celesile and Farai – there is a sofa suite, large TV and tables with ornaments and family photos on top. The windows are dressed with lacy curtains and bows. Celesile says she has a good relationship with her landlord overall, the only problem is that the landlord moved out of the house before settling her R200 water bill. The water company subsequently cut the supply to the house. The landlord has informed Celesile that if she wants water in the house she must pay the R200 herself. Because of the needs of her baby, Celesile fetches water from a communal standpipe three or four times a day. Unwilling to pay the R200, they do not complain to the landlord or anyone else.

Celesile and Farai's strategy for getting on in Zwelisha is to keep a low profile. Farai says, "When we came here we just came and were staying by ourselves. We came, lived quietly, we got to know the rules of the place ... We humbled ourselves." (F. Moyo, 13/05/10). Their strategy, which has also governed their relations with their landlord, illustrates an awareness of the reputation and experience of most foreigners in South Africa. While they do not report having experienced any xenophobic sentiments from residents in Zwelisha, they are aware that the sentiment is widespread. Having heard a rumour of impending attacks on all foreigners following the conclusion of the 2010 Soccer World Cup, Celesile and her baby left Zwelisha for Zimbabwe; she planned to stay there until the threat passed.

Opposite Celesile and Farai lives Feroze Pillay, a 46 year old South African of Indian origin who lives with his much younger wife and a dog. Throughout the day the dog is tied to a post in the yard outside Feroze's house; it has multi-coloured patches of fur and flesh scratched raw. Inside the house are stacks of colourful blankets, which Feroze occasionally sells house-to-house and in marketplaces in Verulam and Phoenix. He says he wanted to buy South African flags and *vuvuzelas* to sell in advance of the World Cup, but the supplier had already sold his stock, so Feroze had to settle for the much slower-selling blankets. The house is dark inside and sparsely furnished. They are a poor couple with limited means.

Feroze came to Zwelisha from historically Indian Phoenix. He had been living with his first wife and their two children at his brother-in-law's house. When his wife died in 1997, his brother-in-law asked him to leave. Unable to cope with raising two children, they were taken into state care and are now living with other families; his son occasionally visits him, his daughter does not. Feroze's mother lived in Zwelisha at the time in her boyfriend's shack and Feroze came to stay with them. Soon after, his mother and her boyfriend left and moved to another settlement, they did not tell Feroze where. When the upgrade and formalisation process was at pre-feasibility stage, Feroze was approached by the settlement leaders to register for an RDP house, which he did. In 2008 he moved into his new house, delighted, "I will stay here until the day I die. It's the first house in my life I've ever owned!" (Pillay, 13/05/10). His living conditions are in stark contrast to his former life in Zwelisha:

There is a big difference. There were no roads, only lanes. No streetlights. No bridge over the river to Phoenix. Now there is water. It feels like I'm in a whole new world. I have a post box. I can get letters. No one knew I stayed here, no one could reach me. I never got any letters. Now, I get letters from the electricity people [and] the water bill comes here.

(Pillay, 13/05/10)

Feroze is somewhat isolated in Zwelisha; he does not speak isiZulu, is ethnically different from the majority of other residents and rumours of heavy drinking and violence within his home means he

and his wife are often avoided by other residents. Feroze's narrative illustrates two things: race-relations in a low income settlement and racial attitudes towards living in an informal settlement. Both these points are relevant to the stated policy outcome that the eradication and upgrade of informal settlements contributes to building integrated communities and a non-racial society (in **section 4.1**).

Zodwa Kaleni lives across the road from Feroze Pillay; she is two houses further downhill from the main road. Surrounding her plot of land is a mesh wire fence, erected to prevent her four young children, one of whom is mentally disabled, from running out into the street. Zodwa has extended her RDP house to add an additional bedroom, porch and a carport for her car. She runs a *spaza* shop from the back of the house; this is a new business venture for her since moving into the house. Inside the house is well furnished with a host of electronics including a TV, fridge-freezer and a music system. The floors, which would originally have had a concrete finish, are tiled.

Originally from Umbumbulu, Zodwa left for Phoenix when she was a teenager, having dropped out of school to look for work. She recalls:

I was very excited about coming; I was going to the city, this Durban place! I got a nice job and everything was going nicely. At first I stayed in the place where I was working [as a domestic worker], in a house ... I was working for a very nice Indian family.

(Kaleni, 02/06/10)

Compared to life in Umbumbulu, Phoenix and the surrounding area was the city – it was exciting and filled with job opportunities. Zodwa's experience of being an African working for Indian employers is typical in the area. Zodwa eventually moved in with her sister, who was living in a township nearby called Besters (a former informal settlement upgraded in the early 1990s). In Besters she met the father of her four children. She recalls,

After Besters I came here to Zwelisha with my boyfriend and children. I left Besters because I didn't have my own place. At first I rented my own place in Besters, then I went to live with my boyfriend, but his place was not nice at all, so I decided I must come here and try to find my own place. There were people who I was related to who stayed here in Zwelisha and they told me to come here because there are places [to stay].

(Kalenj, 02/06/10)

Zodwa bought her shack from a former resident in 1996 at a time when some of the worst fighting between residents over power and control over the settlement took place. Irrespective of this fighting, to Zodwa the move from renting a place in a township to owning her own home in an informal settlement was a move worth making. The award of an RDP house is retrospectively credited by Zodwa to good decision making in 1996. The fighting between Zwelisha's elites has however taken its toll on her relationship with the settlement leaders; as a result of the conflict she witnessed, she remains cautious in her interactions with the leaders and any discussion of them. This meant that Zodwa refused to answer any questions on the current or former leadership, declaring that something bad might happen to her if she did.

Bhekumuzi (Bhehki) Zwane is a frequent customer in Zodwa's shop. He lives two rows away from Zodwa and further downhill. His house sits in the middle of a large plot of land; he imagines that someday he will build an extension. For now, the house is two rooms – a living room with a small kitchenette to the side, and a bedroom leading on to a bathroom. Inside the living room are large pieces of furniture – a display cabinet with a TV and music system takes up one wall. A bed, sofa and fridge-freezer are pushed up against two of the other walls, leaving little room to walk from one end of the room to the other.

Since suffering from a stroke in 2008, Bhehki stays at home and looks after his two young children; his wife works in Phoenix. He spends most of his time inside the house alone. Most other residents at home during the day are women and the elderly. Bhehki is concerned by local gossip and its repercussions if he were seen socialising with women in the absence of his wife. His concerns project

an image of his part of Zwelisha as a small town where rumour is rife and reputation is important to preserve.

Bhehki's participation in the upgrade and formalisation process is fairly typical of most residents. He was instructed where to go and what to do by a member of the settlement leadership. He recalls:

While in the *mjondolo* they called us to the office and called us to give our number for the house. They told us to keep this number until a house is built ... I didn't know anything. They only told us there will be two rooms. The time between the *mjondolo* and the RDP took no time. I'd built my own *mjondolo* [but] the house was ready when I moved in.

(Zwane, 13/05/10)

To Bhehki, following the orders of settlement leadership resulted in a house that he played no part in building, and improved services. Bhehki judges the success of the process based on its outcomes. He does not object to his lack of participation, as he feels he could not have done any better himself. His reverence for the leadership is part of a wider narrative shared by many residents that credits the leadership with the award of their RDP houses. It is a narrative that breeds a strong sense of indebtedness to the current leadership.

Makhosazana (Makhosi) Mkhize is a member of the current leadership – she is a Community Committee member and a Ward Committee member, positions she has held since 2009. Makhosi joined the committees after she moved into her RDP house. The upgrade and formalisation process exposed her to the role settlement leadership can play in people's lives, she says, "I joined because I like to be helpful to the people who live here" (Mkhize, 19/05/10).

Makhosi is originally from Nkandla in northern KZN; she is amaZulu. When Makhosi matriculated from high school in 2002, she moved in with a sister who lived in Zwelisha. She recalls:

Nkandla is a rural place, a farm place. You cannot get a job there. So, I came here, this side, to try and find a job. And I did find a job after I arrived. I was working in Umhlanga [a wealthy predominantly white residential area] as a domestic worker.

(Mkhize, 03/06/10)

Makhosi stopped working in 2008 when she was 32 years old. Since then, she has dedicated her time to volunteering in the settlement (e.g. helping poorly residents cook and clean). She regards her volunteerism as a way to be helpful to others, and as a means to eventually secure employment:

When they are calling people in the meetings, they tell us we must do something, then I volunteer to do it ... You must keep volunteering because after you finish that, they give you a job.

(Mkhize, 03/06/10)

Makhosi has yet to secure employment through her voluntary work, but remains convinced it is only a matter of time.

Makhosi lives with her boyfriend, who she met in Zwelisha, and their four young children in a two room un-extended house. She hopes to be able to afford to build an extension in the coming years, something she regards as a necessity once her children are older. In Cato Crest, extensions to RDP houses were built to whatever design the owners wanted them built, and shacks could be built at the back of people's properties to supplement their incomes. In Zwelisha, in contrast, the settlement leadership strictly upholds municipal building regulations that forbid shacks on upgraded property - if shacks are spotted by the leadership, they are immediately torn down. The new rules demand that extensions are built by experienced builders using standard building materials. This means that a resident's plans for an extension must be shared with the leadership, who approve it or not, prior to the commencement of any construction. Consequently, plans to build an extension are made with

due consideration of the costs involved in buying standard building materials and in some cases recruiting experienced builders.

Further uphill from Makhosi Mhkize, closer to the main road, lives 55 year old Hannah Khumalo. Hannah's house is accessed from a footpath that runs along the edges of plots and eventually connects to a minor road. The house is next to a stream filled more with rubbish than water. Hannah dislikes living by the stream. She says because of it there is less land available to extend her house; and because she runs a crèche the dangers posed by the stream to the seven infants she looks after means they are confined to her two room un-extended house. Running a crèche seems a popular activity for older women residents; there are at least four other crèches in the vicinity. Hannah lives with her surviving four children (from seven) and her grandchildren.

Hannah was born in Umthwalume (in southern KZN) in 1955 into a Zulu family. However, her strict Christian parents raised her to believe that Zulu traditions and Christianity are incompatible; she says: "I understand the Zulu traditions, but I don't do it because I'm a Christian." (Khumalo, 02/06/10). Her faith is a constant source of comfort to her, and her life in Zwelisha revolves around the Zionist church – a physical building that remained throughout the upgrade. It provides a space for Hannah to socialise outside of her family; all her friendships are cultivated on the basis of church attendance and church-based activities.

Hannah was raised in a strictly patriarchal family. She married at a young age because her father believed she should. He also insisted she leave school once she had learnt how to write her name.

She reflects:

They used to say we girls mustn't attend school too much or we girls will be called *febe* girls, you mustn't know everything. *Febe* is someone who is not behaving nicely because she's educated, she'll be too proud of herself, proud of her education, and she will not respect us. So they used to stop us from school.

(Khumalo, 02/06/10)

Hannah left her father's house to join her husband's, who held similar views on the role of women and girls in society. Around 1984, however, her husband was killed in a robbery in KwaMashu. Left without a source of income, for the first time Hannah was forced to make decisions on the wellbeing and future of her family. From her husband's work colleagues, she heard of places to stay in an informal settlement. She stayed in a tent (rather than a shack) to save as much money as possible. Political violence in 1996 forced her to flee north to Phoenix. In this emergency situation she rented a room in a formal house from an Indian family. The comparatively high cost pushed her back to an informal settlement – Zwelisha – soon after.

In the absence of necessity, Hannah leaves major decisions to trusted authorities around her – her father, husband, and now the settlement leadership. In the process of upgrade and formalisation, she was a passive actor who attended meetings when told to, completed forms when told to, and moved to where she was told. Hannah has little recollection of the process and does not seem to understand how it happened; she cannot remember what forms she had to complete or the date she moved. Her dependence on others seems to be part of a wider approach or strategy to life and one that she regards as successful: "The biggest decisions of my life were to attend church and to stay in my own house. And I can see that there is a very big difference now [because of it]. I can keep myself in one place and attend church" (Khumalo, 02/06/10).

Further uphill from Hannah's house, at the corner of the main road running through the settlement and a minor tarred road, lives Thandi Zuma. Thandi lives in an extended RDP house that is almost double the size of other houses in the area; the house has a porch, three additional bedrooms and a separate kitchen. The interior walls are painted in different pastel shades, and are adorned with family photos and framed pictures. Ceiling fans whirl in every room. Thandi lives with her three adult daughters and their children. All her children matriculated high school and now work in nearby

towns. Thandi no longer works; her income is dependent upon state benefits and her daughters' contributions to the household.

Thandi was born in KwaMaphumulo in northern KZN in 1965. Her mother moved the family from KwaMaphumulo to KwaMashu when her father died in order to be closer to Durban and its job prospects. Thandi, who had dropped out of school when she fell pregnant as a teenager, soon found work in Durban too. There she met and married Mr. Zuma. They and their young children moved from place to place trying to find a home to buy and the right combination of employment and relative safety for the family. Before they could move to any such place Mr. Zuma died. Thandi was forced to return to her mother's house in KwaMashu for several years until she met another man who introduced her to Zwelisha and found a shack for her to buy. She recalls:

I didn't like to live in the shack, but because I wanted my own place (I didn't want to live in my mother's house) I came here. I have a new house now, if I had stayed in my mother's place it would not have happened.

(Zuma, 02/06/10)

Thandi has a strong sense of fatalism that is linked to her faith. Although she was born into a Zulu family, from a young age Thandi (like Hannah) rejected much of Zulu custom because, "I think it is much better to be a Christian than doing the Zulu things, because only Jesus saves" (Zuma, 02/06/10). Thandi's faith is paramount to her sense of wellbeing. She attends a Zionist church in Zwelisha almost daily.

Thandi's experience of the upgrade and formalisation process was more complex than other interviewees. At some point prior to moving to Zwelisha, Thandi had registered for an RDP house in another settlement. Her name therefore appeared twice in the municipal database that tracks subsidy claimants. De-registering in the first settlement delayed her move, an experience that has

left her somewhat resentful of the settlement leadership, who in her view did not do enough to help resolve the issue. She explains:

It took so long for me to come in the house, so I'm a bit disappointed. I saw everyone else move in but I was still in my shack. Now I'm in my house and I'm happy – I'm just unhappy about the process ... I don't know [about plans for the future of the settlement], and I'm not interested. I'm not worried about what the Community Committee now says because I'm in my own house! I was interested before, but they failed to help me, I had to help myself. No one helped me to get my house.

(Zuma, 14/05/10)

Thandi's rejection of future involvement in settlement developments reveals her belief in the extent of power the settlement leadership is able to exert over residents – "I'm not worried about what the community committee now says because I'm in my own house!" implies the leadership was able to exert power and influence her tenure before the upgrade. The relationship between the settlement leadership and residents is a dominant theme in Zwelisha leading up to and after the upgrade; the theme is continually revisited throughout the chapter.

The following table is a summary of the characteristics of the eight residents who took part in this study.

TABLE 7.1 Zwelisha: overview of interviewee characteristics*

Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity/ Nationality	Resident since	Tenure status	Other characteristics
Njabulo Mathebula	Male	68	amaZulu	1996 (in Zw**) 2003?(in RDP)	RDP house owner	2 daughters in Zwelisha in their own RDP houses; runs a spaza shop
Celesile Moyo	Female	23	Shona/ Zimbabwe	2007	RDP tenant	Lives with husband and 6 month old baby
Feroze Pillay	Male	46	Indian origin	1998 (in Zw) 2008 (in RDP)	RDP house owner	Lives with wife, South African of Indian origin
Zodwa Kaleni	Female	38	amaZulu	1996 (in Zw) 2008 (in RDP)	RDP house owner	Runs a spaza shop from her extended house; lives with her children
Bhekumuzi (Bhehki) Zwane	Male	39	amaZulu	2001 (in Zw) 2008 (in RDP)	RDP house owner	Lives with wife & two children under 5 years
Makhosazana (Makhosi) Mkhize	Female	34	amaZulu	2002 (in Zw) 2008 (in RDP)	RDP house owner	Ward and Settlement committee member, lives with boyfriend & their 4 children
Hannah Khumalo	Female	55	amaZulu	1993 (in Zw) 2006 (in RDP)	RDP house owner	Runs a crèche from her house, lives with her children & grandchildren
Thandi Zuma	Female	45	amaZulu	1996 (in Zw) 2007 (in RDP)	RDP house owner	Lives with three adult daughters in extended RDP house

*Data correct at the time of the interviews. Interviews were conducted 13 May 2010 – 09 June 2010.

**Zwelisha

7.2 States of tenure security and insecurity post-upgrade

The narratives of these eight residents of Zwelisha are diverse and reveal a variety of considerations in their tenure decision making. The pressures and opportunities that drove them to the settlement included better job prospects, being closer to family and fleeing violence. Prior to the upgrade, they also included money-saving from living in a shack and the prospect of home ownership. Post-upgrade they included living in a pleasant physical environment with services and amenities nearby. Thus far the narratives on tenure are similar to residents in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest, who cite the same pressures and opportunities for their moves to an informal and partially upgraded settlement respectively. However, in post-upgrade Zwelisha, RDP residents believe that as a result of the upgrade process they have greater tenure security. This section first explores how and why residents believe they are more tenure secure than before the upgrade (bearing in mind that no title

deed has been issued yet). It then goes on to examine the value of secure tenure to the living conditions and livelihoods of individuals in Zwelisha (i.e. land and house use).

7.2.1 Changing tenure security

The tenure status of the interviewees is the same; all are owner-occupiers except for Celesile Moyo, who is a tenant. This difference in tenure status has a bearing on Celesile's requirements for tenure security. In upgraded Zwelisha, as in informal settlements, the tenure security of tenants is subject to tenant-landlord relations. Celesile says:

You always get the feeling the landlord might say to leave. But they always give notice. It's not like you must leave in 24 hours. If it happens to me here when I'm ready to go home, then I'll go home. If I'm not ready then I'll find somewhere else to stay.

(C. Moyo, 13/05/10)

Celesile is not particularly concerned by the threat of eviction for two reasons: first, she is confident that if she were asked to leave she would have sufficient time to find somewhere else to go; and second, she is confident there are other places to go i.e. as a tenant Celesile has flexible tenure options that enable her to manage the potential effects of eviction.

Owner-occupiers of RDP houses tie their security of tenure to confidence in their proof of ownership. As in Cato Crest, the most confidence-inspiring proof of ownership is a formal letter on municipal letterhead with correct details of their name, ID number and former shack number and/or RDP house number. All owner-occupiers were given a House Handover Certificate with these details when they moved into their RDP house. For many residents, the certificate is equivalent to a title deed - that is they do not distinguish between the two nor indicate they are aware of any difference between them, possibly because they were never clearly told what a title deed is and the benefits it is expected to confer. Feroze Pillay is adamant, "I have a title deed. I received it 6-8 months ago... [It means] at this time I'm the property owner. I can build, extend [and] fence my house. I can call

someone to rent if I want to.” (13/05/10). Feroze cannot possibly have a title deed because the municipality has yet to issue them. It is most likely he has a House Handover Certificate. To Feroze, whichever document he has, he believes he is sufficiently tenure secure to exercise power and autonomy over his property.

Similarly, to Bhehki Zwane a title deed and a House Handover Certificate is the same thing, because both mean that he is the owner of the dwelling. He says, “I have a title deed [produces House Handover Certificate, dated October 2008]. No one can take my place away ... I don’t think there is a difference between a certificate and a title.” (Zwane, 13/05/10). Bhehki’s tenure security is sufficiently high to inspire confidence that he is free from the threat of eviction. Ultimately, it does not seem to matter to some residents if they have a title deed or not; they are sufficiently secure in their tenure through a formal letter and their occupation of an RDP house. The House Handover Certificate seems to validate their claim to ownership (assumed with occupation of a house) rather than bestow it.

It seems that, for all residents, occupation and official acknowledgement of occupation results in a high level of *de facto* tenure security. However, Thandi Zuma, the only interviewee to experience a delay in the award of her RDP house due to duplicate registration, demands legal proof of ownership – *de jure* tenure security. Thandi says:

I’ve got [a] paper from the municipality, and a water account letter also from the municipality. I feel safe in my house with these letters. [And] I know I will get a title deed. It will have my ID number, my house number, and I will know I am the owner. [Right now though] I’m waiting for more proof. I want more proof.

(Zuma, 14/05/10)

To Thandi, tenure security and evidence of ownership of her RDP house are two different but related concepts. Her occupation of an RDP house and the municipal documents she holds provide secure tenure but is insufficient legal proof of ownership. Thandi is unable to articulate what difference

legal proof by way of a title deed will make to her life, but she is certain there will be a difference. Thandi is not alone in feeling this way. Hannah Khumalo, another older Zulu woman whose children and grandchildren live in her house, is unsatisfied with a House Handover Certificate as proof of ownership and demands a title deed as irrefutable proof; she says, "I've got a paper now, it looks like a title, but it's not a real title. I'm waiting for more information to prove this is my house." (14/05/10). Nevertheless, Hannah is still tenure secure: she says, "I'm not worried someone will take me out. I want a title just to be satisfied." (14/05/10). Hannah too is unable to articulate why a title deed is important to her.

A title deed does not seem to play any role in increasing perceptions of or actual tenure security for any resident. They are secure and content with a letter from the municipality and occupation of their house, with the exception of Thandi and Hannah, who are secure but not content. For them, perhaps, there is a lack of confidence in the municipality and subsequently the House Handover Certificates it issues (Thandi experienced a delay in the process, which makes her mistrustful of the settlement leadership and the municipality). A title deed, or irrefutable proof of ownership, may be of great importance to Thandi and Hannah because it frees them and successive generations from any dependence on the municipality for their tenure.

7.2.2 Changes to sources of tenure insecurity

In previous chapters, 'tenure security' was discussed as a concept that is tied to personal safety and physical security in a settlement. In Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest, the fear of fire, theft and communal violence helped to create a high risk environment, where the ability of an individual to live free from the fear of eviction, exploitation and destruction of one's home was compromised. In post-upgrade Zwelisha the environment of risk has changed, largely due to the shift from clusters of shacks to well spaced houses built of sturdier materials, and authoritative settlement leadership. As

a result, internal security has improved, although external security concerns remain. The safety of Zwelisha is affected by the actions of residents in neighbouring settlements.

When Makhosi Mkhize (a settlement leader) moved to her shack in Zwelisha in 2002, she felt sufficiently tenure secure, but was cautious of the threat posed by the municipality. She recalls:

I was never scared anyone would throw me out of the *mjondolo*. I saw so many people in shacks and they were ok. So I thought why should I be worried?

[However], I was worried about the municipality, so I attended community meetings to hear what was going to happen. I would have fought the municipality to stay in this place.

(Mkhize, 26/05/10)

The threat of eviction by the municipality was a constant risk. Makhosi tried to manage the risk by staying informed of the municipality's plans for Zwelisha. Once she learnt of the upgrade at community meetings, and subsequently moved into her RDP house, she believes the risk has been mitigated. When Bhehki Zwane lived in a shack he too was worried by municipal actions. Bhehki had heard a rumour (before news of the upgrade) that the municipality were to "drop the shacks" (20/05/10). He believes the settlement leadership at the time were responsible for fending off an aggressive municipality and for securing the upgrade of the settlement. Since moving into his RDP house, Bhehki no longer believes that the threat of eviction from the municipality or any other source is a credible threat.

Certain threats to physical insecurity and personal safety also seem to have diminished. Feroze Pillay recalls, "Once I was in the informal settlement and the whole shack fell on me because it was raining. I [had to] build one room just so I have somewhere to sleep." (13/05/10). A better built RDP house has greatly diminished the risk of collapsed dwellings harming those inside, and it provides adequate protection from the effects of heavy rain. Rainwater that would collect in the valley was problematic

for all residents, who were at risk of their homes flooding and damage to their belongings. Drainage and roads introduced through the upgrade process have greatly diminished these risks.

As in Cato Crest, for RDP residents with wide spaces between their houses, inside toilets and a more secure structure, the risk of being victim to certain crimes – like burglary and assault (especially at night) - has diminished, with reduced opportunities for crime and violence. However, amongst all residents there remains a palpable fear about public safety, largely emanating from the adjacent informal settlement of Amaoti. Amaoti is a constant reference in the narratives of personal and public safety of all residents. So much so, that to residents the risks posed to public safety originating in Amaoti seem to dwarf the risks to public safety from Zwelisha's own residents. Farai Moyo, the husband of Celesile and a tenant in Zwelisha, offers a comparison of Zwelisha and Amaoti. He says:

I think it is because the spacing here [in Zwelisha] is better, it's easier to control [residents], it's quiet. People come from Amaoti – the *mjondolo* there, to commit crime here. I can't pass by that place at 7pm or after. I do feel safe enough to walk here in the evening.

(F. Moyo, 13/05/10)

To Farai, who was familiar with pre-upgrade Zwelisha because his brother lived in the settlement, the upgrade has made Zwelisha feel safer, especially at night. This view is reinforced by the actions of the settlement leadership. Pre-upgrade, Bhehki Zwane recalls the settlement leadership used to patrol the settlement at night and encouraged a 10pm curfew for residents. The leadership and residents reasoned that there were no lights in the area, which increased the chances of attack (Zwane, notes on social relations map, 20/05/10). Post-upgrade, the settlement leaders no longer patrol the area and there is no curfew, largely because of the advent of streetlights.

The level of tenure security, physical security and personal safety experienced by all residents in this study is a marked improvement on their security situation before the upgrade. There are no obvious

or immediate threats to tenure, and many aspects of physical security and personal safety are better managed because of physical changes to the settlement as a result of the upgrade. The upgrade has also vested greater authority over individual tenure security in the municipality; this is evidenced by residents (for the most part) relying on municipal guarantees of their ownership as a sufficient mark of secure tenure. The changing nature of the relationship between residents and the state is a theme returned to in **section 7.4**.

7.2.3 The value of secure tenure

Secure tenure is valuable in many ways to the residents of Zwelisha. For example, they worry less or not at all about being evicted; there are improvements to personal safety and other securities that accompanied secure tenure, which mean that residents are able to move more freely outside their houses; they feel able to purchase high value items like TVs, stereos and fridge-freezers, knowing they will be fairly safe inside their houses (every interviewee except Feroze Pillay had a number of electronic goods in their houses). With the confidence of secure tenure, residents like Thandi Zuma, Zodwa Kaleni and Njabulo Mathebula have gone on to extend their properties or demarcate them with a fence to make the living space more comfortable for their needs. Others, like Hannah Khumalo, Bhehki Zwane and Makhosi Mkhize, aspire to do the same. Secure tenure has improved the daily living conditions for all residents.

The remainder of this sub-section narrowly defines the 'value' of secure tenure. It explores land and house use after tenure has been secured through the occupation and ownership of an RDP house, in order to identify the effect of secure tenure on livelihoods. Another major aspect of the value of secure tenure is future tenure decision making e.g. retirement and inheritance plans. This is discussed in **section 7.5.1** in relation to vulnerability and resilience.

Land and house use post-upgrade is in effect regulated by the settlement leadership. The leadership, claiming broad support of the municipality and residents, has prohibited the building of shacks and poorly built extensions on land privately owned by Zwelisha's upgraded and almost formalised residents. Njabulo Mathebula explains:

Even though we have big yards you can't build a shack – no one is allowed. Only if you have space and build a proper extension are you allowed. That's what the committee and the councillor says.

There are housing officers from the municipality who say, 'you have a two-room house and you can only extend not build other shacks'. They come and pull down the *mjondolo* if you've built one – even during the day when you're at work, or at night. It's happened to many people. They are always looking.

(Mathebula, 13/05/10)

These rules have greatly restricted opportunities for owner-occupiers to become landlords and engage in backyard rental. The leadership has also banned *shebeens* in the settlement, arguing that they attract unsavoury characters, encourage excess drinking, can become hubs of violent and aggressive behaviour, and that residents in the surrounding area suffer the consequences. These restrictions are intended to create a pleasant unthreatening and aesthetically pleasing environment, but they also limit livelihood opportunities. Under these restrictions the only permitted home-based businesses appear to be running a *spaza* shop or a crèche. The leadership appears to be able to implement such rules because residents fear that without this level of guidance Zwelisha will become like neighbouring Amaoti (discussed in **section 7.4.2**).

Zodwa Kaleni runs a *spaza* shop from her house. It is a new business venture for her, taken up after she moved into her RDP house. She explains:

After I stopped working in Phoenix as a domestic worker, I went to town and was selling things there. I didn't have a *spaza* shop when I stayed in the *mjondolo*; I decided to open

a *spaza* shop here because I have sick children in the house and I can look after them if I stay here.

(Kalenj, 02/06/10)

Zodwa cannot leave the settlement to work because of the needs of her children, and she does not trust anyone else with the responsibility of looking after her disabled son. Running a *spaza* shop allows her to look after her children while still earning an income, which is the main family income. The option of running a *spaza* shop only became possible after the upgrade, with a house that provides better protection for her stock than a shack. For now she is confident in the viability of her shop, but she worries that good transport links to cheaper supermarkets in Verulam and Phoenix will limit the demand for *spaza* shops in Zwelisha.

To Njabulo Mathebula, his daughter's plot (diagonal to his) and the *spaza* shop she has built on the edge of it, are family land and a family shop. Every day Njabulo works in the shop which sells fruit and snacks to passersby. No one in Njabulo's family ran a shop before the upgrade. The allocation process, randomly, Njabulo states, inadvertently provided a business opportunity that enables them to take advantage of their location next to the main road (Mathebula, notes on community map, 27/05/10).

When she lived in a shack, Hannah Khumalo worked as a cleaner in Umhlanga until poor health and old age forced her to stop in 2007; a time that coincided with moving into an RDP house. Desperate for an income and to continue contributing to her household finances (Hannah lives with her four adult children and grandchildren in an un-extended house), Hannah followed the pattern of many older women in the area and started to run a crèche from her new house. Running a crèche tends to be the preserve of older women or *gogos*.

Secure tenure, a sturdy dwelling and favourable location are major contributing factors to these new business ventures. Zodwa and Njabulo's daughter invested in building their shop and buying stock

because they were confident in their ownership of the land and the safekeeping of stock. Hannah, although she has made little investment in her business (a few toys), also benefits from secure tenure; the knowledge that she lives without the risk of eviction inspires confidence and trust in the parents who leave their children with her. Secure tenure contributes to the livelihood options of residents who are able and desire to start a business.

7.3 Identity and social relations

In this section, the concepts of 'identity', 'social relations', and the relationship between the two as they relate to the eight residents of Zwelisha studied is analysed. The discussion of the topic in previous chapters (**sections 5.3** and **6.3**) suggests that such an analysis is relevant to identifying the rules of behaviour in a settlement, patterns of socialisation amongst residents, and the width and breadth of their social worlds. These rules and patterns signify power relations within a settlement and influence ideas of 'community'.

7.3.1 Identity

In Zwelisha displays of ethnic, political and religious identity indicate the social environment in which residents live and the rules that govern certain behaviour. Evident in the history of Zwelisha and the contestation of power between rival groups broadly divided into amaXhosa and amaZulu is that majority identities tend to dominate the formation of rules. In the execution of these rules, the dominant group either actively discriminates against minority groups or creates an environment where minority groups self-censor displays of identity, contributing to their marginalisation. Since the beginning of the upgrade and formalisation process up to the present day, one group – amaZulu members of the ANC – have dominated the settlement leadership, helped to determine acceptable behaviour and set the rules of entry for newcomers (mainly tenants).

Makhosi Mkhize, a settlement leader, like other settlement leaders, is amaZulu and a member of the ANC. Makhosi expresses her ethnicity and Zulu culture in a number of ways - mainly by participating in Zulu ceremonies, dances, singing and wearing traditional costume. When Makhosi was a child and teenager in Nkandla, these Zulu ceremonies were an integral part of her life. In Zwelisha she feels comfortable continuing these expressions of Zulu culture. She says, "I like these things very much. I still do them now. If there is something in Zwelisha I just wear my things and go there. I teach my children the same cultural things." (Mkize, 03/06/10). Living in Zwelisha does not prevent her expressing her Zulu identity - which is also the dominant ethnic identity in the settlement and the province.

Bhehki Zwane similarly feels comfortable expressing his Zulu identity in Zwelisha. Bhehki grew up in a very traditional household in rural Zululand. His father was head of the *insizwe*⁵¹, a position that meant that, on instruction of the Chief, he would command other men to gather their weapons and prepare to fight. His father wore animal skins, practiced polygamy, and asserted his authority over all branches of his family. To Bhehki, expressions of ethnic identity are tied to a heightened masculinity that involves polygamy, patriarchal exercises of power and animal sacrifice. The cultural practices of his father are practices he wishes to emulate in Zwelisha. Bhehki is considering taking a second wife, saying,

Sometimes I think it's a good thing to have more than one wife. I'm not sure about it, but I think about it. You see it depends on how this wife [his first wife] treats you. But sometimes I think I'd like to have one or two more than this one I've got.

(Zwane, 03/06/10)

Bhehki is also comfortable undertaking animal sacrifice in accordance with Zulu custom. However he acknowledges that living in the settlement may impose some restrictions - in Zwelisha there is not enough space on his land to slaughter a cow, so he can only sacrifice goats. It is unclear if Bhehki

⁵¹ Researcher's phonetic spelling.

believes non-Zulu cultural expressions threaten his own identity, but he says, “I don’t think they can come and do their things here. It seems like it will be very different from us, I’m not sure they can do it.” (03/06/10). To Bhehki, Zwelisha is a culturally exclusive place in terms of expressions of culture and ethnic identity. In his view, the prevailing social rules prohibit non-Zulu displays.

Foreigners Celesile and Farai Moyo are aware of these social rules and abide by them. In Zwelisha, where they are widely known as foreigners, they lead a limited social life, interacting only with other Zimbabwean families. They are cautious in their behaviour out of fear of aggravating other residents and stirring up hostility. Some day in the future, Celesile and Farai plan to leave South Africa and return to Zimbabwe with enough money to build their own business. They consider the restrictions on expressions of their identity as necessary but also temporary. Farai says, “This is a foreign land. Home, when we go there now, we will carry out all our rituals, all our morals, that’s where we can carry them out properly. Here we are mixing – here I keep my morals in my head, so that I can live well with other people” (F. Moyo, 27/05/10).

Politically, Zwelisha is in an ANC-dominated constituency. Councillor Dlamini of Ward 59 has been an ANC councillor since 1993. The settlement leadership is composed of ANC members and all the interviewees (except Celesile Moyo) are ordinary members of the ANC. Makhosi Mkize reflects on her membership, “I joined the ANC [in 1994] because I thought it was very good; you sit down and talk about things like politics. And it helps you, leading you forward. See now, we’ve got these houses in our place. If I didn’t join the ANC, I don’t think I’d have the house I’m staying in. Oh, I really like my ANC.” (Mkize, 03/06/10). Feroze Pillay also relates ANC membership to the upgrade process. He reflects, “I’m part of the ANC. I paid R40 [for membership] ... This is the first time in my life I have a house – so I must join the ANC.” (Pillay, 02/06/10).

Although Makhosi and Feroze joined the ANC prior to the upgrade and formalisation process, both attribute the benefits of the process to the ANC. That is not to say that membership of the ANC is

widely believed to be a necessary precondition for participating in the process, but that ANC members indirectly link their membership of the party to the outcomes of the process. As a result, the power and authority of the ANC brand is consolidated through the upgrade and formalisation process, principally through displays of gratitude for houses and infrastructure.

7.3.2 Social relations

The *in situ* upgrade of Zwelisha was implemented in short stages without the use of transit camps. Houses were constructed on a cleared patch of land, and when the houses were built a group of residents were instructed to leave their shacks and move in. Their shacks were then cleared to make way for another row of RDP houses, and the process was repeated. This meant that most residents moved straight from their shacks into RDP houses alongside their former neighbours. For RDP residents in Cato Crest, the process of upgrade, which displaced and relocated groups of neighbours served to strengthen the relationships between them. Relations that were space-based and dependent on frequent visual contact and daily interaction for security and friendship survived post-upgrade, even where neighbours were no longer living next to each other. One effect of the survival of neighbourly relations was that residents were unwilling to invest in building new relations, preferring and seeking comfort in old ones. A similar pattern is visible in Zwelisha.

Hannah Khumalo lives by the edge of a stream with her family. Her house is surrounded by five other houses. She claims that she does not know anyone beyond the stream, and that she interacts only with her five immediate neighbours, family inside the house, and friends from church (whom she socialises with only at church, they never visit each other's houses). Hannah's spatial 'community' is limited. Her current neighbours are also her former neighbours and their common experience of the upgrade process has helped to strengthen their relationship. However, her sense of community has recently been threatened by the arrival of newcomers. Hannah lives next to Zimbabwean tenants; she knows little else about them (Khumalo, notes on community map,

26/05/10). As families move in and out of the area, changes to her immediate neighbours pose a challenge to her spatial conception of 'community'. It has now narrowed to four families and might continue to narrow as more people move in and out of the area.

For some reason, Bhehki Zwane did not move into an RDP house with his former neighbours, who live in a cluster further uphill. Bhehki lives in an area housing people relocated from other upgraded settlements and he is cautious and distrustful of his new neighbours. He says,

Bad things are happening too much here now. I think now it's too much. If I leave this house now and visit Empangeni for a few days, leaving this house without telling the Community Committee that I'm leaving and that they must help look after my place, then people will come and break my house, and take everything that is inside my house. That is why I say it is bad here now. The people around me they can tell other people to come here and break in. They don't want you to think it's them, so they want you to think it is people from outside. They can tell the people I'm not here, then the people from outside can come and break into my house.

(Zwane, 03/06/10)

Since the upgrade Bhehki's neighbours have changed and so too has the function of a neighbour. Many of his former neighbours in the shacks were also friends. They would look out for each other's shacks and socialise together at weekends. He had a strong spatial sense of 'community'; it has since been destroyed by the effects of the upgrade process and relocation. Bhehki does not trust his new neighbours, and in his eyes, simply being neighbours is not a sufficient reason to befriend them and build relationships, especially because the settlement leadership can fulfill the security function for which he previously relied on neighbours. Although Bhehki makes an effort to continue his friendships with his former neighbours, they interact infrequently. His poor health and young children make it difficult to walk uphill to visit his neighbours. Since his relocation to an RDP house, his dependence on the settlement leadership has increased, while his social world has contracted.

The history of Zwelisha plays a significant role for some interviewees and their conceptions of 'community' and desire for neighbourly interactions. The interviewees who have lived in Zwelisha

the longest and witnessed terrible violence in the contestation over settlement leadership seem to crave isolation. They are civil to their neighbours and greet them pleasantly but now the need for neighbourly relations for security has diminished, they prefer to be left alone in their fenced houses. Njabulo Mathebula is one such interviewee. Njabulo calls everyone in his row of houses a 'neighbour' – it is a spatial definition based on proximity to his house. He vaguely recognises most of his neighbours from the informal settlement, but has no relationship with them beyond a simple greeting should they pass by each other's houses (Mathebula, notes on community map, 27/05/10). The only relations with other settlement residents that are valuable to Njabulo are his relations with his daughters, with whom he engages in frequent acts of reciprocity – sharing meals and child care responsibilities, for example. These relations have continued despite the changes to their lives brought about by the upgrade process.

Zodwa Kaleni too has few relations and interactions in Zwelisha, preferring to live in relative isolation. To her a 'neighbour' is a label for the four households occupying the plots that touch hers. This functional definition reflects her detachment from any closer relationship with people who live close by, people who are also customers in her *spaza* shop. Zodwa has no discernible conception of 'community' – either spatial or common-interest based. It seems that, to her, Zwelisha is just a place to live and get by and her knowledge of her immediate area bears this out. On a community map, she identified all the people that live in her area as amaZulu; however this is not the case (notes on community map 27/05/10). This and other incorrect remarks on her map suggest a lack of observation and perhaps a lack of desire to observe her locale and get to know the people who live in it. Zodwa's passive involvement with the upgrade process meant that she was under no obligation to engage with her neighbours or other residents; ultimately the implementation of the process facilitated her retreat from society in Zwelisha.

7.3.3 Identity and social relations

'Identity' and 'social relations' are interrelated concepts. As explored in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest, aspects of one's identity (in particular political, ethnic and religious identity) can facilitate entry to social groups that provide financial assistance, friendship and greater access to power and influence in the settlement. In post-upgrade Zwelisha, amongst residents who have already received an RDP house under the upgrade and formalisation process, there is a weaker imperative to apply aspects of one's identity and gain entry to a group in order to access power. Instead aspects of identity that garner emotional support and friendship appear to be of greater relevance to interviewees.

Hannah Khumalo, as discussed earlier, has very few friends in Zwelisha. Before she retired from working as a cleaner in Umhlanga, Hannah counted her colleagues as her friends. Since her retirement, she no longer sees them and they have lost touch entirely. As an older woman with limited income and therefore mobility (she cannot walk long distances and taxi fares are considered an indulgence), she is unable to sustain the contact necessary for friendships outside the settlement to survive. Her local church in Zwelisha, however, offers her a physical space and opportunity to meet new people and consolidate old friendships, unhindered by the costs of travel. From an early age, Hannah's faith and conviction has been a constant source of comfort to her. Through attending the church in Zwelisha, Hannah meets like-minded people with whom she exchanges gifts on occasions such as Christmas and Easter (Khumalo, notes from gift diary, 26/05/10 – 02/06/10). Hannah also volunteers at various church functions and helps other members, as best she can, if they fall ill. She both gives and receives emotional support from her church membership.

To older, married or widowed Zulu women, membership of a church can supplement or even substitute for family relations. Both Hannah and Thandi Zuma (another member of the Zionist church in Zwelisha) believe that once a woman is married she is married into her husband's family.

His *emaki* becomes her *emaki*. This is usually accompanied by diminished relations with her own siblings and parents. Hannah explains that, although her two brothers live in settlements nearby, “I hardly go and visit or see them. It’s not easy to see them now; I mustn’t disturb them and their marriage.” (Khumalo, 02/06/10). Marriage creates new families, sometimes at the expense of existing ones. The Zionist church offers church ‘mothers’, ‘sisters’ and ‘brothers’ i.e. a family irrespective of marriage. To Thandi Zuma – a widowed Zulu woman – the relationships she has built at church have become as meaningful as the relationship she has with her family. For example, Thandi records reciprocal relations with three different people: her daughters, and women she identifies as her “mother” and “sister in church” (Zuma, notes from gift diary, 19/05/10 – 02/06/10). She claims her “mother” and “sister” offer her advice, support and encouragement, just as her real mother and sisters used to when she lived with them.

In post-upgrade Zwelisha there are few public spaces for socialisation and the spaces that exist are highly gendered. As in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest, churches are primarily female spaces and *shebeens* are male domains. Prior to the ban on *shebeens*, Feroze Pillay would regularly drink in several *shebeens* in Zwelisha. To him the *shebeens* served as social spaces where his ethnic identity and lack of isiZulu came second place to his masculinity. The only friendships Feroze identified were with his drinking partners – other men. They were the only relationships in which he engaged in acts of reciprocity, they would buy each other beers and give cigarettes (Pillay, notes from gift diary, 19/05/10 - 02/06/10). Since the ban, patterns of male socialisation have been forced to change. Whenever Bhehki Zwane is able to socialise, he meets friends (his former neighbours) at their houses and they drink beer in the yard, while their children play nearby. Bhehki laments that this is not the same. For men especially, *shebeens* served a social function in enabling and consolidating friendships and facilitating interactions. Without them and with no alternative space for socialisation (especially for those who do not attend church), it is difficult for social networks to grow. Gender in

Zwelisha has come to play an important role in regulating social interaction and the types of social relations residents are able to cultivate.

7.4 The relationships between tenure and identity; and tenure and social relations

This section turns to analysing how and why identity and social relations affect and are affected by tenure in a post-upgrade settlement. The analysis focuses on both residents' current tenure and their reflections on past tenure conditions. It traces initial access to the settlement and the upgrade and formalisation process, identifying the use of identity and social relations as tools to facilitate access. Then, rather than analysing the role of identity and social relations in securing tenure, as previous chapters have done, the section discusses how the change to tenure affects aspects of identity and relations with authority figures, including the settlement leadership, the municipality and the state more generally. This discussion relates to the literature on shack dwellers and citizenship (discussed in **section 2.1.2**) and explores the effect of changes to tenure on the conditions of citizenship experienced and expected by residents.

7.4.1 The role of identity and social relations in forging access to land and the upgrade process

The settlement patterns of Zwelisha's residents were similar to those in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest. Early settlers are reported by interviewees to have occupied plots of land and marked their ownership through occupation of a shack or demarcated boundaries. None of the interviewees were early settlers; one of the earliest settlers is Njabulo Mathebula, who recalls having to seek permission from Xhosa early settlers (who in effect formed the settlement leadership of the time) for the right to access land in the settlement. When Njabulo first arrived in 1996, there were many fights amongst the residents of Zwelisha over power and authority in the settlement. He recalls, "Some people would say you must come and kneel in front of me and then ask for a plot of land." (Mathebula, 19/05/10). In his understanding, access to the settlement was gained through an acknowledgment and acceptance of the authority of the settlement leadership at the time.

Hannah Khumalo arrived in Zwelisha three years before Njabulo. Her access to Zwelisha was also mediated by the settlement leadership. She had to approach them and ask for permission to settle. She recalls, "It wasn't easy for new people to just come here because the people were supposed to go and speak to the Community Committee. The Committee didn't say no to the people, only once the place was full (around 1999) did they say no." (Khumalo, 14/05/10). After 1999, once the leadership declared the settlement was "full", newcomers still came to Zwelisha. The rules to enter the settlement had altered to elevate the role of patronage; newcomers were allowed to settle if they knew someone already living in the settlement.

Celesile Moyo moved to Zwelisha in 2007 and Makhosi Mkhize in 2002; they did not seek permission to settle in Zwelisha from its leaders. Celesile entered the settlement based on the positive reputation of her sister. Makhosi gained access to Zwelisha through her sister and brother-in-law. She explains:

My sister came this side to look for a job. Her husband came first and she followed her husband to Zwelisha. Everyone knows someone first. My sister's husband used to work in Intezuma, and he had a friend in Intezuma he used to work with who told him about this place and told him to come. That's how everyone comes!

(Mkhize, 03/06/10)

Since the leadership decreed that Zwelisha was "full", entry to the settlement has excluded the socially unconnected.

Njabulo Mathebula and Hannah Khumalo had to accept the authority of the leadership at their point of entry to the settlement. Celesile, Makhosi and other residents, who did not have to explicitly seek permission from the leadership to settle in Zwelisha, came to acknowledge and accept their power and authority after they had settled. Makhosi's consent to the leadership's authority is specific to the leadership she joined and which, she believes, were responsible for ending the violent contest for power in the settlement. She claimed that, "They have helped me personally too" (Mkhize,

13/05/10) – although she did not elaborate how. Celesile, for the years she plans to live in Zwelisha, is determined to keep a low profile and abide by the rules of the settlement, thus implicitly supporting the leadership.

There is a history of strong leadership in the settlement, irrespective of the group of leaders in power. The implementation of the upgrade and formalisation process between 2005 and 2010 has served to strengthen the authority of the leadership. The leadership helped to manage almost every aspect of the process at settlement level, including the co-ordination of settlement level bureaucracy and facilitation of access to the settlement for builders, surveyors, architects and municipal officials. Under the municipality's participatory agenda, settlement leaders acting as information gatekeepers between residents and Metro Housing, helped to register eligible residents and eventually co-ordinated their moves into RDP houses. The leaders still take an active role in monitoring construction, including extensions to RDP houses.

Hannah Khumalo reflects on the process: "At the time I was in the shack, I heard it was time to apply for a house. The Community Committee told me. They told us at a meeting and were shouting at everyone with the loudspeaker to come to the meeting" (14/05/10). Njabulo Mathebula was informed of the process in a similar way. He recalls, "I had no involvement in the plans. We first heard about it at a community meeting – that's when we learnt the house will be two rooms. At that meeting only; before that we knew nothing" (Mathebula, 13/05/10). Several months later, Njabulo observed the plot to which he was expected to move on a map: "The Ward Committee decided who goes where. They had a map and showed you must move here – there was no choice. The numbers were already written. We saw our number on a map – [our] house number. Our name was next to the house number on a separate list" (Mathebula, 13/05/10).

The upgrade process was thus tightly managed by settlement leaders. Details of upgrade plans were unveiled to residents piecemeal by the leadership, at a time of their choosing. The implementation

of the process illustrates the control, power and organisation of the leadership. However, there is little to suggest that residents desired greater participation in the process. All the interviewees (except Celesile) were reflecting on the implementation of the process and the effectiveness and 'fairness' of its outcomes from inside an RDP house - they are the beneficiaries of a process that required very little engagement on their part. One effect of this is a reverence for the current settlement leadership, who are widely perceived by residents to have single-handedly driven the upgrade and formalisation. Hannah's reflection offers an insight into what gratitude to the leadership for delivering houses and services means, in terms of their almost unassailable authority both in the settlement and with respect to wider relations between residents and the state. She says:

The committee helped us a lot to get these houses. I'm proud of my house. The municipality was not here for long – helping with roads, bins and water. They were here only since a short time. They first came after we got our houses. I think because our place was shacks the municipality thought they are not allowed to help us. Now we have houses they come. Only the contractor came to build the houses ... The committee, they gave us the number to the houses, so I think it is them who helped us.

(Khumalo, 14/05/10)

Largely because of the strong role played by Zwelisha's leadership - composed of Zulu ANC members - in the implementation of the process, the upgrade and formalisation of Zwelisha was not exploited (or even viewed) as a basis for renegotiating citizen-state relations. The municipality is almost entirely absent in residents' narratives of the upgrade and formalisation process.

7.4.2 The role of tenure on identity and social relations

Primarily through major changes to the physical environment of Zwelisha and to the tenure situation of all those residents who now live in RDP houses, the upgrade and formalisation process has caused the forging of new or alteration of existing identities and social relations amongst residents. In particular it has altered the collective identity of Zwelisha's residents. Previously, Zwelisha was a

mjondolo and its residents were shack dwellers. The literature on identity proposes that the label 'shack dweller' is an identity crafted by others to exclude from the mainstream poor urban dwellers and people who would otherwise usually be conceived of as citizens (see **section 2.1.1**). CBOs working with shack dwellers in South Africa are trying to change the meaning of the term by using it as a common denominator for positive collection action (e.g. Federation of the Urban Poor, Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign, and *Abahlali baseMjondolo*). Notwithstanding their efforts, the identity of 'shack dweller' is widely perceived by those to whom the label is attached as an undesirable identity.

In post-upgrade Zwelisha, RDP residents distance themselves from the *mjondolo* identity and from all the negative connotations that came with living in an informal settlement. They do this in two ways: first through a rejection of the label '*mjondolo*' and of themselves as residents of a *mjondolo*; and second, through a complex process of differentiating and disassociating Zwelisha from other settlements.

When asked if an outsider could still call Zwelisha an informal settlement or *mjondolo*, all the interviewees were emphatic in their negative replies. Njabulo Mathebula said, "It's no longer possible to call Zwelisha a *mjondolo*. Because even the municipality doesn't want '*mjondolo*'. We don't want it. We [have] new houses in our new place." (13/05/10). Njabulo's use of 'we' is authoritative and reflects his assumption of a collective identity for Zwelisha's residents post-upgrade. Many interviewees tie their rejection of the label to the change in their type of dwelling and lifestyle, Bhehki Zwane says, "We've improved our lives so much from the shacks!" (13/05/10). The upgrade of the settlement so fundamentally altered and improved Bhehki and other residents' lives that they perceive that upgrade and formalisation produced a disjuncture between their past and present lives in Zwelisha. Feroze Pillay reflects, "From what it was to what it is, it's a totally different atmosphere. Before it looked shabby. I didn't know who lived where, their address, now

it's different" (13/05/10). To the interviewees, 'Zwelisha the *mjondolo*' was a bad place with poor housing and few services. The upgrade has made the label, as a description of the physical environment and conditions in which residents live, redundant.

On the back of this rejection of the 'shack dweller' label, residents post-upgrade are helping to craft what is to them a more acceptable image of Zwelisha. The image seems to be crafted through the differentiation and disassociation of Zwelisha from other settlements, particularly Amaoti - the closest informal settlement and nearest point of reference of what life in an informal settlement can be like. Zwelisha is defined by all interviewees in opposition to Amaoti. Hannah's description is fairly typical:

Our place here is good, but there is a place nearest to us called Amaoti. Sometimes I shout at my son and tell him not to come late, especially from meetings, because those young boys from Amaoti can come this side, drink with them and then they can do anything bad, and I don't want that to happen to my son. Every bad thing is in Amaoti; it's a very bad place. The boys, we can't stop them, they go by Amaoti. This place was never as bad as Amaoti. In Amaoti each and every weekend you hear about something bad – they murder people, kill each other, every bad thing. They drink a lot, even during the week you find them drunk. I don't know why that place is bad.

(Khumalo, 02/06/10)

Amaoti is a source of fear, violence and insecurity. Since the upgrade, RDP houses, roads, services and strict rules of behaviour monitored by the settlement leadership mean that Zwelisha does not look or feel like Amaoti or any other informal settlement. To residents, Zwelisha is better than Amaoti, and perhaps through inference the people who live in Zwelisha are better too. Makhosi Mkhize, a settlement leader, believes that the upgrade has served to increase tension between residents of the two settlements, spurred by jealousy over the municipal resources directed to Zwelisha. As a result of this jealousy and its consequences, she says,

I worry about my children in this place. I worry that people from Amaoti might come this side and do bad things and my children will see; I don't want my children to see bad bad things, like the things that happen in Amaoti. We try very hard in the community

meetings to ask people from Amaoti to come. We ask them and they don't come. They don't want to come. I don't know why, but we call them and they don't come.

(Mhkize, 03/06/10)

Makhosi says that following the failure of Amaoti's leadership to respond to invitations to Zwelisha, the settlement leadership decided that it is best that "we must stay away from them and leave their shacks alone because we have the RDP houses now" (19/05/10). This contributes to an image of Zwelisha as an isolated or exclusive place. Coupled to the distinction between Zwelisha and Amaoti is the continuation of a historic disassociation or lack of engagement between formal settlements in Phoenix and Verulam.

Although a bus service and taxis run through the settlement and have improved the connections between Zwelisha and Phoenix and Verulam, the upgrade has not so far changed relations with residents in these towns, which remain mostly employer – employee relations. The predominantly Indian residents in these two closest towns are fearful of Zwelisha and prefer not to enter. Feroze Pillay explains that he has Indian friends and family in Phoenix and other towns, but they never came to visit him. They were too frightened to enter Zwelisha when it was an informal settlement. Since the upgrade, he reports, they are still frightened and prefer not to enter Zwelisha, although his son makes the effort to visit him occasionally. He says that his son finds post-upgrade Zwelisha less intimidating than before (Pillay, notes on social relations map, 19/05/10). It is possible that in time the post-upgrade environment that makes Zwelisha less intimidating to Feroze's son will result in improved race relations and interactions in the wider area. In the meantime, however, the disassociation between residents of neighbouring formal settlements and those living in Zwelisha contributes to the wider isolation of the settlement, which might prevent greater social integration and interaction, and thus impact on the potential to extend social relations and networks.

7.5 Vulnerability and resilience, and its relationship to identity and social relations

The analysis thus far has explored the value Zwelisha's residents place on 'tenure', 'social relations' and 'identity' as forces to which they are sometimes subject, and assets that they hold and are able to direct to various outcomes. The analysis also identified the effects of the upgrade and formalisation process on the value and use of tenure, identity and social relations in an upgraded settlement. This section goes on to explore how the concepts of 'identity' and 'social relations' apply to an individual's ability to withstand shocks and manage risk in their attempts to realise their aspirations. First, the section looks at how the upgrade and formalisation process appears to influence strategies for wellbeing, contextualised by individual aspirations and responses to vulnerability.

7.5.1 Resilience and vulnerability

The resilience strategies adopted by the eight residents of Zwelisha mould and are moulded by their aspirations. As observed in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest, individuals usually have multiple strategies and aspirations that change over time; some of which are better thought out than others. Strategies and aspirations tend to be flexible and responsive to changes in circumstances and the environment, especially those changes brought about by the upgrade and formalisation process in these settlements. This section focuses on the upgrade process as a catalyst for changes in resilience strategies and aspirations, and explores the effects of the process on vulnerability.

Feroze Pillay has a short-term approach to resilience; his aspiration is to merely survive. Surviving with minimal resources and in hostile environments is a continual narrative in Feroze's life. He is a former prisoner, drug addict and possibly an alcoholic, who has been disowned by most of his family and is socially isolated in Zwelisha. He says, "My inner strength comes from me, who I am and what I do to survive. My way of surviving is not to work for anybody ... I haven't got a permanent job. But I'm surviving. Maybe because God has given me that mentality of surviving." (Pillay, 02/06/10).

Living in a permanent and sturdy house not only makes his survival easier, but the formalisation of his ownership over physical assets – land and a house, has caused him to dream of the future and make plans. He says:

Maybe I can extend my house. Paint it, extend it, make it nice and so on. Make the yard look like something good. Now it looks shabby, I understand. But my dream is to make it look brightened up. Make it look nice. Properly fenced and with a garage and so forth. I'll get a car maybe, only if I am financially secure. Maybe if I can get a secure job and get finance, something like that, then I'll own one.

(Pillay, 02/06/10)

The upgrade and formalisation process has not increased his ability to secure employment or improve his finances, but it has raised his aspirations with respect to how his land and house can be developed.

Bhehki Zwane's aspirations have changed over time, as have those of his peers. As children, he and his friends dreamed of professional careers in engineering, law and dentistry - none fulfilled their ambitions. After he matriculated high school and at his father's insistence, Bhehki started the first of many manual jobs in the various factories of northern KZN. His last job was as a petrol pump attendant. The realities of his family's financial situation, the opportunities available to young African men in apartheid South Africa, and his father's power over the family's fortunes, meant that Bhehki continually revised his ambitions until they became more modest and attainable. Following the upgrade process and his occupation and ownership of an RDP house and plot of land, Bhehki's "plans for the future are just to raise my children until they are big, extend my house and bring my sister here. I have a sister and I think I must bring her here once I have extended my house." (Zwane, 03/06/10).

The use and value of land and housing in post-upgrade Zwelisha is a pertinent feature of the resilience strategies interviewees craft for themselves and their families. Njabulo Mathebula, for

example, plans to leave his RDP house to his two daughters in Zwelisha as a part of their inheritance (Mathebula, notes on social relations map, 19/05/10). Njabulo, aware that his daughters have their own house, believes that inheriting his house will provide them with livelihood and investment options that will increase their resilience. An RDP house and the land around it is an asset for the entire immediate family and is valued for the inter-generational gains it can create.

This thinking was also evident in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest, where the potential to secure assets for future resilience affected mobility. Makhosi Mkhize reflected, as did others in other settlements, that when she first heard Zwelisha was to be upgraded, she was determined to stay there. She says, "I liked this place because I could register for a house. In other places they were already registered (like Umlazi, Intezuma and Park Gate)" (Mkhize, 26/05/10). Having settled in Zwelisha and learnt of the upgrade at a meeting, Makhosi was aware she had the opportunity to register for a house and considerably improve her family's situation. Knowledge of the impending process affected her tenure strategies, resilience strategies and aspirations.

In terms of vulnerability, as discussed in **section 7.2.2**, the upgrade of Zwelisha appears to have improved internal security, but the actions and intentions of residents in neighbouring settlements still contribute to a climate of fear and sustain a risky environment. When Zwelisha's residents discuss the sources of their fears, anxieties and threats to resilience, in addition to the threats posed by Amaoti, they discuss non-specific threats such as the risk of being infected with HIV and the effects of AIDS, as well as the general risk of being a victim of violence. For example, Bhehki Zwane says:

When I'm sitting here thinking about my future, things are very bad. When I was younger I used to travel long, long distances without fear. I used to be able to travel from here to Bester, even at night. Now you cannot do all that. There are so many things in the world – lots of people just killing each other. Disease too – this AIDS thing –

I'm frightened for my children. I wasn't as scared in the past [during ANC – IFP fighting] but now it's from bad to worse.

(Zwane, 03/06/10)

As time goes by, Bhehki's concerns for the future seem to have increased, and he sees threats to his life and the lives of his children from many sources that he cannot manage. He notes that violence has increased, particularly indiscriminate violence that is not motivated by politics. Njabulo Mathebula is also fearful of what *can* happen. He has come to believe that life is unpredictable. He says,

In this world I can say I'm not free at all, I'm always frightened for what can happen ... I'm not happy at all when I think about the children's future. I'm not happy about anything ... We used to live nice and quietly. Not just in Zwelisha, all over the world. Maybe you are walking and you see a child, you are not doing anything to anyone and maybe someone will come and shoot you and you die there on the spot.

(Mathebula, 09/06/10)

That Njabulo believes that his fear of being shot at random by a child is a common feeling around the world speaks to the violent environment in which he lives. Random, uncontrollable and unmanageable violence has become his reference point for standard global behaviour. The upgrade and formalisation process does not appear to have played an important role in confronting the range of vulnerabilities faced by residents of Zwelisha. When viewed with reference to residents' resilience strategies, especially their ability to leave assets such as land and a house to their families, the outcomes of the upgrade process, it can be argued, might help residents cope with the devastating effects of extreme violence and HIV/AIDS; however, these links were not made by the interviewees.

7.5.2 The relationships between identity, social relations, and vulnerability and resilience

This section explores the role of salient identities and social relations in individual experiences of vulnerability and resilience, specifically minority ethnicities, gender, and family relations. Some of these relations appear to be affected by the upgrade and formalisation process, some do not.

In Gum Tree Road, Cato Crest and Zwelisha, members of minority ethnicities and nationalities are exposed to greater risk than their majority Zulu South African neighbours. In Zwelisha, Celesile Moyo and Feroze Pillay are vulnerable to discrimination and targeted attacks based on their minority identities; as minorities they also have limited access to avenues for redress. As mentioned earlier, fears of xenophobic violence following the 2010 World Cup forced Celesile to flee Zwelisha (temporarily, she hoped) for Zimbabwe. Police presence nearby and a strong leadership in Zwelisha did not convince her to stay. In addition to these specific, high-profile threats, Celesile and her family are exposed to continual discrimination on the basis of their foreigner status, which affects their daily wellbeing. Farai explains:

It's easy to get a job [if you're a foreigner], [but] it's hard to get paid. [If] they know you're a foreigner, usually most people they don't want to pay. They underpay you. You see Zulu people, they don't play around, they tell you they want this much money. You agree, then he tells you [that] you must pay him ... [For me now, he says] 'Look I give you R100 for this work'. So I work. If he then wants to change it to R80, what must I do? I just look at it, R80, 'Ok. You're telling me R80 after all the work that I've done! Ok, give me the R80 then' ... I think just give me the R80 and let me go. A Zulu would say to him, 'no, give me my R100 there and then'. Because [they] are comfortable. They are in their own country, they've got all the rights. They can go and report it to the police, 'he doesn't want to pay me my money, he doesn't want this...'. But look at me. I'm racing against my own time. I'm in a foreign land [and] I want money, I'm looking for money.

(F. Moyo, 27/05/10)

Celesile and Farai are in a dilemma. They are economic migrants in South Africa, there to earn money. This goal is made harder because they are foreigners. The foreigner identity exposes them to a number of insecurities - a particular hazard is not being paid for work and having no recourse to demand payment. Farai does not feel able to go to the police if he is not paid. Being a foreigner leaves him and his family totally exposed to the lack of scruples and behaviour of others.

Feroze Pillay, as a South African, is not as exposed to vulnerability as the Moyos; for example, he feels he is able to go to the police if necessary. However, in Zwelisha, and in spite of a strong settlement leadership, Feroze believes that both he and his mother have been the targets of violence

and intimidating behaviour based solely on their ethnicity. Feroze mentions a specific incident involving his mother. One night when she was alone in the shack, several African men were throwing sticks, bricks and stones at it. They threatened to pull it down and burn it, with her inside. Feroze recalls that they said that she did not belong in Zwelisha and must leave (Pillay, notes on social relations map, 19/05/10). Feroze relates the intimidation his mother experienced in Zwelisha to race and the supposed incursion of ethnic Indians into spaces perceived as African. He does not report any aggressive behaviour towards him or his family since the upgrade. However, the extent of his social isolation suggests that many residents still do not consider Indians to belong in Zwelisha.

While minority identities increase vulnerabilities, they also facilitate access to social networks and groups that may aid resilience. For example, Celesile's entire social world and network for resilience in Zwelisha is constructed through family ties and nationality. Her brothers provide her husband with a job and their family with an income. Her only friends in Zwelisha are a Zimbabwean couple who she met in the settlement. Celesile relies heavily on her friends to help with childcare, fetch water for daily household needs, entertainment, opportunities to socialise, and information (C. Moyo, notes on gift diary, 20/05/10 – 27/05/10). This couple are also tenants, who live in an RDP house shared with several amaZulu tenants, who keep them informed of developments in the settlement, information that her friend passes on to Celesile and others. It was through her friend that Celesile heard the rumours that xenophobic attacks would recur after the World Cup. The networks for resilience that minority identities help to create appear, in their use, to be unaffected by the upgrade and formalisation process.

As in Cato Crest and Gum Tree Road, and in recognition of the challenges posed by contemporary society, residents in Zwelisha, especially women, place a high value on the education of their children, particularly girls. They tie education to aspirations and resilience. For example, Hannah Khumalo was discouraged from continuing to attend school as soon as she could write her name.

Her ambitions and those of her family were tied to marriage to a husband who would be able to provide for her. Hannah had “everything that I thought I must have” (Khumalo, 02/06/10) until the death of her husband and the need to support their family forced a change in her opinions. Hannah now believes that her daughters need a good level of education to survive – they cannot pin their resilience solely to the fortunes of marriage. Similarly, Zodwa Kaleni teaches her daughters that because they are girls they must learn to be independent of men and never be forced to rely on someone else. She says: “They must just attend school, finish their studies and do things on their own. Don't think you can stay with a man and rely on him ... If you get an education no one can take it, it will always be yours” (Kaleni, 02/06/10). To Hannah and Zodwa, resilience for their daughters is achieved through education and the agency it can inspire. This shift in attitude seems to occur independently of the upgrade process.

The upgrade and formalisation process can, however, have a direct impact on resilience and gender. Makhosi Mkhize lives with her partner of several years and their four children. The RDP house in which they all live is registered to Makhosi, the housing subsidy was awarded to her alone and the house is not in joint ownership (Mkhize, 19/05/10). There are two reasons for this. First, the non-registration of her partner means that he is eligible for a subsidy of his own should their relationship break down. Second, Makhosi is confident that with sole ownership rights over the house, her children will always have a place to stay, irrespective of her relationship with their father. As a mother, to Makhosi her sole ownership of the family house is an important source of resilience to protect the most vulnerable members of her family.

In Cato Crest (**section 6.5.2**), it was suggested that the upgrade and formalisation process could change relations amongst immediate family members who live in adjacent shacks. Space-contingent family relations, it was supposed, may impact on how family relations are used for resilience, especially amongst older residents. In Zwelisha, it seems that post-upgrade family relations are

strong and remain an important source of resilience. Njabulo Mathebula's two daughters used to live in their own shacks next to his. Following the upgrade of Zwelisha, both were awarded RDP houses. One lives diagonally across from Njabulo, the other a little further away and Njabulo has strong, reciprocal relations with both. He is reliant on them for access to information on settlement-wide developments and for daily interaction. And they are reliant on him to help with childcare and a home-based business (Mathebula, notes of gift diary, 19/05/10 – 09/06/10). The resilience of all family members is tied to dependence on one another, as it was prior to the upgrade.

All the other interviewees with adult children still live with their children in a single RDP house. The main reason why these adult children do not have their own RDP houses is that they were under 21 at the time of registration. Hannah Khumalo lives with her adult son and younger children, and Thandi Zuma with her three adult daughters in an extended house. In both cases, their living arrangements are part of a resilience strategy that suits the needs of the family. Hannah, a widow, is comforted by the presence of an adult man in her house. Thandi's daughters support her financially and emotionally, and Thandi, through childcare and providing her daughters with a safe and comfortable house to live in, supports her daughters.

Where families live together in Zwelisha or close by, parents and grandparents are involved in helping to reduce the vulnerabilities of others, aspiring to ensure their success and comfort (i.e. their resilience). Their time, labour and financial support often helps out children or grandchildren. An individual is a part of a family unit and is driven by a desire to ensure that the family unit is resilient, even if this means he or she assumes additional burdens, duties and risks. The bonds between family members do not appear to have been strained by the upgrade process and the modest relocations involved in Zwelisha.

7.6 Tenure and vulnerability and resilience

The relationships between tenure, vulnerability and resilience were framed by the residents in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest as a 'trade-off', although the agency deployed by actors to enter the trade off varied. Life in an informal or partially upgraded settlement with its limited services and risky environment increased hardship and vulnerability for some, while simultaneously providing refuge, opportunities for employment and livelihoods, and, in the early stages of the upgrade and formalisation process, the prospect of secure, permanent tenure, a dwelling and an improved supply of amenities. The implementation of the upgrade and formalisation process in Zwelisha has fundamentally altered the terms of the trade-off. For owner-occupiers, tenure arrangements are less flexible and amenable to resilience strategies that in the past centred on mobility – running away from danger, moving closer to jobs, schools and services, and shifting to lower-cost housing to save money. The effects of permanent secure tenure are apparent in post-upgrade responses to threats to personal safety and security, responses to the labour market, and cost reduction initiatives.

Njabulo Mathebula and Hannah Khumalo both moved to Zwelisha to escape communal violence. Njabulo was living in Eshowe with his second wife in the early 1990s when violence inspired by party politics forced them to flee. He recalls, "Zwelisha was very bad when I first came. It was a forested place, lots of snakes, there was nothing that you could not find in Zwelisha. It was a very bad place. I still decided to stay because of the sake of my wife. I wanted her to come this side from Eshowe because Eshowe was so bad. So I thought, even if this place is bad we must still stay, maybe one day it will come right." (Mathebula, 09/06/10). The immediate survival of Njabulo's family depended on fleeing Eshowe for a less risky although still violent settlement. Hannah, a recent widow, was living with her children in a tent at a time of intense political conflict. She recalls, "They used to knock on our doors and force our children to attend the meetings, the ANC meetings. My children were too

young at that time, so I decided I must run away from that place, because they were killing the children there too.” (Khumalo, 02/06/10).

Since moving to Zwelisha, Njabulo and Hannah did not recall cases of extreme violence on a scale comparable to the violence in the 1990s that had caused them to flee their previous dwellings. However, they and other residents have had to cope with continual threats to their survival and resilience from other sources. As discussed in **section 7.4.2**, the greatest threat to residents in Zwelisha is perceived to come from Amaoti, against which Zwelisha is often juxtaposed. Thandi Zuma explained that, although she had never been there, “I know it! ... Amaoti is not a good place. [...] Amaoti is a very bad place, I don’t like it, I don’t even like to talk about it ... Even if I wasn’t going to get my shack here, I wasn’t going to go to Amaoti to build there. I just don’t like that place.” (Zuma, 02/06/10). Amaoti has become the embodiment of fear, violence, crime and danger. Resident’s strategy for survival and resilience, encouraged by the settlement leadership, is to avoid Amaoti and its residents. This means never to enter Amaoti and never to invite people from Amaoti into Zwelisha. The threat of Amaoti is serious enough to warrant strategies for avoidance that curtail movement and association, yet no interviewee contemplates leaving Zwelisha. Despite the dangers posed by Amaoti, residents in Zwelisha continue to invest in their properties or aspire to invest in them. For example, Thandi, who does not even like to talk about Amaoti, has built a substantial extension to her house and made improvements to the land, acts that suggest plans for long term residence.

For one group of residents in Zwelisha, fleeing the settlement when threatened with violence is an option that is easier to exercise. Tenants have more flexible tenure arrangements than owner-occupiers. To this group of residents, the terms of the trade-off are similar to tenants in other settlements. Celesile and Farai Moyo continue to stay in Zwelisha in spite of the risk of being targeted for xenophobic violence and tenure insecurity. These vulnerabilities are managed as best

they can in order to fulfil their long term strategy of owning their own business in Zimbabwe as a means of securing the family's resilience. When the risk could not be managed (e.g. threats of attacks targeting foreigners), Celesile fled.

As illustrated by the shack rental market in Gum Tree Road, low income settlements with a variety of informal tenure arrangements tend to draw migrant labourers, attracted by accessible cheap and conveniently located housing. Bhehki Zwane had always moved from one dwelling to another depending on employment opportunities. He explains:

While I was at Emandeni I was staying in a *mjondolo* – that place was close to where I was working. While I was at Richard's Bay I stayed at home, because it wasn't far ... I was staying anywhere because I was trying my luck, as long as I could work somewhere I stayed anywhere. But I prefer it here [in Zwelisha], because at first I was in a shack, but now I have my house.

(Zwane, 03/06/10)

Although following a stroke Bhehki no longer works, his wife does. The improvement to their dwelling and daily lives following the upgrade process means that he is reluctant to consider relocation for employment. He observes that other residents in Zwelisha also appear averse to relocation. He says, "I don't see any new people really come here anymore. I've noticed only if someone gets a job far away, they go to that place, but they still come back to the house" (Zwane, 13/05/10). To Bhehki, the value of living in Zwelisha and owning a house (something that may not be possible in another settlement) outweighs the advantage of relocating closer to employment.

A primary consideration for many shack dwellers in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest was the cost-saving associated with living in a shack, such as no utility bills, for owner-occupiers no rent or municipal rates, and manageable transportation costs (the location of the settlements meant that many residents were able to walk to work or school). Under eThekweni Municipality's provision of free basic services for low income families, households in Zwelisha receive a free allowance of water

(6kl per month) and electricity (50kWh per month) (GoRSA, 2011). They are also in effect exempt from paying municipal rates because the 'market value' on which rates are set is yet to be determined for RDP properties. No interviewee mentioned a noticeable increase in their cost of living following the upgrade, or thought that this was an area for future concern. Rather, interviewees appear to express a desire to spend money to make improvements to their lives. For example, almost all the interviewees had purchased high value electrical goods such as TVs, music systems and fridge-freezers. It is uncertain if the allowance of 50kWh per month is sufficient to cover the resulting increase in electricity use; a study commissioned by Earthlife Africa (Adam, 2010) suggests it is not. In addition, it is unclear whether future increases in the cost of utilities and services (especially once rates are payable) might make it necessary for residents to move elsewhere.

Underlying the absence of mobility as an integral part of an individual's resilience strategy in post-upgrade Zwelisha is a shift in residents' conception of 'home'. Many residents, including Njabulo Mathebula and Zodwa Kaleni, still appear to have a strong link to their *emaki*. For example, Njabulo's first family live in his *emaki* and he still visits them, and Zodwa partakes in cultural festivities only at Umbumbulu – her *emaki* (Kaleni, 02/06/10). However, living in Zwelisha is a permanent prospect for them both. Njabulo is retired in Zwelisha and plans to remain there, close to his daughters who have established their own lives in the settlement. Zodwa, like other interviewees, takes great pride in the look and feel of the settlement following the upgrade, believing that through her long residence, she contributed to the dramatic change in her environment. This belief and pride in her surroundings makes her, and others, reluctant to leave.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter reflected on the upgrade and formalisation process in Zwelisha through the narratives of eight of its residents. It also examined the effects of the process on conceptions of tenure security, finding that proof of ownership underwritten by a state actor and combined with the

occupation of an RDP house, has led to a strong sense of security and engendered investments in property. High levels of tenure security are attainable without a title deed. However, a long history of mistrust between former shack dwellers and state actors lead some residents to demand *de jure* land rights through a title deed as a means of reducing their future dependence on the state.

Another major effect has been a challenge to the collective identity of Zwelisha's residents and consequent conceptions of settlement-wide 'community'. History and contemporary race relations limit the inclusion of Zwelisha into mainstream formal society, helping to craft it as an exclusive and somewhat isolated place. Under the direction of a strong leadership, there are limited opportunities for newcomers to access housing in the settlement and limited associations with residents of neighbouring settlements. However, this did not appear to be a point of concern to any of the interviewees. The appearance of the settlement, daily life in it and plans for the future have in their view all been dramatically improved because of the upgrade.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.0 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the relationships between tenure and vulnerability by identifying and exploring how changes to tenure security, introduced through the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements, affect individuals' exposure to risk and ability to cope, and the ways in which social relations and identity influence those effects. From the detailed analysis of data based on the narratives of twenty-four residents of low income settlements two central and related arguments emerge. The first is that an individual's social relationships and aspects of their identity do not simply influence their access to urban land, housing and tenure security, but determine it. This study reveals the strength and importance of local power structures, which shape interactions between residents and local elites before, during and after state intervention through the upgrade process. The implications of these relationships are relevant to the discourse on citizenship implicit in the policy of upgrade and formalisation, which aims to draw informal settlements into mainstream society and under the auspices of the state. Furthermore, the prevailing uses of identity and social relations and the power structures they help to craft and promote affect the renegotiation of the social contract between citizens and the state that according to the literature ought to occur as a result of upgrade and formalisation.

The second argument is that the process of upgrade and formalisation considerably improves aspects of tenure security (as reconceptualised by respondents) and daily wellbeing for all residents of informal settlements, but insufficiently addresses a major cause of both tenure insecurity and vulnerability – crime and violence. Tenure insecurity is experienced in a number of different ways, for example arising from job insecurity or a lack of public and personal safety. This is insufficiently

acknowledged in the theory of formalisation, which addresses only one aspect of tenure security, meaning that overall security does not necessarily improve with formalisation. This leads individuals to maintain informal relationships and the power structures they help to craft. The idea that title to a plot is the key to security reflects a poor appreciation amongst policy makers of life in an informal settlement and its daily and long term challenges for residents. The concepts of ‘citizenship’ and ‘security and violence’ are therefore meta-narratives that overarch the analysis and findings of the thesis.

The following section presents a summary and synthesis of previous chapters, draws out these meta-narratives and other main findings, and relates them to existing literature and prevailing theories (**section 8.1**). The chapter then revisits the research questions and develops answers from the specific – three informal settlements in eThekweni municipality - to the general, informal settlements in developing countries, to aid theorisation and generalisability (**section 8.2**). The final section of the chapter discusses issues raised by the thesis in terms of areas for further research (**section 8.3**).

8.1 Chapter summary and synthesis

Previous chapters have successively introduced the research topic and set out pertinent questions for the study to address (**chapter 1**); presented existing theories that purport to explain the relationships between the four key concepts of this study: tenure security/insecurity, identity, social relations, and vulnerability/resilience (**chapter 2**); explained the rationale behind the approach taken to address the study questions (**chapter 3**); set the study in the context of national policy debate and contemporary South African history (**chapter 4**); and analysed primary data to address the research questions through grounded explanations of the nature and purpose of the relationships between the four key concepts (**chapters 5, 6 and 7**). This final chapter aims to draw together the main themes, arguments and meta-narratives that run throughout the thesis.

The introduction to this study presented a case for research into the social consequences of urban poverty alleviation initiatives in the global South (**chapter 1**). One initiative that has momentum and the favour of development agencies and national governments is the *in situ* upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements (at least in policy, if not in practice). In South Africa, policy used to focus on the supply of low-cost housing units, but in recent years, in keeping with international trends, the debate has almost exclusively focused on *how* informal settlements are best upgraded and their residents formalised, with legal tenure arrangements that emphasise full freehold title. The rationale behind the policy suggests that the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements substantially contributes to alleviating urban poverty and deprivation. It also signifies a neo-liberal influenced capitalist approach to the issue, which holds that land tenure reform propels economic growth by, for example, aiding the poor to realise 'dead capital'; state intervention is justified to help the poor negotiate access to the formal land market (GoRSA, 1995; 2005).

The policy to upgrade and formalise informal settlements has been stated by successive South African housing ministers in terms of the 'elimination' and 'eradication' of slums by 2014. This language is borne of global campaigns to change the urban landscape by targeting informal settlements as problem spaces; of these campaigns the World Bank and UN-Habitat supported 'Cities without Slums' is the highest profile. Critics have argued that the sentiment behind 'slum eradication' policies and campaigns masks a sinister pathology that criminalises the poor and marginalised, who live in informal settlements, for their poverty and marginalisation (e.g. Huchzemeyer 2008; Bauder, 2002). The policy to 'eradicate' or upgrade and formalise informal settlements in South Africa identifies poor quality housing, a lack of services, and tenure insecurity as the causes of urban poverty, deprivation, exclusion from mainstream society, lack of social mobility, crime and violence, and a host of other social ills that informal settlements are believed to harbour. This study, through a nuanced perspective on the daily lives and aspirations of residents in low

income settlements in a major South African city, offers a timely investigation into the claims of the policy to upgrade and formalise informal settlements.

Hermeneutic appreciations of the concepts tenure, identity, social relations and vulnerability and resilience as experienced by residents of low income settlements reveal that the relationships between these concepts are complex. As found in conventional approaches to social analysis, variables such as gender, ethnicity, age, family situation, network of friends and family, education, health, employment or job prospects all affect the value and use of identity and social relations, and how tenure and vulnerability is experienced and understood. Additionally, from the study data, an individual's personal history, relationship with local elites, attitudes to wellbeing, current aspirations, and the strength of religious or cultural conviction, matter just as much as more conventional variables in understanding the nuances of change in a low income settlement. This finding is a contribution to methodological literature on the analysis of urban poverty.

Amidst the individuality of experiences and understandings of tenure and vulnerability common themes emerge across the twenty-four narratives collected from three settlement sites. A strong emerging theme concerns how tenure security is understood by residents of low income settlements and the ways in which their understanding challenges traditional conceptions of tenure security. In the literature on approaches to tenure security (**section 2.2.1**) the concept is defined in terms of the strength of an individual's claim to ownership over land and/or a dwelling; tenure insecurity is therefore related to ownership disputes and their consequences e.g. conflict, eviction and/or fear of eviction. According to the theories of de Soto (2000), de Haan (1999) and Deininger (2003), the process to upgrade and formalise informal settlements ought to move people who live in informal settlements and are tenure insecure to formal housing and tenure security. The analysis in this study of what constitutes tenure security and insecurity reveals that simply moving along the process (from a shack to an RDP house) does not correspond to a shift from tenure insecurity to tenure security.

On the whole, the residents interviewed felt secure in their claims to ownership over a shack or an RDP house for which they had not yet received a title deed, or in their verbal tenancy agreement. Their sense of tenure insecurity was related to their exposure to the risk of random or targeted acts of crime and violence, ill health and its consequences for a household, and the effects of unemployment and/or an irregular income on paying rent and any utility bills. This finding challenges the usefulness of traditional conceptions of tenure security and questions the assumptions that tie tenure security to the formalisation of informal settlements; thus contributing to Gilbert's (2002) critique of the value of legalisation and a title deed to poor urban dwellers.

Based on the evidence presented in the analysis chapters (5, 6 and 7), this thesis argues for a re-definition of the concept of tenure security so that it is understood *as the ability of a person to live in, what is to them, a desirable location*. Such a re-definition allows for greater understanding of the cultural specificities of tenure and variation in the experiences of tenure security and insecurity between men and women, the elderly and the young, foreigners and nationals, the employed and unemployed, and one group of party political supporters and another.

Experiences and perceptions of vulnerability and resilience amongst the residents were similarly rooted in social and cultural specificities. As explored in **section 2.4**, the conceptualisation of vulnerability in prominent poverty discourses such as the post income-based poverty analysis of Chambers (1995; 2006) and Sen (1987), Moser's asset vulnerability framework (1998), chronic poverty (Hulme and Shepherd, 2003) and livelihoods analysis (e.g. Beall, 2002), tends to focus on vulnerability as a condition influenced by a range of different variables – variously labelled resources, assets or capitals. Generally the more resources/assets/capitals a person can access the better off they are. More recent literature on the concept of vulnerability in studies of wellbeing (Gough *et al.*, 2006) explores vulnerability as a variable condition that is socially constructed and thus influenced by and experienced through cultural norms, social attitudes and prevailing systems of power. The

respondents in this study broadly experienced and understood vulnerability and resilience in the ways conceptualised by the wellbeing literature, thus contributing empirical evidence in support of the relevance of the theory of wellbeing, and its emphasis on individual aspirations, to understanding vulnerability.

The study respondents' aspirations for themselves or their family shaped their ideas of resilience, and influenced their attitudes to risk and subsequent behaviour. Aspirations changed depending on the respondent's time in life and wider political and social change. For example, the end of apartheid signalled new and exciting possibilities for black South Africans, and in more recent years, despondency amongst many black South Africans that the post-apartheid years did not bring the opportunities anticipated. In relation to these historic changes aspirations were accordingly scaled-up or became more modest and thus attainable. News and observations of the upgrade and formalisation process in their settlement raised the aspirations of all respondents for both themselves and especially any children or grandchildren. Respondents spoke (in anticipation or through reflection) of better living conditions, economic opportunities for home-based businesses, improved physical security, reduced risk of house fire and electrocution from illegal electricity wires (i.e. improved life chances), and greater educational opportunities from living close to colleges and high schools in the city.

These aspirations resulted in some individuals acting in ways to secure their access to the upgrade process and its outputs. Behaviour included, in Gum Tree Road, the subtle manoeuvring of those individuals uncertain they would receive a housing subsidy in the settlement to forge closer relations with the settlement's leaders who were charged with developing a housing list of eligible residents. Some residents in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest had also developed plans to take an RDP house if for some reason their entitlement to one was not realised by the authorities. For some residents in Zwelisha who lived in RDP houses the realisation of some of their aspirations with regards to housing

and tenure, led to a renewed focus on other aspirations such as good health and freedom from the fear of HIV/AIDS and its consequences, and physical safety and freedom from the continuing fear of crime and violence.

Overall, this study investigates the interplay between the tenure and vulnerability/resilience, explores how changes to tenure affect individual experiences of vulnerability and resilience, and how continually changing experiences of vulnerability and resilience can affect an individual's conception of tenure security and insecurity, and influence decision-making related to tenure. The interplay is presented as a 'trade-off' between tenure and vulnerability. In Gum Tree Road, tenure (a desirable urban location, relative tenure and physical security) was traded against vulnerability (exposure to communal violence, poor living conditions and limited basic amenities such as access to drinking water). Individuals engaged in the 'trade-off' for four main reasons: to save money; to improve their personal safety; to improve their quality of life (compared to their area of previous residence); and to take advantage of future options for resilience, which are increasingly perceived as tied to the process of upgrade and formalisation.

Findings from all the settlements suggest that the process and prospect of upgrade and formalisation changes the terms of the tenure - vulnerability trade off because it changes the risks and potential gains involved. In Cato Crest and Zwelisha it was apparent that the formalisation process, to the individuals concerned, was a potential means to improve their long term resilience by giving future generations a place in the city. However, findings from studies on commercial land speculation and the commodification of upgraded settlements across Southern Africa suggest that if the equity in RDP houses appreciates householders may later decide to sell to realise the value of the property (e.g. Mooya and Cloete 2007 and Skuse and Cousins 2007), often under acute pressure, suggesting that vendors may have limited agency at the point at which they decide to sell. In general, the agency deployed by individuals who enter the tenure - vulnerability trade-off varies. For example,

some individuals who had lived in a settlement for close to twenty years lacked the ability to gain access to a comparable dwelling elsewhere (vacant urban land for potential settlement having long been occupied); their tenure does not reflect a choice that balances the desirability of a location against exposure to a range of risks.

By drawing together discourses of tenure with discourses of vulnerability and resilience (discussed as a literature gap in **section 2.0**), this study creates a space in which to situate the related concepts of identity and social relations and the power dynamics they help craft and augment, which sometimes influence and more often determine the experiences of and opportunities for tenure insecurity/security and vulnerability/resilience. It is the joint treatment of discourses on tenure and vulnerability and the creation of a new space in which to locate points of conceptual synergy that enables this study, through empirical investigation, to contribute to a neglected area of research on the links between tenure and vulnerability.

Through a reinterpretation of these findings on tenure and vulnerability in light of other literature on the subject, this study also argues that a focus on housing, services and legal title does not address underlying and continuing causes of vulnerability and tenure insecurity, which are the continuing risk of violence and the absence of other securities. This finding, which relates to the *in situ* upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements, is similar to the findings of studies on other approaches to low income urban housing, such as relocation, for example, in Ross's (2009) study of resettled former shack dwellers (see **section 2.3.2**). Ross identifies that, despite changes to residents' physical location, life is still hard. The wider social, political and economic context in which life is lived means that residents still directly experience and suffer from the effects of ill-health, drugs, violence, death and unemployment i.e. structural violence. This suggests that a policy focus on 'eradicating slums' is in danger of creating formalised 'poverty enclaves' (Ross, 2009:205), in which the lives of poor urban

dwellers are still characterised by exclusion, deprivation and a lack of opportunity, despite their residence in formal housing areas.

Citizenship, and violence and security were earlier suggested as meta-narratives that help to contextualise the findings of this study in broader theoretical and practical debates on creating safer and more inclusive cities (UN-Habitat, 2002; 2003). Ideas of 'citizenship' in South Africa are highly politically charged. Under apartheid, the question of who was and was not a citizen of South Africa and/or the homelands was deeply divisive and contentious. Post-1994, 'citizenship' is a term used to imply inclusion and is implicit in discourses on national unity; it is the cornerstone of South Africa's multi-racial democracy, and represents a rights-based politics that includes all groups within the population (Von Lieres and Robins, 2008). The use of the term aims to redefine the relationships between citizen and state.

In the literature on informal settlements, shack dwellers are broadly accepted as disempowered members of society who are marginalised from formal structures of authority by virtue of the illegality of their residence, or through stigmatised perceptions of shack dwellers (e.g. Huchzermeyer, 2004; Schlyter, 2001; Morris and Hindson, 1994). The citizenship of shack dwellers is conditioned in terms of the legitimate and moral rights and entitlements they can demand from the state, and the obligation the state believes it has towards people who typically live on the margins of mainstream society, and who may or may not be actual citizens. In South Africa, many poor African men and women who survived apartheid actively supported the ANC before it became the party of government, took part in anti-apartheid struggles, are citizens (in the conventional sense of citizenship as nationality), and carry a strong sense of entitlement from the state for their past support and their direct contribution to multi-racial democracy. Shack dwellers in South Africa occupy an odd position where they are or were politically active citizens (participating in political marches and campaigns; joining political parties; and voting in elections), yet they remain

marginalised. Foreign shack dwellers are similarly marginalised but, the literature suggests, with far fewer expectations from the state.

The heuristic approach adopted for this study and its ethnographic methodology enables a fuller understanding of experiences of citizenship in a low income settlement. The research methodology adopted a multi-method approach to develop rich in-depth narratives that help to contextualise individuals' encounters with the state through the upgrade process in terms of history, culture and social change (see **chapter 3**). For example, the historic policies of the apartheid state defined the terms of association and movement of African men, women and children, as well as their value to society; they also determined the spaces in which the presence of Africans was acceptable and where it was not (detailed in **chapter 4**). The narratives of twenty-four individuals affected by an upgrade policy that legitimises and sanctions African use of space in South African cities are rooted in historic and post-apartheid citizen-state relations and expectations.

Proponents of the neo-liberal approach to upgrade and formalise informal settlements have argued that the process can be a way to draw residents of informal settlements into mainstream society under a drive for more inclusive (and safer) cities. For example, debates around legalising tenure arrangements, drawing shack dwellers into a legal framework where the state is guarantor of tenure security, argue that this can provide a means to renegotiate the terms of citizenship and the rights and responsibilities of both state and citizen in post-apartheid South Africa (e.g. Royston, 2002). In practice, however, the research reveals that, the process of upgrade and the formalisation of tenure does not automatically increase an individual resident's sense of inclusion in mainstream society or improve their access to state actors and mechanisms. For example, the process and its outputs, either due to restrictions on eligibility or informal rules on resource allocation exclude a range of people to varying degrees. Foreigners and recent arrivals to informal settlements are excluded from the process, and in Durban, non-Zulu South Africans feel discriminated against. Furthermore,

upgraded spaces are isolated, sometimes intentionally in the case of Zwelisha, from other informal settlements, but also from surrounding formal spaces where historic ethnic and racial boundaries continue to prevail.

It is argued in **chapter 4**, and continually illustrated throughout **chapters 5, 6, and 7**, that the process of upgrade and formalisation places considerable emphasis on community participation and devolves responsibility for key elements of the process, such as determining eligibility and allocating resources to specific individuals and families, to local elites, whose legitimacy and representativeness is questionable. The implementation of the process creates opportunities for local elites – councillors, settlement leaders and grassroots party political structures (in the case of Cato Crest) – to engage in acts of nepotism and patronage that reflect their ethnic and cultural preferences. Residents keen to access the process and benefit from its outcomes tend to emphasise their social relationships with local elites and aspects of their identity in order to manoeuvre themselves into the strongest possible position to claim their entitlement to resources. Rather than changing the relationships between citizens and the state, the mediation of the upgrade and formalisation process by local elites serves to consolidate their power and authority over ordinary residents, albeit in a reconfigured form.

This is evident, for example, in post-upgrade Zwelisha. Residents who had obtained secure tenure as a result of the process felt obliged and indebted to settlement leaders, initially for lobbying the municipality for a settlement upgrade and then for their role in implementing a process that had resulted in such a major improvement to the wellbeing of beneficiaries. The ‘participatory’ nature of the upgrade process means that the state ends up legitimating the authority of local elites and confers power to them over resource allocation. As a result, the settlement leadership continues to play a mediating role between citizens and the state. They mediate the access of residents to front line services, for example, residents report crime or health emergencies to settlement leaders, who in turn call the police or an ambulance on their behalf. Settlement leaders also continue to exert

their authority, now in collusion with the municipality, by monitoring and taking action against unauthorised building extensions, the reconstruction of shacks in backyards and the operation of *shebeens*.

The second meta-narrative concerns 'security and violence', and how fears and experiences of insecurity and violence undermine improved security of tenure, thus questioning the veracity of some of the main claims made by supporters of the upgrade and formalisation process, regarding the role of the process in creating safer (and more inclusive) cities. Security of tenure is commonly cited as an outcome of the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements by state agencies, and has become a major justification for intervention (e.g. GoRSA, 2005). In neo-liberal theory, which values 'the individual', a title deed is believed to free individuals both from the perpetual fear of eviction by the state (e.g. de Soto, 2000), and from the social obligations and power dynamics that had previously governed the terms of their rights to land (e.g. Davies and Fourie, 2002).

Security of tenure also, it is argued in the international literature, improves household resilience (e.g. Moser, 1998). The findings from Gum Tree Road, Cato Crest and Zwelisha illustrate that what constitutes tenure security before, during and after the upgrade and formalisation of informal settlements is more complex than assumed by these theories; and that improvements to resilience are conditional.

Findings from the settlements studied suggest that the extent of a resident's security of tenure is tied to a range of other sources of security including a job, sufficient income and good health and, overwhelmingly, physical security; and that these are experienced differently by different residents. For example, in Gum Tree Road and Cato Crest, foreigners and non-Zulus are at particular risk from being 'chased away' in a current climate of xenophobia and heightened ethnic tension (also in Sichone, 2008:258). Across all three settlements, women and girls are at continual risk of sexual violence and/or assault within and outside their homes, which affects how safe and secure they feel

in a given space. And all residents believe they are at risk of another outbreak of communal violence, previous episodes of which have defined where people live, with whom and for how long.

On the whole, residents in RDP houses reported that the upgrade and formalisation of the informal settlement has improved their daily wellbeing and has sometimes contributed to improved economic security (as expected in neo-liberal theory) through, for example, the introduction of a safe and constant supply of electricity and water in the home, which eases household drudgery and can enable home-based businesses to be established; and occupation of a solid dwelling, which reduces the fear and risk of house fire, and encourages residents to invest in high value goods that improve daily life, like fridge-freezers. RDP residents also reported that de-densification following an upgrade improved the look and feel of the settlement and resulted in their feeling safer as greater space in between houses had reduced the ability of criminals to hide and escape without detection. However, there are a number of vulnerabilities, topped by violence and physical insecurity, that the upgrade process does not affect (and nor does it aim to), which affects the desirability of a specific space and the ability of a resident to live there, thus limiting the extent to which a resident can claim to be completely tenure secure (according to my redefinition of the term).

This leaves residents with the need to continue to manage a range of insecurities through their social relationships, especially with local elites on the one hand and family members on the other, as well as appeals to a common identity such as nationality, ethnicity or party political affiliation. Such strategies for achieving security are similar to those that residents of informal settlements previously found to be successful, with tenure and other securities also typically secured through social relations and appeals to common identity. The continuation of such strategies may well place residents under the same social obligations and power dynamics from which formalisation and individual tenure is intended to free them.

Furthermore, the process of upgrade and formalisation and the strategies that residents develop to access the process can create new social obligations. For example, the process of upgrade currently excludes both tenants and landlords or owners of multiple shacks, who can only register for a single RDP house. These eligibility criteria inadvertently create incentives for tenants and landlords to circumvent the intent of the rules on eligibility. In Gum Tree Road, tenants are emboldened to strike deals with landlords so that they can register as the owner of their shack, thus appearing eligible for the process. Landlords are similarly emboldened to evict tenants and/or register a friend or family member as the owner of a shack by riding roughshod over the *de facto* tenure security of a tenant. Such deals exacerbate class inequalities in upgraded settlements between former renters, former landlords and owner-occupiers.

The conceptual framework for this study discussed theories on the relationships between tenure, identity, social relations and vulnerability/resilience. The subsequent analysis shows that these theories do indeed identify many of the influences, determinants and outcomes of these features during the process of *in situ* upgrade and formalisation, illustrating the overall adequacy of the conceptualisation advanced in **chapter 2** as a framework for examining the intricacies of the relationship between tenure and vulnerability. The thesis contributes to the refinement of these theories by illustrating where the relationship is especially strong and where new links need to be drawn. For example, the importance of identity and social relations in determining (and not merely influencing) access to urban land, housing and tenure security and its influential effect on access to the upgrade process illustrate a far stronger relationship than assumed in current theory (see **section 2.1.2**). Also, having highlighted a gap in theoretical understandings of the interplay between tenure and vulnerability, the findings show how vulnerability can drive tenure decision making, and how experiences of tenure are influenced by exposure to risks and people's ability to cope with them.

Although the conceptual framework was adequate for this study, in relation to the meta-narratives, the conceptual framework could be further developed to improve its relevance and application in other studies concerning the development of safer and more inclusive cities. In this study the ways in which ordinary citizens relate to, access and think of the state in general terms and certain state actors (e.g. elected councillors, municipal officials, ANC party officials) was understood following the process of data analysis; at this point the importance of the topic became apparent. Similarly, the often casual remarks of respondents' experiences with death, violence and crime, picked up at the point of data analysis, vividly illustrates the omnipresence of violence and insecurity in their history, present lives and in their anticipation of the future. This investigation into individual perceptions and experiences of life in a low income settlement and the process of upgrade and formalisation has uncovered the importance of these two meta-narratives. This indicates a case for their inclusion into a new conceptual framework for other studies of urban poverty, land and housing. This would apply theories of citizenship and urban violence in an analytical lens for exploring the relationship between tenure and vulnerability.

8.2 Research answers: from the specific to the general

The main research question answered in this study concerns the effects of formalising tenure through *in situ* upgrade on vulnerability and resilience, and in what ways and why these effects are influenced by identity and social relationships. This section revisits this question and aims to consider the relevance of the study findings beyond the specific situations found within eThekweni Municipality to the national and international contexts. In doing so, the section considers whether findings can be generalised to both low income settlements in general and the overall policy of upgrade and formalisation. The section also reflects on how the research question was answered and explores the ways in which the research methodology can be applied to other studies.

In South Africa, the *in situ* upgrade and formalisation of an informal settlement aims to deliver a dwelling and freehold title deed, which is expected to provide poor urban dwellers with tenure security and its supposed benefits. This proposition was framed in **section 2.2** as a neo-liberal ideal challenging neo-customary practices. This study has found (as discussed in chapters **5**, **6**, and **7**) that claims to tenure security in low income settlements throughout the upgrade and formalisation process are related to an individual's ability, using their identity and social relations, to negotiate local power dynamics and structures in order to secure and retain access to land and a dwelling. This finding, which highlights the importance of power relationships in low income settlements, contributes to the arguments made by Davies and Fourie (2002, in **section 2.2.2**) on tenure security and the harmony of 'internal' and 'external' tensions (or 'dialectic'). They argue, the upgrade and formalisation of a settlement (which is an external intervention), inadvertently heightens internal competition, and may not, therefore, result in greater tenure security for residents.

This study's findings, and that of Davies and Fourie (2002), also suggest that the upgrade and formalisation process does not shift the centre of power from settlement leaders to the state nor does it meaningfully alter the obligation individuals feel towards these leaders. Post-upgrade, the social institutions and informal rules that regulated the tenure of residents continue to determine access to land and a dwelling and the dispute resolution mechanisms that help to manage tenure security; that is, post-upgrade approaches to tenure remain 'neo-customary' in nature.

The theory of neo-customary tenure is relevant where state and non-state actors mediate access to land and housing through both law and customary rules grounded in cultural and social orthodoxy (Durand-Lasserve, 2007; Payne, 2002). The legitimacy of neo-customary approaches to property and land transactions is embedded in the perceptions of the user (which is influenced by history and custom) and the acceptability of the dispute resolution mechanisms provided by customary actors. In the study sites, settlement leaders were often better known to residents than locally elected

officials, and in Gum Tree Road and Zwelisha especially, they were regarded by most respondents as capable and trusted sources of authority particularly in the resolution of ownership and/or tenancy disputes. Following the arguments of Cross (2002) and Fourie and Davies (2002) on the adaptation of rural systems of tenure for urban use, it can be argued that settlement leaders that uphold traditional and established rules on tenure in urban informal settlements resemble customary actors. This study argues that the participatory aspect of the upgrade process involved established settlement leaders and devolved responsibility for determining access to a formalised settlement to them. In effect, the state sanctioned the authority of these settlement leaders and thus created a pluralist tenure framework where state and non-state actors both mediated access to land and housing through law (initial eligibility criteria) and customary rules. Post-upgrade, they created an environment where non-state actors in collusion with the state set the rules of residents' behaviour (e.g. the monitoring or granting permission for building extensions in Zwelisha).

Neo-customary tenure practices in upgraded settlements raise the same criticisms of the practice in general, initially discussed in **section 2.2.2**, of local elites potentially exploiting the poor (particularly newcomers to the area) and exercising authority over them under questionable ground of legitimacy. Given the global impetus for participatory *in situ* informal settlement upgrade programmes (discussed in **section 1.1**) it is likely that this finding applies to other newly formalised urban settlements in South Africa and beyond. This is a significant observation in policy terms that challenges the conventional orthodoxy of upgrading and thus the potential future of the urban poor.

The research methodology of this study adopted an abductive research strategy where respondent's construction of reality and their way of defining, valuing and using the concepts of tenure, identity, social relations and vulnerability/resilience, lay at the heart of the investigation. This research strategy demanded an emphasis on hermeneutics to understand how phenomena are experienced and understood, and also critical interpretivism to explain why they are experienced and understood

in these ways. The general approach was captured by an analytical and diagnostic model that reflected modifications made to Moser's asset vulnerability framework (1998) and the resource profiles framework (from the wellbeing literature e.g. Gough et al., 2006) (developed in **chapters 2 and 3**).

Where the asset vulnerability framework provided strong theoretical links between tenure and vulnerability and a model to identify determinants of vulnerability, the resource profiles framework allowed for experiences of vulnerability to be contextualised by an individual's circumstances and the wider environment in which they live. By applying a hybrid model that asked: what assets do people have and control, what do they think about them, how do they plan or how are they able to use them, this study was able to reconcile some of the methodological variations between the two frameworks. For example, Moser's approach was intended to aid generalisation and policy intervention; whereas the resource profiles framework was more explanatory and rich in enabling description. Through this reconciliation, the study developed a diagnostic model for urban vulnerability that allows for a nuanced and deep understanding of the range of risks that individuals perceive they are exposed to, and the range of strategies that they employ to secure both daily wellbeing and longer term resilience. The modified asset vulnerability framework contributes to methodological approaches investigating how and why social phenomena are experienced and understood by the urban poor and thus may be relevant to the design of future studies on urban poverty.

8.3 Issues for further research

The findings of this study on the effects of the upgrade and formalisation process on the vulnerability of poor urban dwellers raises pertinent issues that require further, more detailed, research. This includes, for example, research into local power dynamics, the conditioned citizenship of the urban poor, and the conditioned resilience of the urban poor who are not citizens.

Further research into local power dynamics might include a study of elites in low income settlements, especially given their prominence in directing resources and affecting the outcomes of the upgrade and formalisation process for individuals and families. Such a study might investigate how individuals are able to assume power and become members of an elite, the conditions under which they are trusted by others to direct and manage resources, the claims of representation that they make and whether there is evidence to support such claims. An investigation of this nature would require local power dynamics to be contextualised within the wider cultural and political environment in which settlement elites operate. This type of study might involve an investigation into the organisational and personal links between grassroots party political structures, formally elected local officials and informally elected (or nominated) settlement leaders. It might draw upon theories of power and organisation in society found within the disciplines of political science and sociology to develop a research framework.

The approach to upgrade and formalise informal settlements adopted by the municipality in this study is, in principle, characterised by ideas of 'community participation', involving in practice important roles for settlement leaders and grassroots party political actors. In South Africa ideas of citizenship, rights and entitlements are strong amongst urban populations, who are often (party) politically aware, engaged and well versed in their constitutional rights. Thus, approaches that aim (and appear) to deliver on these rights and entitlements, but on closer scrutiny are realised mainly through the politics of patronage, raise questions about the conditioned citizenship of poor urban dwellers. In complement to any study on local power dynamics, further investigation into the conditioned citizenship of shack dwellers might ask what citizenship looks like to a shack dweller, and how settlement leaders, and elected and non-elected officials conceive of citizenship rights and subsequently deliver them.

In terms of non-citizens, there is a need for more research on how policies and programmes on informal settlements that, on paper, exclude them (e.g. upgrade and formalisation processes), in reality affect them, in terms of their wellbeing. The treatment of non-citizens is alluded to throughout this study in terms of the level of responsibility the state has to people within its borders. A study investigating the response of non-citizens to policies on land, housing and livelihood, for example, could produce in-depth data on the experiences of a group of people frequently overlooked in dominant discourses on urban poverty, and yet who are affected by poverty alleviation strategies. Such a study could develop the conceptual framework used in this study to include the role of identity and social relations in theories on migration and the coping strategies of foreign migrants.

There is also scope to advance the findings of this study on the relationships between tenure and vulnerability. The study focused on the process of upgrade and formalisation in eThekweni Municipality. Due to time constraints and the limited number of post-upgrade settlements in the municipality, it was unable to investigate the long term outcomes of the upgrade and formalisation process. Given the potentially transformative effects of an upgrade, there is a need for longitudinal research into its effects 10, 15 or even 20 years after an upgrade. Although over such timeframes practice would have certainly have moved on, and it would be difficult to attribute long term effects to a particular housing programme, such studies can be designed to investigate generational gains/losses of home and land ownership. Such an investigation would demand a methodology that locates an individual (or family) within macro processes such as urbanisation, trends in land and housing markets, and political influences on policy and its implementation. A mixed methods approach that combines analysis of national data on markets and urban growth (where they exist) with an ethnographic study that charts how individuals and families cope over the years and the changing value of home ownership over a long period of time may be appropriate. In which case, this study may continue to be relevant to research in 10 or 20 years' time.

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ANNEX 1

LIST OF INTERVIEWS

[Not available in the digital version of this thesis]

ANNEX 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interviews with respondents in Gum Tree Road, Cato Crest and Zwelisha

Round 1: Interview

[Instructions] These questions are a guide only

GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR ALL

- 1) IDENTITY: How would you describe yourself and where you currently live? How did you come to live here? How long have you lived here? Tenant or owner? Why do you choose to stay in [settlement]?
- 2) COMMUNITY COMMITTEES: Are you/Were you a member of any community committees? How important do you think these committees are? How have they helped you?
- 3) NEWCOMERS: Can anyone come and settle in the community? How can they do this? Who can stay and who can't? And what role does the committee/councillor/neighbours play?
- 4) HOUSING LIST: How can someone get onto the housing list? Do you think this is a fair process? Can someone be taken off for some reason?
- 5) COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION: Have you been involved in the plans for the community? How? Has what is happening in the community been explained to you? Do you understand? What is happening in the community?
- 6) CHANGE PERCEPTION: What difference will/has upgrade make/made to the 'feeling' and look of the community? And what difference has/will it make to your life?
- 7) CHALLENGES: What challenges do you think the municipality faces in upgrade? What is the relationship like between the municipality, community committee and ward councillor?
- 8) LIFE IN NEW SETTLEMENTS: Once upgrade happens, who decides which families go where and how do they decide?
- 9) TENURE: To you, what does tenure security and tenure insecurity mean?
- 10) TITLE: What will a freehold title allow you to do, that you can't/weren't able to do before?
- 11) SOCIAL RELATIONS: In the middle of the night if there is an emergency, who would be the first person you go to?

TO RDP RESIDENTS

- 1) What are your thoughts on the size and appearance of an RDP house?
- 2) Can you choose your neighbours? Would you like to?
- 3) What happened to your old neighbours?
- 4) How has life changed for you with this new house?
- 5) Do you miss anything about your old house and its location?
- 6) Is it possible to an outsider to come to this settlement and say it is the *mjondolo*?

TO TRANSIT CAMP RESIDENTS

- 1) When will you get your RDP house?
- 2) Do you know where it will be? Will you be next to your old neighbours? Would you like to be next

to your neighbours?

3) How has your life changed from your previous house, and how do you think your life will change in your new house.

4) Is it possible to an outsider to come to this settlement and say it is the *mjondolo*?

TO INFORMAL HOUSING RESIDENTS

1) Will you be going into an RDP house? If not, why not?

2) How long do you think you will live here for?

3) Is it possible to an outsider to come to this settlement and say it is the *mjondolo*?

Round 2: Social Relations Map

Draw a spider diagram with yourself in the middle, and chart all people and organisations you interact with/have a social relationship with.

Typical relations [*prompt, if needed*]:

- Friends inside and outside community
- Neighbours
- Family in household, community, outside community
- Local councilor
- Police
- Various community committee
- Municipality
- State
- Political parties
- Landlord/tenants
- Employer
- Any others that come to mind?

Write next to each box how often do you interact with them.

From these relations identify the following (in real time and in the past)

- Which relations play/played a role in helping you feel safe in your house?
- How do these people help you stay in your house?
- Who helps you to access services like water and electricity?
- Who provides knowledge about jobs?
- Who provides knowledge about what is happening in the community?
- Who helps build/repair your house?
- Have you received any threats to being here? Who helped?
- Who helped you access this land when you first got here?
- Who helped access the house?
- How are land transactions made? Who would you involve?

Round 3: Community Map

Imagine you are looking at your community from above. Draw a picture of the current community layout with your house in the centre.

Include the following:

- Main roads

- Secondary roads
- Water taps/ communal tanks
- Tuck shops
- Clinics/health services
- Taxi/bus stops
- Communal area for gathering/children playing
- Draw the borders of what *you* consider your community
- Anything else that comes to mind?

Next, superimpose the social relations map and draw on to the community map where past actors who were involved in tenure security lived/could be accessed; and where current ones can be accessed.

Round 4: Life history

These questions are a guide only. Do not ask all the questions under each sub-heading.

CHILDHOOD

- When and where were you born? Brothers/sisters?
- How would you describe your parents?
 - Their personality?
 - As a child, the best/worst thing about them?
 - What characteristics did you inherit from them?

CULTURAL HERITAGE

- What is the ethnic/cultural background of your parents?
- (Was your family different from others in the area?)
- What family of cultural celebrations, traditions or rituals were important in your life?
- What ideals or beliefs do you think your parents tried to teach you?
- Was religion important in your family?
 - To you as a child, or later in life?
- What cultural influences are still important to you today?
- How much of a factor in your life do you feel your cultural background has been?

TEENAGER AND YOUTH

- Did you make friends easily?
- What did you do for fun/entertainment?
- What was your first experience of leaving home like?
 - Where did you go?

EDUCATION

- How far did you go in school?
- What has been your most importance lesson in life, outside a classroom?
- What is your view on the role of education in a person's life?

LOVE AND WORK

- Are you married?
 - How did you meet?
 - What made you decide to get married?
- Do you have children?
 - What are they like?

- What values do you try to give them?
- In work terms, what were your ambitions as a child?
 - Did your ambitions change?
- When you entered adulthood/came here what were your hopes and dreams?
- What was your last job?
 - How did you end up doing this type of work?

HISTORICAL EVENTS

- What was the most important historical event you participated in?
- How did you first discover apartheid was coming to an end?
- What is the most important thing you have given to your community?
- What changes were happening in your life as apartheid was ending? How did it make you feel?

RETIREMENT

- Are you retired now from work?
 - Best and worst parts of retirement?
 - What do you enjoy most/least about grandchildren?
 - What are your expectations of their future?

SPIRITUALITY

- Do you feel you have inner strength?
 - Where does it come from?

MAJOR LIFE THEMES

On reflection over your whole life,

- What were the crucial decisions in your life?
- Are you satisfied with the life choices you've made?
- What has been the happiest time in your life?
- What relationships in your life have been the most significant?
 - How would you describe those relationships?
- What time of your life would you like to repeat?

THE FUTURE

- When you think of the future, what makes you feel most uneasy?
- What do you want to experience most before you die?
- Do you have any advice or wisdom for the younger generation?

CLOSURE

- Is there anything else you wish to add to your life story?

Round 5: Gift Diary

Instructions to respondents

Every time that you give or receive a gift, make an entry into the 'gift diary'. Write whether you gave or received the gift, who the other person in the exchange was, what the gift was and how many times this week that gift was given/received. Gifts can include your time or someone else's time, and goods (e.g. food, medicine, drinks). Only include items that you did not pay for or that you did not charge someone else for. We will review the diary every time we meet, so do not worry if you forget to make an entry.

Interviews with experts

Interview questions were tailored to the specific area of expertise of each interviewee. A sample of questions, by theme, is listed below.

DEFINITIONS

- What definition of an 'informal settlement' do you officially use?
- When, in the upgrade process, is an informal settlement and a shack dweller no longer considered 'informal' by the municipality/province/state?
- By what criteria is an upgrade considered successful?
- What does 'tenure security' mean?

CHALLENGES

- What are the main (anticipated) challenges to implementing an informal settlement upgrade in terms of (a) technical challenges (b) political/policy challenges (c) practical challenges within the community?
- If there are any indications of corrupt practices, what is the responsibility of the municipality/community committees/local councillor to act?

PROCESS

- What is the process to upgrade and formalise an informal settlement?
- Which agency is responsible for what at each stage? How is this monitored?
- In your opinion, would residents accept anything short of full freehold title?
- What provision is made for foreigners or others not eligible for the upgrade?
- How is it decided which families move where? Who makes those decisions?
- What pressures drive the selection of settlements for upgrade?