



## **PHASE 2 REPORT**

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Annex

# 1. Extended Executive Summary

This report describes Phase 2 of the IsuLabantu project. The aim of Phase 2 was to use a participatory action-research methodology to co-produce knowledge on upgrading of informal settlements. Three case studies were used in our research: Namibia Stop 8, where housing was built by the municipality and community contractors appointed by FEDUP (a community organisation) and uTshani fund (an NGO) between 2011 and 2014, and residents were resettled from neighbouring informal settlements; Havelock, an informal settlement in the process of negotiating an upgrade to their site; and Piesang River, a site that has gone through an upgrading process throughout the 1990s and 2000s, elements of which are still ongoing.

**Chapter 2 provides an introduction to the research**, including a brief history of community-led upgrading in South Africa and a literature review.

**Chapter 3 details our participatory and action research approach.** Households, FEDUP members, representatives of NGOs and policymakers from eThekweni municipality in Durban took part in individual and groups activities to discuss their experience of bottom-up strategies at housing, neighbourhood and city scales. Findings were publicly presented back to residents in two of the sites, for testing and validation.

**Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present findings on the cross cutting themes that emerged from the data and our analysis.**

**Chapter 4 examines the barriers and drivers of community self-organisation in relation to housing and neighbourhood upgrading**, by analysing:

- 1) The role of community structures and leadership;
  - The key community-led strategies in Namibia Stop 8 have largely revolved around the construction of top structures, and included collective savings, self-building activities, and community-based project management, supported by technical assistance from NGOs and external contractors.
  - It was evident that the completion of the 96 FEDUP houses coincided with an abrupt decline in self-organisation. Residents stated that they were no longer members of FEDUP or they considered themselves members but were no longer involved.
  - In contrast to the focus on housing, we found little evidence of resources or resident mobilisation for initiatives at the neighbourhood level in Namibia Stop 8.
  - In Havelock, collaboration with the Informal Settlement Network (ISN) led to the introduction of savings schemes in the settlement for the purpose of improving neighbourhood conditions and accessing external funds. This also allowed the committee to access socio-technical support from partner organisations, who played an important role in supporting a participatory enumeration and reblocking exercise. This data allowed the committee to start negotiations with the eThekweni Department of Water and Sanitation, leading to the provision and improvement of ablution blocks, and more recently, to the on-going efforts for the inclusion of the settlement in the upgrading discussions of the city.
  - The history of Havelock also illustrates challenges that have either weakened the ability of the committee to be representative or affected the stability of projects, and

the effectiveness of the advocacy and negotiation efforts. The lack of periodic elections means that the improvement and negotiation efforts have remained the responsibility of a relatively small group of active and engaged residents, giving rise to disempowerment and competing committees.

- In Havelock, one of the key challenges in self-organisation is that social cohesion in the settlement is vulnerable, and establishing partnerships with outsiders or institutions can be seen as a way of clientelism or political campaigning in the settlement. Another key challenge for the committee is to enforce rules and deal effectively with issues that may challenge community mobilisation, such as renting of structures and the arrival of newcomers.
- In Piesang River, the process of building housing had a clear, tangible outcome which attracted a wide support base for FEDUP. However, once the construction of the houses was concluded, there was a loss of interest from the residents in continuing with mobilisation and collective savings. As a result FEDUP members introduced a loan system that provided residents with access to finance and a safety net for emergencies, both in terms of financial help and social support. This ensured that residents remain members of the federation, keep contributing to collective savings, keep using the skills build such as financial literacy, and keep attending meetings long after last houses were built.

## 2) The ways in which communities connect to and access formal structures at the ward and city level.

- From the three case studies, Havelock is the only settlement that is currently in an on-going process of community organisation to improve the conditions of the neighbourhood, to advocate for its permanence in the site and to negotiate a potential in-situ upgrading. As part of the reflection on community structures, we mapped the ways in which Havelock residents connect to and access formal structures such as municipality departments and ward committees, using informal networks and an array of different routes and individual contacts.
- The relationship of Havelock with local formal residents was described as non-existent at best, or conflictive at worst. The conflictive relationship with the neighbours is a key barrier for the improvement and upgrading of Havelock.

## 3) Barriers and drivers of community led upgrading; barriers include:

- Lack of continuity in self-organisation strategies has led to the loss of valuable skills, knowledge and social capital, as well as the loss of interest and credibility among residents and potential new members.
- Residents mentioned the lack of tangible or explicit benefits (material, physical, monetary) as a common obstacle for mobilising and organising the community.
- There was evidence of the lack of capacity or motivation of the residents to engage with decision-making or to engage with issues that might be confrontational.
- Community organisation practices in the context of Durban are highly vulnerable to politicised interventions, from both insiders from the community and external actors.
- Reliance on the committee, ward councillor or civil society organisations to lead initiatives.
- The conflictive relationship with neighbours in inner-city settlements such Havelock, is a key barrier for improvement and in-situ upgrading.

Key drivers include:

- Leadership and membership-based representative structures (such as FEDUP and ISN) and the establishment of community-based structures (such as community committees) have played a key role in organised and strategic responses to community issues.
- Accessing representational and decision-making structures at the ward and city level has allowed community members to tap into multiple political and non-political relationships, whether it is for accessing services or for negotiation and advocacy in the upgrading process.
- Adaptability to new needs and circumstances; community structures were built around self-organised practices according to specific needs. If needs changed, structures adapted to ensure sustainability.
- An integrated approach: Building on the capabilities of communities and interests (i.e. mobilisation, sweat equity, need for housing and land) and integrating them to technical and financial strategies (e.g. saving schemes), allowed for the implementation of community-led strategies that promote ownership and control of the project as well as developing skills of community members.

**Chapter 5 explores the focus placed on housing and top structures in upgrading processes**, both by households, and wider stakeholders.

- Residents described an array of different histories that had led them to live in these communities, with key factors including family and friends; the (sometimes mandatory) process of informal settlement upgrading; and FEDUP membership. They reflected on challenges they faced, including the unpredictable nature of their residence.
- Populations continuously change in unpredictable and unplanned ways; sometimes this reinforces community ties and processes, other times it disturbs and breaks them. These dynamics also constantly throw up new issues, and make leadership challenging, for community leaders and committees; for example, in controlling rental agreements, expansion of houses or internal subdivision of houses.
- Residents' also described past experiences of upgrading their households. Within Havelock, these tended to be smaller interventions to improve materials, or to renew or repair an informal home. The residents sometimes felt unable to upgrade their home due to their status as renting tenants, or because they felt they would not live in Havelock for long.
- Namibia Stop 8 had been relatively recently built, and the smaller government-built (RDP) houses often remained unmodified. Where improvements had been made residents had changed the interiors of their properties, for example, adding internal wiring, plastering internal walls, or adding floor tiles and putting up ceiling boards. Other examples of upgrading included: adding one-story extensions; building separate outbuildings; and putting up walls and fences around their properties.
- Some residents were in the middle of stalled or ongoing upgrades; gradually accumulating building materials as they had available income, or owning partially built extensions that would be finished in time. All of the residents we spoke to were either upgrading their homes themselves, with the help of family members, or using an informal network of builders, plasterers and casual workers.
- In Havelock (but not NS8 or Piesang River, as these settlements have already gone through, or are going through, upgrading processes) we also discussed future

upgrades residents planned in their current location, and more generally what they viewed as a dignified home. Many residents highlighted the lack of space and resources to upgrade their homes, but suggested they would prioritise more space in the home, alongside basic improvements to roofing, walls, and flooring to prevent or reduce the ingress of water.

- When asked about a 'dignified home', lack of tenure was highlighted as a specific issue. Some residents also stated that a dignified home would have to be outside of Havelock. Women tended to have distinct features in mind such as: fences for safety; a veranda for socialising and shade; and creating distance between the kitchen and the toilet. Men were less concerned about distance between kitchen and toilet, with some suggesting they should be next to each other, so as to save on construction costs. Men were also less concerned with having fences, reflecting less concerns around safety and privacy, but highlighted a garage as a key status symbol. All of the envisaged improvements and visions of dignified homes provide clear examples and targets for future upgrading efforts. However, they also pose questions and issues which need to be tackled in upgrading efforts.

This chapter also explored the focus on top structure by the state, NGOs and community-based organisations:

- The housing subsidies and grants used to support upgrading in South Africa are often related directly to 'how much' house they afford. Participants both from the municipality and NGOs stated they felt the connection between the two was long-lived and pervasive. This is related to the culture around 'one plot one home' and deep-rooted expectations of the state providing housing.
- Beyond the immediate urgency for housing action, financial pressures also lead towards and frame the focus on simple houses, without any neighbourhood planning or community engagement. Building on a 'one plot one house' basis is simply the cheapest and easiest thing to do.
- The focus of the state was also acknowledged by NGO and CBO actors. They saw the state's focus on 'site and service' (with an inherent focus on one plot one house and top structure) approaches to upgrading as a barrier to successful upgrades, and specifically to community engagement and prospects of in-situ upgrades.
- In Durban, this historical focus may be showing signs of shifting, at least at a strategic level. The municipality now have a formal model for prioritising settlements for upgrades based on a range of criteria including position relevant to infrastructure, social and economic facilities, public transport and potential livelihoods. This helps to bring in other factors (beyond top structure related concerns) to the decision on *where* to upgrade, but may not change the focus *when upgrades actually happen*. Indeed, the municipality team that actually scope and conduct specific upgrades, is separate from the team that runs the strategic prioritisation.
- The municipality do make efforts to work in a 'joined-up' manner when making 'incremental' upgrades (i.e. installing basic services where a full upgrade is not expected soon), however this can be challenging. The municipality have also shown some positive signs in response to reblocking exercises, which can play a significant role in shifting focus from the top structure towards layout and provision of services, especially when done with a community. However this could also be difficult for the municipality to carry out and requires buy-in from leadership that may not yet exist.

- The most common consequences of a focus on top structure are the creation of conflict, either between residents, or between residents and the state, and the return of residents to informal settlements.

**Chapter 6 explores upgrading and collective action from the context of the wider neighbourhood.** This chapter shows how communities use communal space, view services in their local area and where they travel to in the city, as well as how residents organise to address collective issues. We explore the needs, expectations and most pressing concerns of residents related to their neighbourhoods, including basic infrastructure, public space, accessibility, layout and social dynamics. It does so by discussing the two different experiences of Namibia Stop 8 and Havelock.

- The main themes that emerged as findings from Namibia Stop 8 are related to the ownership of spaces and the delimitation of boundaries. The most pressing concerns relate to the passages between the houses, their poor condition, and the misuse and misappropriation of the pathways by some of the neighbours and the conflict this creates due to poor delimitation. For instance, women mentioned their concerns over their safety and privacy as the adjacent space to their house is used as public passages.
- The issues around boundaries also has a direct relationship with the maintenance, improvement and use of the houses. For example, some residents expressed the confusion and uncertainty over the lack of guidance about boundaries and how this affects their plans and visions for a better house – feeling unsure if they could extend or improve their home.
- The uncertainty and lack of guidance on the use of land also affects how residents can utilise the available open space in the neighbourhood. Residents acknowledged that open spaces are not necessarily scarce in Namibia Stop 8, but there are several issues that impedes them to be used more effectively by children or by groups that want to engage in productive activities such as urban farming. The uncertainty about municipality plans for the space and it's unregulated appropriation for different activities such as football, gardening and even as grassland for grazing has also created conflict among neighbours.
- The issues discussed in Havelock (i.e. challenges of the site, such as location and density, and conflict over use of land) have implications for both the physical improvement of the settlement and the self-organisation of the community. For example, it is clear that passages, housing and quality-of-life are closely related. However they continue to be disregarded from any potential project in the area. Passages can be utilised in incremental upgrading in Havelock, including in small pilot projects or in larger reblocking initiatives, to address multiple concerns and maximise their impact. If these opportunities are articulated properly to the communities, they can serve as processes to bring people together around collective projects that are not only focused on housing.

**Chapter 7 concludes by summarising some of the key lessons that can be drawn from our findings, and consider implications and ways forward, both generally for community-led upgrading policy and practice, and for this project's Phase 5 Toolkit.**

## **PART I - Background and approach**

## **2. Background to this study**

### **2.1 History of community-led upgrading of informal settlements in South Africa**

### **2.2 Literature Review**

This section provides a brief overview of some of the key relevant literature to Phase 2 of the project. This includes discussion of: the postcolonial perspective/critique and its associated approach to urban research; reports and critiques of NGO/CBO/CSO housing projects in South Africa; specific upgrading case studies and reflections from Durban; studies focusses on the perceptions of residents in informal settlements; assessments of migration dynamics in relation to informal settlements; and finally, studies considering community structure and dynamics and potential for conflict during upgrades. The review is not exhaustive and uses the focus on Durban and South Africa to narrow discussion where there especially large streams of literature.

#### **The Postcolonial perspective on cities in the global South**

The postcolonial perspective, since the seminal critiques of urban scholarship by Robinson (2002) and later Mbembe and Nuttall (2004), has provided an important lens for urban and city research. It is not our intention to review and discuss this at length here - others have done this excellently already, including McEwan (2009), Pieterse (2010), and Watson (2013) - however, it is also an important frame for the research presented in this report.

The critique, and its associated perspective, mandates an approach, or urban theory, to researching cities and urban areas (particularly in the global South) that moves beyond a focus on 'global cities', to one that explores a greater diversity of experiences of what it is to be a city - or 'cityness' - from across 'all of the map'. The literature has also sought to unpick unuseful binaries of global and local, and generally understand cities in a more nuanced way, exploring wider relationships and interconnections. There have also been efforts to articulate and critique the common focus of policy-oriented urban research on the challenges and 'absences' faced by cities in the global South (particularly Africa), for example as in Pieterse (2010).

For this report, and the research that underpinned it, (apart from using a participatory qualitative approach, see Chapter 3) this meant we attempted to build our understanding and knowledge around everyday experiences of informal settlements as they were reported and articulated to us by residents and the community researchers we were working with. In reality, this co-production of knowledge with the residents and community researchers stopped at some point following the conclusion of the fieldwork. The knowledge started being constructed in partnership with the residents, but eventually, the production of knowledge shifted back to our responsibility as researchers.



## **The work of housing NGOs, CBOs, and CSOs in South Africa**

Researchers and practitioners have described and reflected on the activities of non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations and civil society organisation in relation to informal settlement upgrading around the world, but in South Africa and Durban specifically, this is dominated by the work of the South African Shack/Slum Dwellers International Alliance (SDI). SDI and its pre-incarnations, is the focus of Bolnick (1993), Bolnick and Bradlow (2010) and Bradlow (2015); which between them explain the context and history of SDI in South Africa, outline specific examples of their work (e.g. Sheffield Road in Cape Town), describe their mode of working, and highlight their innovative knowledge sharing activities across communities, both nationally and internationally. These overviews provide insight into the approach of SDI but do not provide deeper critical commentary on their practices. Nhlabathi (2000) attempts to take a clearer reflection on success and failures, using the example of the Piesang River Regional Federation (part of the People's Dialogue/Homeless People's Federation which later became FEDUP). They suggest that the organisation has difficulty trying to deliver both (i) empowerment and skills to residents, as well as (ii) housing itself; the delivery of the former slows down the delivery of the latter, and the delivery of the latter reduces efforts on the former. More recently, Tomlinson (2017) explores the scalability and universality of the SDI methodology or approach, with focus on how it has worked in the Cape Town context. They highlight the fact that an overly rigid use of the SDI approach may constrain efforts, and that flexibility is needed for application in different contexts.

Taking a step back, Mitlin and Mogaladi (2013) explore the approach of one of the community partners within SDI - The Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor (FEDUP) - in comparison to another community organisation, Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM), in Durban specifically. They suggest the two groups have much in common when identifying housing issues, however they do not agree on solutions. Though improving access to housing subsidies is a key effort of both organisations, the means through which they interact with eThekweni Municipality, and the wider state, differ. Put simply, FEDUP has tended increasingly to take a more collaborative approach, where as AbM has taken a more confrontational and contestational approach, though this has shifted in recent times. The authors also note that often different local groups or offices of each organisation will take different approaches.

## **Upgrading Case Studies**

Descriptions and reflections on specific upgrading efforts in Durban have been presented by a range of researchers and practitioners, often in an effort to draw out reasons for successes and failures, and to develop richer understandings of communities' activities and perceptions. Van Horen (2000) details an upgrading process in Besters Camp, with a focus on describing how planning activities, tenure arrangement, and public participation were approached. They suggest there was good community participation in planning, but that poor tenure systems (for example, conventional systems being out of sync with existing arrangements in the community) were adopted. Charlton (2006) broadens out to provide a description of four upgrading examples (including Bester's Camp in Inanda, but also Ntuthukoville in Pietermaritzburg-Msunduzi; Briardene; and Cato Crest) over a fourteen year period. Limited documentation, analysis and evaluation of upgrades are highlighted as key problems in developing wider learning. UN Habitat (2007) provides a detailed description of settlements in

two areas of Durban, and explores the effectiveness of past and ongoing upgrading initiatives. Lack of capacity at municipality level is highlighted as key cause of failures, despite some successes on greenfield and institutional projects. Patel (2013a) presents an ethnographic study on an upgrading process in Zwelisha. Extensive details are given on the process and successes (as defined by residents) of the upgrading. They highlight the value of 'informal continuities' (i.e. continued activity of the local community development committee) after the formal upgrade period. They also caution against state involvement serving to reinforce or legitimise informal power relations within communities that may not serve all groups or individuals.

Beyond Durban, there is a wealth of examples from elsewhere in South Africa, which also seek to identify reasons for successes and failures. Presenting an upgrading process in Oukasie (approx. 20km west of Pretoria), Pikholtz (1997) highlights the political awareness and savvy of community leaders, and the use of success stories to create a self-fulfilling prophecy, as key determinants of success. This contrasts with communities that have lower capacities in a range of domains, and the impacts this can have on housing projects, for example, as described in Lemanski (2008). Internal community power dynamics and the potential negative effects of these on the use of knowledge, is explored by Jacobs et al (2015) using case studies in Cape Town. Taking a long term perspective, Marais and Ntema (2013) present a case study report on the upgrading of Freedom Square in Bloemfontein. The report covers twenty years of data collection since the start of upgrading efforts. This gives key insights into longer term issues such as migration and mobility, transfer of sites (i.e. ownership/deeds), housing consolidation slowing down, and maintenance, all key factors in the continued success of an upgrade.

Others (e.g. Cross, 2006) have highlighted the importance of communities simply being involved in upgrading processes, and the resolving of governance issues. Similarly, Huchzermeyer (2006) articulates the issues around the paternalistic model of communities waiting, and/or allowing the state to simply deliver new housing for them, in relation to a people-driven development in Joe Slovo, Port Elizabeth. The role of policy makers in creating counterproductive or unintended consequences has also been considered; for example, Mokoena and Marais (2007) explore the case study of Mangaung Local Municipality, and demonstrate how guidelines (e.g. a focus on 40sqm houses), ad hoc subsidy delivery, and administrative issues at the provincial level had negative consequences at the local level by placing too much pressure on the municipality. Lack of action or willingness from local government has also been identified in some cases; Huchzermeyer (2009) presents three case studies from Gauteng, where communities have faced difficulties in developing in situ upgrading plans because of resistance, reluctance, and/or inaction from local government, despite policy and legislative frameworks promoting this approach.

Specific elements and activities within the process of upgrading have also been the focus of studies. For example, Baptist and Bolnick (2012) present details of an enumeration project in Joe Slovo, Cape Town, and describe its value in empowering communities. Fitchett (2014) provides an example of adaptive co-management being used in a small upgrading project in Johannesburg. They suggest the approach is useful, particularly because of its emphasis on the symmetry of knowledge sources (i.e. the technical, managerial and economic knowledge of residents is valuable, not only their socio-cultural knowledge). Focussed on an electrification project in Stellenbosch, Kovacic et al (2016) explore ways of dealing with uncertainty in data

and analysis of informal settlements and how this relates to technical projects. On land transfers, Marais et al (2014) use the Freedom Square example, to explore how residents might react in unexpected ways to more formal land transfers and titling. Similarly, Massey (2014) examines unexpected responses by communities (specifically 'counter-conduct' by women, such as setting up businesses in homes, building backyard shacks, and illegal electricity connections) in case study sites in Cape Town. It is suggested these counter-conducts arise through the conflicts in 'governmentalities' (i.e. the organised practices of governance) between communities and the municipality.

### **Perceptions of residents**

The perceptions of residents, both of upgrading itself, but also of other housing related issues have been explored in a number of ways. Del Mistro and Hensher (2009) use an economic approach to measure residents' valuation of attributes of upgrading projects. The most valued characteristics of an upgrade were; being in situ and/or 'rolling-type' approaches, and in-house toilets. They also explored the cost effectiveness of possible options to offer in upgrading, with findings suggesting, more nuanced options are better than either-or simple choices. The responses also highlighted the fact that residents will not all pick the same choices. Comparing across different stakeholder groups, Windapo and Goulding (2013) assess valuations of housing project attributes and find differences between the perception of different stakeholders as to what are important building requirements and location factors. Using interviews with residents, Jay and Bowen (2011) examine what residents value in settlements. They identify nine categories: comfort, cost, environment, facilities, local economy, safety, security, social, and space; and suggest there is a need for deeper understandings of employment and livelihoods. Based on interviews with individuals relocated to 'transit-camps', Hunter and Posel (2012) describe potential problems related to livelihoods and employment created by relocation.

On land tenure, Patel (2013) presents an ethnographic exploring the nuanced ways in which residents of informal settlements experience and idealise tenure. Emphasis is put on the factors beyond formal legal status, and how these factors (e.g. social norms, employment) often outweigh legal rights in residents' perceptions. Gunter (2014) present a qualitative investigation into the experiences of tenants and landlords of the rental market in informal settlements in Johannesburg.

### **Migration and population**

There are several studies which seek to describe broad migration patterns in South Africa; for example Geyer and Geyer (2015) explore migration patterns in relation to economic growth and policy, using census and national community centre data. They highlight urban migration in lower skilled and black South African populations, and to a lesser extent, rural migration in higher skilled and white South African populations. Todes et al (2010) specifically focus on the key drivers behind urbanisation patterns in South Africa, considering some of the specific push factors from rural areas, and highlighting the use of circular migration (i.e. temporary and/or repeated migration between rural and the same urban areas) by rural communities, as well as international migration from beyond South Africa. Lohnert and Steinbrink (2005) take a step back from the data and consider the need to reconceptualise the rural-urban dualism,

suggesting that this separation is losing its analytical value. They suggest a 'translocal' perspective should be adopted which takes into account the nuanced geo-social networks that individuals, families and communities use to organise their lives and livelihoods.

Looking specifically at Durban and migration into informal settlements, Cross et al (1994) use data from household surveys across Durban to identify broad trends. Though now relatively old, their data is rare and well-used. They suggest migration into informal settlements is a complex process, with migrants taking opportunities when they arise, using different routes into settlements, and seeing clear differences between settlements in their acceptability or openness. They also show that residents in informal settlements are not solely migrants from rural areas, but have come from other urban areas too. The process of on-migration, and multiple steps in migration flows, is also highlighted as common. Cox et al (2004) explore migration using large data sets collected by Statistics South Africa, and qualitative interviews with migrant workers (though not necessarily informal settlement residents) in Durban. They find a multitude of different 'models' of migration patterns including: men who have wives and children in areas of origin and visit regularly; men who have wives and children in the city; others who visit their origin rarely but intend to retire there. These are but a few of the models of migration, however a common theme is the use of networks and key contacts in mediating access to jobs and housing. Smit (1998) uses data from a series of interviews conducted in three low-income areas in Durban, to explore links of residents to rural areas. They find that many people intend to return to rural areas at some point, and only see their urban home as temporary. Focussing on migration from elsewhere in Africa, Maharaj and Vadi Moodley (2000) surveys migrants on why they chose to come to Durban and their remaining links with their place of origin.

All of these studies have identified common themes and patterns, one of the most important is well-described in Posel and Marx (2011 and 2013), where surveys of migrants living in two informal settlements in Durban are used to explore dual household membership and circular migration. They suggest a large majority of adults see themselves as members of other households (typically in the rural area where they grew up, or where close relatives live), and that ignoring these links gives a false sense of families, and communities. However, their findings also suggest that nearly half of migrants do not intend to return to their place of origin, or their other households. Rogerson (2017) further highlights multi-locational households, and circular migration, and its importance in the context of visits to friends and family.

### **Community structure and conflict during upgrading**

Despite the overwhelmingly positive framing of community-led upgrading, and community participation in upgrading activities, there have been some reflection on potential issues that can arise during these types of upgrading processes. Patel (2015) considers the effect of devolved and community-led housing allocation mechanisms on the potential for exclusion of non-elite/favoured groups in Durban. They find that devolved housing allocation processes can lead to competition among residents along existing social fault lines of ethnicity, nationality and party political contest. This can undermine citizenship efforts and exacerbate conflicts. Jacobs et al (2015) consider the links between power and knowledge use in communities, using case studies in Cape Town, and show community engagement activities can be

negatively affected by the suppression of some knowledge along the lines of power and political cleavages.

## **Summary**

This literature review section has provided a brief overview of some of the key relevant literature to Phase 2 of the project. This review is for now kept narrow and has been used to focus and underpin our understanding of informal settlement upgrading in Durban: from taking a postcolonial approach into our research, and understanding both how housing NGOs/CBOs/CSOs have operated in the recent past and recent upgrading examples (alongside the this history presented above); to incorporating exploration and understandings of migration and community dynamics into our approach. These are now further developed and applied in Chapter 3 on methodology.

## Chapter 3. Methodology



Fig. 3.1: Residents and community researchers involved in mapping, discussions and data sharing and validation events

A fundamental aspect of Phase 2 (WP2) was to ***Reframe and enhance understanding of urban transformations from the perspective of the communities themselves***. We utilised a participatory action research method, and approached ‘coproduction of knowledge’ as the process through which residents in our case study areas have an active role in the research. Phase 2 has facilitated these processes through the following intertwined strategies: In this final report, we have integrated the knowledge co-produced with the residents with the processes and perspectives mapped within eThewkini Municipality and other stakeholders. The crosscutting themes underlying these activities were:

- *Reframing* and enhancing understanding of urban transformations from the perspective of the communities themselves, by articulating and mapping positive drivers in their practice, the room for improvement, and the barriers they faced in the process.
- Mapping *synergies* between community-led approaches and the responses and inputs from local actors, institutions, experts and industries.
- Facilitating *integration* throughout the project between non-expert knowledge (or co-produced knowledge) and technical and expert knowledge on finance, planning, environmental and construction management across the project phases.
- Facilitating the *continuous engagement* of *residents* as co-producers of knowledge throughout the research by creating an action-research approach to be utilised within each project phase.

### 3.1 Theoretical foundation for method

Participatory action research is one of a range of similar approaches (e.g. action research and community-based participatory research), can take many forms and resists definition (Fals Borda, 1995; Chevalier and Buckles, 2008; Reason and Bradbury, 2008; McNiff, 2013). Through concurrent action (or ‘intervention’) and research, participatory action research endeavours to bring new forms of knowledge – rooted within the everyday experiences of ordinary people – to bear on issues, such

as: health, migration, race and ethnicity, community development and sustainability. Participatory action research typically utilises an in-depth case study approach in which a series of participatory processes are undertaken in collaboration with members of the relevant social group or community, as well as – where appropriate – relevant policy and practice stakeholders (Burchell, Fagan-Watson, King and Watson, 2017).

Participatory action research emphasises the importance of *research with* as opposed to *research on*. It typically has the objectives of prompting learning among the project participants and promoting direct change within case studies. In this sense, participatory action research is somewhat similar to ‘community engagement and participation’, in particular those approaches which have empowerment and partnership with local institutions as their desired outcomes (Urban Forum and NAVCA, 2009; Centre for Sustainable Energy, 2013; Community Places, 2014). Participatory action research approaches also typically aims to deepen understanding of social phenomena with a view to broader dissemination that can inform future practice and policy.

Our approach is influenced by a range of literature on co-production – a term first used by Ostrom (1996) which has been interpreted as ‘the joint production of public services between citizen and state, with any one or more element of the production process being shared’ (Mitlin, 2008). Our case study approach has sought to promote co-production between individual residents, community organisations, NGOs and civil servants in South Africa. The rationale for this is both the benefits that such approaches can deliver to residents of informal settlements (see below), and the ways in which policymakers at both the local and national level in South Africa have struggled – and often failed – to implement a programme of integration, co-operation and upgrading envisaged in the ‘Breaking New Ground’ agenda of 2004. Instead government officials have focused on on top-down targets for housing delivery that saw slums targeted for ‘eradication’, with forced evictions and ‘re-blocking’ of residents in greenfield sites (Huchzermeyer, 2010).

The use of coproduction is also an approach advocated for by Shack / Slum Dwellers International (SDI), a network of community-based organizations of the urban poor in 33 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This is particularly significant for this project, as a key project partner is uTshani fund – an NGO and SDI-affiliate based in South Africa. SDI affiliates utilise tools including enumeration (see Appadurai, 2013), grassroots savings groups and mapping of communities. This takes place alongside engagement with governments, international organisations, academia and other institutions to ‘create relationships that benefit the urban poor’ (<http://knowyourcity.info/our-practices-for-change/>)

Co-production has been said to represent ‘one way in which poor urban communities have been able to secure significant improvements to their living environments under

conditions in which governments are either unwilling or unable to deliver land and services' (Watson, 2014). Mitlin has stated that coproduction is not solely limited to the efficient delivery of services, but it can be utilised as an explicitly political strategy, a route through which the organized urban poor may consolidate their local organisational base and augment their capacity to negotiate successfully with the state (Mitlin, 2008). There are always moral, ethical and practical issues which must be considered during co-production; critics argue that public participation approaches are prone to capture by particular groups (Cooke & Kothari, 2001), and can be antagonizing and discouraging for participants – who feel unheard, and pitted against each other – and can emphasise divisions within a community (Innes and Booher, 2004). We have sought to highlight these kinds of issues in our discussion and to manage them appropriately through our methodology (as detailed below).

Another concepts that underpins our research is the well-evidenced focus of the South African state on delivering individual units of housing. This focus on housing and the 'top structure' has come at the expense of wider concerns about creating sustainable communities: as Huchzermeyer neatly summarised:

'the intervention paradigm of the first decade of democracy reduced the informal settlement question to that of delivering sufficient standardised housing units, thereby obscuring important socio-economic, socio-political and socio-spatial dimensions of the informal settlement, and likewise of the intervention' (Huchzermeyer, 2004)

Further policy interventions in the following decade have failed to reverse this trend, despite initiatives like 'Breaking New Ground'. Indeed, Huchzermeyer subsequently argued that the 2000s saw an increase in direct interventions to remove informal settlements (e.g. forced removals) and prevent new settlements being established (Huchzermeyer, 2016). While recent policy instruments have attempted to encourage in-situ upgrading of informal settlements, the historic focus of national and local policy still influences the treatment of informal settlements today.

The case study areas were selected as they provided a cross-section of different stages of community-led upgrading processes in Durban (see boxes 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3). It is important to note that the settlements we are working with are at quite different stages of upgrading, have different levels of community cohesion and conflicts, and have quite different levels of community organization and mobilization. Hence, some strategies have worked better in some settlements than in others. This is explored in more detail in our findings, below.



### **Box. 3.1 Namibia Stop 8**

*Located on Haffajee's Land in the Ethekewini northern region, Inanda, on the outskirts of Durban in the South African province KwaZuluNatal, Namibia Stop 8 was recently built (2010 to 2014) by community contractors on a greenfield site, with the support of members of FEDUP and the uTshani fund. The residents were largely moved from two neighbouring areas (Namibia and Stop 8) as part of a reblocking exercise to make way for services in those neighbourhoods, and rehoused. The housing that was built was a mixture of government-provided (RDP) housing which was approximately 40sqm and unplastered; and a small number of houses built with the assistance of FEDUP members, which were larger (56sqm) and plastered. The site has piped water, electricity lines, access roads (although these do not reach all properties), and a sewage system. The site sits on a series of slight gradients, which cause issues with water run-off. The site suffers from water and electricity supply intermittency.*



### **Box 3.2 Havelock**

*Havelock informal settlement is located 8km outside Durban central, close to the northern suburb of Greenwood Park. It is a relatively enclosed space, surrounded by formal housing located on a steep hillside made up of a mixture of municipality and privately owned land. It suffers from a lack of social spaces and services (roads, accessibility, speed bumps). It has a number of clear environmental hazards, including an illegal connection to electricity, flooding, naked electric wires around the settlement, a polluted stream with a sewage pipe at the lower end of the settlement. It has a mobilised community actively campaigning for an improvement to their housing, but at the time of writing had not undergone any upgrade yet. In 2012, the settlement conducted an in-depth enumeration of the informal structures on site. With the assistance of the Informal Settlements Network (ISN), workshops were hosted to train community-based enumerators in understanding the questionnaire, and thereafter, capturing the data on CORC provided computers. Outputs from the enumeration were tested with the community to validate them, and the dataset was spatially referenced via Geographical Information System (GIS).*



### **Box 3.3 Piesang River**

*Piesang River settlement is located near the townships of Inanda and KwaMashu, 25km to the north west of Durban City Centre. This settlement was established through the purchase of land and its subdivision, following by the gradual settling of adjacent land in the 1970s-80s. Civic structures were formed in the late 1980s by the United Democratic Front, eventually leading to land regularisation and the extension of infrastructure into the settlement (Huchzermeyer, 2004).*

*Since the early 1990s, Piesang River has undergone a gradual process of formal development involving multiple actors. In the early 1990s until 1995 the civic organisation in Piesang River was supported by the Built Environment Support Group (A local NGO) which acted as project manager for the development of infrastructure and site allocation. The Homeless People's Federation (and its supporting NGO, People's Dialogue) later rose to prominence in Piesang River, prioritising the construction of individual houses for its members; and at around the same time the NGO Habitat for Humanity established itself in the settlement, offering loan funding for housing construction. The local authority eventually organised the election of a representative committee to resolve some of the tensions and differences between the priorities of these organisations, and to resolve questions about which households would have to be relocated.*



## 3.2 Methods

This work package used a variety of methods across the case studies, shown below. Both Namibia Stop 8 and Havelock were in-depth, detailed case studies. Piesang River was treated as a smaller case study, with fewer research activities focusing on the history of upgrading in the settlement.

Throughout the research, our team was made up of three researchers from the UK; Co-Investigators from University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and uTshani fund; two professional freelance researchers; and several Masters students from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. The freelance researchers and Masters students were all from the Durban area, and spoke isiZulu.

In our research we utilised a mixture of both individual and group activities:

- **Individual activities focused on user experience of the housing produced under bottom-up upgrading strategies:** These activities were undertaken with homeowners, using a variety of methods to facilitate a better articulation of their positive and negative experiences, particularly with regards to the quality of construction, spatial arrangements and affordability. This included in-depth interviews, drawing and recording of their everyday activities.
- **Group activities to discuss neighbourhood upgrading:** These activities engaged residents in a critical discussion of their neighbourhood upgrading, including the existence and/or condition of infrastructure, public spaces, street and corridors and the surroundings. These methods included participatory and mind mapping, priority exercises and mapping games.
- **Individual and group activities to discuss the two settlements in relation to the city of Durban:** These activities were concerned with the urban and regional scale, with a focus on mapping the connections between the specific bottom-up strategies in each settlement, the situated experience of its residents and the wider urban dynamics that provides the context to the settlement's upgrading.
- **Community events** open to the public, with outreach to check and validate data, and to get feedback from participants.

The use of these methods is summarised in Table 1:

	Namibia Stop 8	Havelock	Piesang River
Interviews with key individuals in community	Group Interview with 3 Ward Councillors	Informal interview with Ward Councillor.	Leaders and elders in FEDUP included in focus groups below.
Transect walk	Yes	Yes	Yes
Semi-structured interviews with residents	28 household interviews conducted with residents in both FEDUP (NGO-led) and RDP (government provided) housing	22 household interviews with residents.	None
Focus groups	Two Focus groups held with 1) current and former FEDUP members, and 2) young people from across the settlement	Five Focus groups held with community committee, and with residents/community researchers.	Two Focus groups held with community members and FEDUP members (including leaders/elders)
Mapping activities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Participatory Planning Workshop with architectural model of site	No	Yes	No
Community event with interactive stations to test emerging findings with wider community using timelines, diagrams and settlement models.	One event held in November 2016	One full event in Feb 2017, and one smaller feedback session in May 2017.	None

*Table 1: Methods used in the 3 case studies*

### **3.3 Sampling strategy**

We collected data from a variety of sources, using this sampling strategy:

#### **Household interviews**

Participants in semi-structured individual and group interviews: In Namibia Stop 8 we split the neighbourhoods into areas, and sent pairs or groups of researchers, co-researchers and Masters students to door-knock in those areas. We sought to interview two groups:

- People living in the 96 houses provided by FEDUP and uTshani fund. As we were particularly interested in speaking to people who lived in housing provided through a community group, we repeatedly door-knocked every one of these 96 houses in the afternoon (usually between 1-6pm, as we were advised that local residents often worked, attended school or did chores in the mornings). Thus our focus was sampling all of these 96 houses, rather than a random sample.
- People living in approximately 400 'RDP' houses, provided by the government. We sought to interview a sample of householders, so door-knocked throughout the RDP housing on the site. This was closer to a random sampling approach, although it relied on residents being available in the afternoon.

In Havelock, we took a similar approach, breaking into pairs or threes (one researcher or research assistant with one or two community researchers) and knocking on doors, identified by splitting the community into four groups by geography. No household interviews were conducted in Piesane River.

#### **Focus groups**

Participants in focus groups: We asked both uTshani fund and our co-researchers to identify community groups that we could conduct research with; but in NS8 this proved difficult due to low levels of community groups on the neighbourhood (perhaps as a result of being relatively recently built, between 2011 and 2014). We ended up conducting only 2 focus group interviews: one with FEDUP members; and a group of young people who the co-researchers contacted.

In Havelock, we similarly asked for from uTshani, community researchers, and interviewees for suggestions of community groups. Five Focus groups were held with the community committee, and with residents/community researchers. In Piesang River, two Focus groups held with community members and FEDUP members (including community leaders/elders).

#### **Community events:**

Crucially for our methodology, we recognised the methodological issues associated with 1) 'snowballing' our co-researchers and focus groups from uTshani fund and 2) conducting many of our research activities on weekday afternoons, when not all residents may be at home. We therefore held community events during the weekends to reach a wider group of residents and to test, validate or challenge our emerging findings. We presented findings in various accessible formats (see slides) with at least one professional researcher, Masters student or community co-researcher manning each poster and asking for feedback. We held one of these events in NS8, and two in Havelock.

## PART II - Findings

The following chapters (4, 5 and 6) present findings on the cross cutting themes that emerged from the data and our analysis in the three case studies of Namibia Stop 8, Havelock and Piesang River.

- **Chapter 4 examines the barriers and drivers of community self-organisation in relation to housing and neighbourhood upgrading**, by analysing: the role of community structures and leadership; the ways in which communities connect to and access formal structures at the ward and city level; and the collaborative strategies that communities implement with the socio-technical support of NGOs.
- **Chapter 5 explores the focus placed on housing in upgrading processes**, both by households (in terms of their individual upgrading efforts and visions of a dignified house), and wider stakeholders (e.g. state, NGOs and CBOs) (in their common prioritisation of or focus on 'top structures').
- Finally, **Chapter 6 explores upgrading and collective action from the context of the neighbourhood**, exploring how communities use communal space, view services in their local area and where they travel to in the city, as well as how residents organise to address collective issues.



## Chapter 4. Focusing on community self-organisation in upgrading

Each of the informal settlements we worked with are at different stages of upgrading and have undertaken different community-led approaches to the improvement and development of their neighbourhoods, including savings schemes, self-building, community-based construction management and participatory enumeration and profiling. The differences between the three contexts allowed us to observe and map diverse types of self-organisation strategies as well as different outcomes, challenges and levels of success. **This chapter will describe the bottom-up practices mapped in each of the neighbourhoods with the aim of identifying: drivers; barriers and ‘room for improvement’ based on the communities’ experiences; the impact of each of the strategies in their lives; and their potential to inform urban development in Durban.**

### 4.1 Mapping community self-organisation strategies

#### 4.1.1 Community self-organisation in Namibia Stop 8

In Namibia Stop 8, the levels and types of community self-organisation have fluctuated greatly, from the relocation process and the collective construction of top structures, to more recent housing efforts to improve and extend homes (see Chapter 5 for housing stories from NS8). This section will 1) reflect on the self-organisation strategies used in relation to housing in NS8, including the initial construction of 96 housing structures, and 2) reflect on the attitudes and efforts towards collective action for neighbourhood improvement which goes *beyond* the focus on housing.

#### Community self-organisation strategies focused on housing



*Fig. 4.1: The images show the houses belonging to FEDUP members, the interior improvements and the more recent extensions*

The key community-led strategy in Namibia Stop 8 has largely revolved around the construction of top structures, led by collaboration between FEDUP, CORC, uTshani Fund and Lombard Insurance (see Chapter 2 for the introduction to the case studies). The self-organisation practices behind this process were a combination of collective savings, self-building activities, and community-based project management, supported by technical assistance from NGOs and external contractors.



The 96 households involved in the Namibia Stop 8 project were all members of FEDUP and therefore involved in collective savings for this specific purpose. Residents joined FEDUP at different times, as far back as 2004, and as recently as 2010. Members paid a fee of R750 to join and committed to attend meetings and contribute weekly with savings. These contributions could vary from 50 cents to R10, depending on the financial and work circumstances of the household. Although some residents were involved with FEDUP long before the relocation project emerged and therefore were acquainted with the federation's philosophy, others were actively recruited once their houses were marked for relocation. In these cases the driver for savings was the certainty that they would be allocated with a plot and the promise that they would be provided with a bigger house, in comparison to the one provided by the government. Through our discussions with residents, the differences in original motivation to join FEDUP as well as the level of understanding of the federations' philosophy, were often brought up.

For instance, some residents could articulate clearly the benefits for joining FEDUP, which were not solely related to the potential ownership of the house but also for developing their skills:

*"[Discussing his reasons for joining FEDUP] It was the organization of the poor people and we were paying little money for our contribution as we paid only 50c. Another reason for joining FEDUP was to help us develop the skills of building as we were learning to do plastering and plumbing. When the builders were doing the work, the members of FEDUP would also be there to help and learn the new skills. FEDUP was also creating job opportunities especially for those who were unemployed. The members of FEDUP also received bigger houses than the houses of RDP."*

**Male Namibia Stop 8 resident**

Other residents joined FEDUP without been certain of how the planned end result would be met or how the savings would be utilised, but were attracted by the possibility of securing a bigger house after being relocated, as the following quotes show:

*"At the beginning, we were not sure that it would succeed and they [FEDUP] were showing us different pictures of the houses we going to get. We kept saving without being sure if we would get the house with that little money. They were showing us that in other areas people already received these houses. We became motivated to see the pictures of other areas."*

**Nambia Stop 8 resident**

*"We were paying according to how much we were able to afford...We asked why we were saving if the houses were coming from government. We were told that the government houses were too small. We needed to save in order to get bigger houses. We were again told that we would build houses ourselves; we would collect all the material from the trucks, be it cement, roof planks etc."*

**Nambia Stop 8 resident**

Once the construction started, self-building efforts mostly consisted of 'sweat equity' or residents' contribution of time and labour in the building process. Even though external

contractors from neighbouring communities were brought into the site by FEDUP and were in charge of most of the building process, the majority of residents stated they assisted with fetching water and carrying materials such as blocks and tiles. For example, one resident states:

*“We were told that we would carry water with wheelbarrows and give those people who will be building the foundation. We carried the cement and dug trenches to extend the houses, as you can our houses are bigger. If there was more work to do, we would even clean the yards. We were doing all the work that is supposed to be done to build a house. If men were making the slab [concrete foundations of the house], we would be helping and working together.”*

**Nambia Stop 8 resident**

As part of the collective aspect of this strategy, some of the residents would contribute with sweat equity without knowing which house would belong to their family. The allocation of some of the houses would be done only after a number of them had been finalised, encouraging both a sense of community and quality control:

*“[Discussing who built her house] It was different people from the community... We were working together to build each house. Bricklayers were from somewhere else and the labour was from the community. We were building each house every day.”*

**Female Nambia Stop 8 resident**

In some instances when residents had full time jobs or were unable to help with physical labour, residents paid others to cover their ‘sweat equity’ contribution.

The strategy also included the introduction of the Community Construction Management Team (CCMT) whose primary role was to coordinate and manage the project, oversee the transferability of skills, and ensure community ownership of the project. The original goal was to establish a CCMT and identify builders that were both FEDUP members and part of the community; however, financial and political constraints meant the recruitment and training process had to be done in a short space of time. This resulted in three external FEDUP members coordinating the CCMT and external contractors from neighbouring settlements being hired for the main construction tasks. This meant the transfer of skills related to project management and accountancy was limited, and sweat equity became almost the only channel to encourage ownership of the project and ensure transferability of construction skills, albeit more informally. One of the technical support team states:

*“We are trying to encourage that anybody that builds [contractors] has someone from the community on the side so there is a transfer of skills. We tried it informally in NS8 but it needs to be done more formally”*

**Member of the technical support team to the CCMT**

A resident further elaborates:

*“Members of FEDUP hired the people to [build the house]. FEDUP hired members’ of the community who have the skills, and some people were coming from Cape Town to build these houses. The community members get the job according to their skill. I think it was about nine houses here which were built by the construction team that came from Cape Town, they were coming with better knowledge to show them how to do the proper foundation of the house”*

**Nambia Stop 8 resident, during focus group with FEDUP members**

The hurried way in which the project had to be implemented, as well as the outsourcing by the CCMT and contractors, limited the knowledge management and the transferability of lessons for future projects in the community. After the conclusion of the first phase of the project and the dismantling of the project office, many of the records and training information were lost. As a result, information related to construction, accountancy and project management which would be useful for the current and future housing extensions and community projects were not available after the conclusion of the project.

### **Decline in self-organisation in Namibia Stop 8 and current upgrading efforts**

Through our discussions and interviews with residents in Namibia Stop 8, it was evident that the completion of the 96 houses coincided with an abrupt decline in self-organisation. Residents stated that they were no longer members of FEDUP or they considered themselves members but were not longer involved in collective savings. Some of the residents stated that they maintained a strong contact with their previous neighbourhoods, Stop 8 or Namibia, and attend meetings related to the potential upgrading of those areas. In most cases collective savings and meetings were abruptly discontinued after the completion of the top structure. One resident explains:

*“The members [of FEDUP] are not as united as we were before, even the attendance to the meetings is not good. Even the leaders of FEDUP are disorganized...”*

**Nambia Stop 8 resident**

Another elaborates, explaining why they think there has been a change:

*“I am still involved [in FEDUP] but I do not go to meetings as usual because I have no money to contribute. Things are tight financially. I cannot lie to you, I have not been there for some time...FEDUP calls for meetings, but it is not like before when we had no houses. The meetings are not the same.”*

**Nambia Stop 8 resident**

This decline in activity has diminished the capacity of the residents to use the financial skills and collective practice of saving to invest in improving and expanding their houses, particularly those most vulnerable such as the elderly.

### Community self-organisation for neighbourhood improvement in NS8

In stark contrast to the focus on housing, we found little evidence of resources or resident mobilisation for initiatives *at the neighbourhood level* in Namibia Stop 8. As Chapter 6 illustrates, residents identified several pressing issues and priorities for improvement in the neighbourhood, particularly related to open spaces, safety, conflict over use and ownership of passages, and the general layout of the settlement. Nonetheless, we observed a general lack of self-organisation to address these issues, including the absence of a community representative body or committee.

During the discussions and mapping exercises about the neighbourhood residents were able to identify places where collective initiatives are either happening or where community initiatives could have a positive impact (Fig. 4.2). Residents noted that there is an interest, particularly among women, in managing open spaces in productive ways, including for urban farming. When discussing deterrents for such initiatives residents mentioned a lack of information on the ownership of these spaces, the uncertainty about the municipality's future plans to develop public areas, and a lack of knowledge or guidance on the possibilities of using open spaces for temporary activities.



*Fig. 4.2 Examples of the temporal initiatives led by women in various open spaces in the neighbourhood*

The lack of information acting as a deterrent for self-organisation is reinforced by the perception that collective action is not feasible in this context of Namibia Stop 8 for several reasons. For instance, when trying to address issues at the neighbourhood level, residents stated that collective action is perceived to be more feasible around issues of roads and passages, as these are issues that affect the majority of the population and therefore have more potential to mobilise residents. Residents also acknowledged that although issues are pressing, the barriers to address them are many, for example, citing: fear of sparking conflict over access and ownership of passages; or a lack of financial resources which makes it difficult to invest in neighbourhood issues rather than dealing with household needs and emergencies. Some residents stated they were unsure of what the potential end result would be of a specific intervention, therefore discouraging residents to take part on it. Discussions also revealed a reliance on either the ward councillor, CSOs or NGOs to lead initiatives and bring people together to address neighbourhood issues. There is the sense that residents should not be the ones initiating projects for the neighbourhood but would support initiatives initiated by other stakeholders.

### Recent examples of self-organisation in Namibia Stop 8

When we asked residents in individual or group interviews if they were members of any other community groups, they were often unable to name any groups operating in the area other than church groups or the ANC political party. There have been attempts to establish youth and dance groups, but we found no evidence of such groups being currently active. This relative sparseness of civil society or community organisations operating in Namibia Stop 8 may in part be due to the fact that it is a new development (built 2011-2014), which involved the housing of people from two previously separate communities. Some residents continue to be involved in activities in their previous neighbourhoods.

The current most significant form of self-organisation in Namibia Stop 8 is the stokvel group (informal rotating saving schemes), which was mentioned primarily by female residents. Although these groups are organised at a small scale and do not mobilise large quantities of money, residents considered them helpful for covering unexpected expenses and for socialising. There is no evidence of these stokvel groups being used for the expansion or improvement of the current houses. One resident spoke about her plans to scale-up her stokvel group, acquiring a bank account and potentially use these savings for more ambitious plans, including small housing improvements (see box 5.1 in Chapter 5).

#### 4.1.2 Community self-organisation strategies in Havelock

This section will reflect on the self-organisation strategies related to housing and neighbourhood improvement in Havelock, including a mapping of the history of community organisation from the inception of the neighbourhood, up to the most recent advocacy and negotiation efforts for upgrading of the area. This reflection includes an analysis of its main achievements and the current challenges affecting community cohesion, organisation and leadership.



*Fig. 4.3 Havelock residents discussing their history of community organisation*



### **A focus on survival and basic services**

The first families settled in Havelock in 1986. Since then, the neighbourhood has grown to 400 residents living in approximately 200 shacks. During a period of 31 years of continuous growth and densification, residents in Havelock have organised themselves to address different challenges such as fires, flooding, lack of water and sanitation infrastructure, and most recently, the need for better housing conditions and protection against eviction.

In the earlier years, self-organisation in Havelock would emerge in reaction to sudden events such as fire, or the absence of basic resources such as water. An informal committee existed from the mid-1990s onwards, leading initiatives such as the construction of pit latrines to minimise open defecation, and the installation of standpipe water once the nearby pond dried-up. These forms of self-organisation were often horizontal, meaning that they mostly involved the residents themselves with little interaction with external stakeholders or institutions. The committee became official by holding elections first in 2002 and has largely remained unchanged until recently, when new elections took place in May 2017.

### **A shift in community self-organisation strategies**

2011 represented a shift in the level of self-organisation of the residents and the committee. This was influenced by the start of collaboration with the Informal Settlement Network (ISN) which introduced savings schemes for the purpose of improving neighbourhood conditions and accessing external funds. This collaboration meant that the committee also had access to socio-technical support from partner organisations such as CORC, who played an important role in supporting a participatory enumeration and reblocking exercise. These exercises generated data about the neighbourhood and served as large-scale activities with which to encourage social mobilisation among the residents.

The new data related to demographics and living conditions allowed the committee to provide evidence and start negotiations with the eThekweni Department of Water and Sanitation, leading to the provision and improvement of ablution blocks, and more recently, to the on-going advocacy and negotiation efforts for the inclusion of the settlement in the upgrading discussions of the city.

In an effort to utilise the newly generated data to implement incremental upgrading of the settlement, the community attempted to start the reblocking of the settlement in May 2013. 190 households contributed with R10 every month to cover the costs of terracing and levelling the settlement for reblocking. The project had been discussed with different stakeholders, including the Ward councillor, and had been approved by the Community Upgrading Finance Facility (CUFF). However, the project was abruptly stopped due to the intervention of the neighbours and members of the local ratepayers association, supported by a court order and the Land Invasion Unit of the eThekweni Municipality (a full report of this event can be found at: <http://sasdialliance.org.za/nimbyism-blocks-development-in-havelock/>). At the time of writing, no further attempts have been made to implement the reblocking.

### Challenges with community representation and dynamics

Despite the relatively good levels of self-organisation and recent achievements, the history of Havelock also illustrates many challenges that have either weakened the ability of the committee to be representative or affected the stability of projects, and the effectiveness of the advocacy and negotiation efforts.

The lack of periodic elections means that the improvement and negotiation efforts have remained the responsibility of the committee, a relatively small group of active and engaged residents. This may have several negative consequences, including the lack of adequate representation of the whole settlement, the lack of empowerment of the majority of residents that are not directly involved in the committee, and the emergence of alternative and competing committees that can generate conflict and further disrupt social cohesion in the neighbourhood.

For instance, the lack of empowerment is illustrated by the following quotes showing residents' general understanding that they are not supposed to be involved in decision-making, and that their role in community meetings is delegated to raise issues and being informed of new developments:

*"I never take any decision but I do attend the meeting and listen to people talking"*

**Havelock resident**

*"I do discuss the issues of the community but I do not take the decision because I am not the member of the committee."*

**Havelock resident**

The residents' attitudes denote a reliance in the committee and an expectation that the committee and the councillor will solve the issues raised by the community; for example:

*"I attend the meetings if I am home. In decision making I do not participate because we have a committee that works with the councillor."*

**Havelock resident**

*"I have not been in a meeting for some time but I am able to suggest and the committee take decisions for us."*

**Havelock resident**

Other residents expressed scepticism towards the committee because of the perceived lack of action, particularly when making comparisons to other settlements; for example one resident explains:

*"It is not easy to sit outside because there is a very small yard, but I remember that we have raised this with the committee, the passages outside are too small and slippery when it rains. I think that [addressing issues with committee] has*

*failed because it has not happened. I have seen other informal settlements where this has been done and it looks neat and safe.”*

**Havelock resident**

When discussing issues in the neighbourhood with committee members, it was evident that one of the key challenges in self-organisation is that social cohesion in the settlement is highly vulnerable to interventions and persuasion, of both political and nonpolitical nature. For example, establishing partnerships with outsiders or institutions can be seen as a way of clientelism or political campaigning in the settlement, or as one resident explains:

*“Some of the residents, if they see white people coming into the community they believe that [name of political organization] is campaigning for votes.”*

**Havelock resident**

This dynamic was further revealed by the fact one of the community events we had planned as part of this research had to be cancelled due to the intervention of some residents stating that the event could be used for political purposes, or cause conflict related to political divisions.

The committee also noted how residents can be easily persuaded, hindering progress of community initiatives and processes, as one committee member explains:

*“...ISN came with the idea of savings and they told us that we could build the houses ourselves without waiting for the government. After a long time of savings, one person convinced others that if they do not withdraw their money it would be disappear in the bank. Everybody wanted to do the withdrawal. They did not buy even one [useful] thing and they just spent it.”*

**Havelock committee member and resident**

Another adds:

*“ISN explained that saving is for changing your life and not waiting for the municipality. Some people went to Cape Town [to visit other settlements] through ISN. One person who was in the committee for three years came back [from the Cape Town visit] and said the municipality provided people with houses [having seen this in Cape Town]”.*

**Havelock committee member and resident**

Another key challenge for the committee is to enforce rules and deal effectively with issues that may challenge community cohesion, such as renting of structures and the arrival of newcomers. Even though the committee reported that there are not people who own multiple shacks (‘shacklords’) in Havelock, there are still instances of owners renting several rooms or even selling their houses without notifying the committee.

*“...some [structure owners] own five rooms where people are renting. The renters are paying R300 or R400. Owners may sell the shack for R4000 and the problem is that if the person sells that shack without giving you the number of the shack that person will not get the house eventually.”*

**Havelock committee member and resident**



The committee initially attempted to control the renting of structures and arrival of newcomers, one resident that managed to purchase the house they were renting, explains:

*“Actually I was renting for four years in Havelock and the committee of that time asked the owners to sell the houses to us so that we would stop renting”.*

**Havelock resident**

The current situation, based on discussions held with committee members and residents, appears to be that controlling the renting of houses is thought to be highly conflictive, and that in some cases it represents the livelihood of a household. Residents explain:

*“It is not easy to control people who are renting because they are living here. The committee is not involved with the people that are renting. Some of the community members leave the house and ask someone else to rent it. Some people are surviving with that money received from the tenants.”*

**Havelock resident**

*“There are people renting here. It is between the owner and the tenants. Some, if we ask as the committee, they hide and say I’m just watching someone’s house because that person is not around and the person hides that is renting the house of that particular person. The procedure or the rules of the settlement before were that if there is a new person in the settlement, for example that person coming from rural areas, they have to be introduced to the committee so that if there is any problem, the committee knows who that person is.”*

**Havelock committee member and resident**

The lack of control on the renting of structures also means that tenants do not have any rights, are not included in neighbourhood plans and can become vulnerable to eviction. Some residents that are currently renting also stated that they attend meetings but cannot make decisions and their tenant status means they do not enjoy any recognised status at these meetings.

#### **4.1.3 Community self-organisation strategies in Piesang River**

The history of community organisation strategies in Piesang River dates back to the 1980s, when the settlement experienced periods of conflict and violence as well as sudden events such as fires and flooding. In some instances, community organisation was led by strong leaders seeking to address issues with conflicts emerging from tenancy agreements, increasing densification and disorganized growth of the settlement (Huchzermeyer, 2004:182). The late-1980s also marked the establishment of civic structures that would later be supported by NGOs such as the BESG.

At present, FEDUP (then known as the Homeless People's' Federation) constitutes the largest form of community organisation in Piesang River. We aimed to understand their past and current self-organisation practices, including the mapping of their biggest successes and the drivers behind them. The following sections discuss the three strategies mentioned by FEDUP members as the key achievements in their history of self-organisation.



*Fig. 4.3 Residents from Piesang River discussing their challenges and successes in community organisation*

### **Savings groups**

Saving groups have been implemented as membership-based strategies in Piesang River since the beginning of the 1990s. Initially these savings were utilised to finance the construction of housing for federation members. More recently, particularly after 2005 when most of the houses were already built, the savings began to be allocated for household emergencies and financial crises. Currently, these savings schemes are organised at two different scales; at a smaller scale, savings groups are organised according to the spatial organisation of the settlement. In the case of Piesang River, there is one saving group per block involving in between 15 and 50 members who actively contribute savings on a weekly basis. Each group has a secretary, a treasurer and a chairperson who are in charge of managing members' attendance, bank accounts, book-keeping and records. In return, members can access small loans from the group to cover for emergency expenses. These savings groups at the block level also serve to exchange ideas and for members to share their problems and seek solutions together. At a larger scale, assemblies are held every month, involving an average of 60 representatives from saving groups in each of the blocks.

### **Mobilising and exchange of ideas locally and regionally**

Mobilising, exchanging knowledge and ideas have been an integral part of both the savings schemes and the building together strategies of FEDUP members. These exchanges are also organised at different scales and for specific, often strategic, purposes. Small groups usually meet on a weekly basis in each other's households for the purpose of saving and sharing more personal, intimate stories. Larger gatherings at the settlement level are organised for strategic and organisational purposes, involving representatives from all the blocks. City level

exchanges are organised for mobilisation and recruitment purposes. These exchanges are not periodic as they are subject to funding being available. Exchanges at the regional level are held for learning purposes, usually involving other SDI member organisations across different provinces. In the last decade, two of these major exchanges have been held in Piesang River, such as the FEDUP National Forum in 2006, and a provincial KwaZulu Natal meeting to share Piesang River's achievements in 2015.

### **Building together**

The collective building of the individual houses was an integral part of the community-led strategies led by the Federation in Piesang River. This collective effort would involve a reciprocate approach, where federation members forming teams of 10 people would build each other's houses. The teams were voluntary, whoever was available and could help at that moment. It could take them 1 or 2 weeks to build one house. Materials were given by People's Dialogue (later by uTshani Fund).

### **Lessons from Piesang River**

The process of building together as a physical outcome meant that people were attracted to the house and to being part of something with a tangible outcome. However, once the construction of the houses was concluded, there was a loss of interest from the residents in continuing with mobilisation and collective savings. As a result FEDUP members introduced a loan system that provided residents with access to finance and a safety net for emergencies, both in terms of financial help and social support. This ensured that residents remain members of the federation, keep contributing to collective savings, keep using the skills build such as financial literacy, and keep attending meetings long after the last houses were built.

## **4.2 Mapping residents strategies to access decision-making and institutions at the ward and city level**

As part of the reflection on community structures, we also mapped the ways in which communities connect to and access formal structures such as municipality departments and ward committees, using informal networks and an array of different routes and individual contacts. The findings from this section are drawn from focus groups (see Fig. 4.4) with Havelock residents, four of which were members of the community committee. From the three case studies, Havelock is the only settlement out of our 3 case studies that is currently in an on-going process of community organisation to improve the conditions of the neighbourhood, to advocate for its permanence in the site and to negotiate a potential in-situ upgrading.

With this section we aim to map the invisible structures of self-organisation that committees and residents create, by first, fulfilling different representative roles at both the settlement and ward level, and second, by mobilising formal and informal relationships with different types of stakeholders and organisations to access resources and address issues of development and upgrading. Fig. 4.5 illustrates the types of relationships that the committee and residents in Havelock have established in recent years to address development and upgrading in the settlement. These relationships and strategies will be discussed in the next sections.



*Fig. 4.4 Residents and members of the committee mapping and discussing their relationships with different stakeholders, political and non-political representative structures*

#### **4.2.1 Access to representation and decision-making at the ward and city level**

As section 4.1.2 illustrated, residents in Havelock are involved in an array of self-organisation strategies to improve their neighbourhood, whether by being an active member of the committee or by taking part in community meetings. Nonetheless, our discussions revealed that residents also fulfill representative roles beyond their own communities, extending across different informal settlements within the local ward and tapping into both political and non-political representative structures. Some of these representative roles are fulfilled by being members of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) and by being elected to manage portfolios within the organisation. These portfolios address issues such as development, and water and sanitation. Managing these portfolios usually entails undertaking visits to different informal settlements across the ward and reporting back on specific issues. At the time of writing, Havelock had two residents in charge of portfolios within SANCO, including a male resident in charge of water and sanitation, and a female resident designated as community-based health care. The following quotes illustrate their roles and the areas they cover in the ward:

*“In SANCO I am representing all the settlements in the ward in my portfolio of water and sanitation, not only representing Havelock settlement...[ ] As I am in the water and sanitation portfolio, I know that in the settlement of [settlement name] they still need another toilet block. We have to check the population of that community before providing them with the toilets. The municipality says that the population of the settlement must be around 50+ to provide the toilets in the informal settlements. My portfolio works and reports to the municipality”*

**Havelock committee member and resident**

*“The community-based health carer visits all the areas because it is their job to do it in [our ward]. I am not working at Havelock only, I have to visit other settlements as I was elected to do it in my ward... [ ] I have to know how many people are sick in different settlements, for example, if the person is living in [settlement name] settlement and that person is unable to collect her or his treatment because of the condition, I will contact the clinic or make some arrangement to deliver the treatment to that particular person”*

**Havelock committee member and resident**



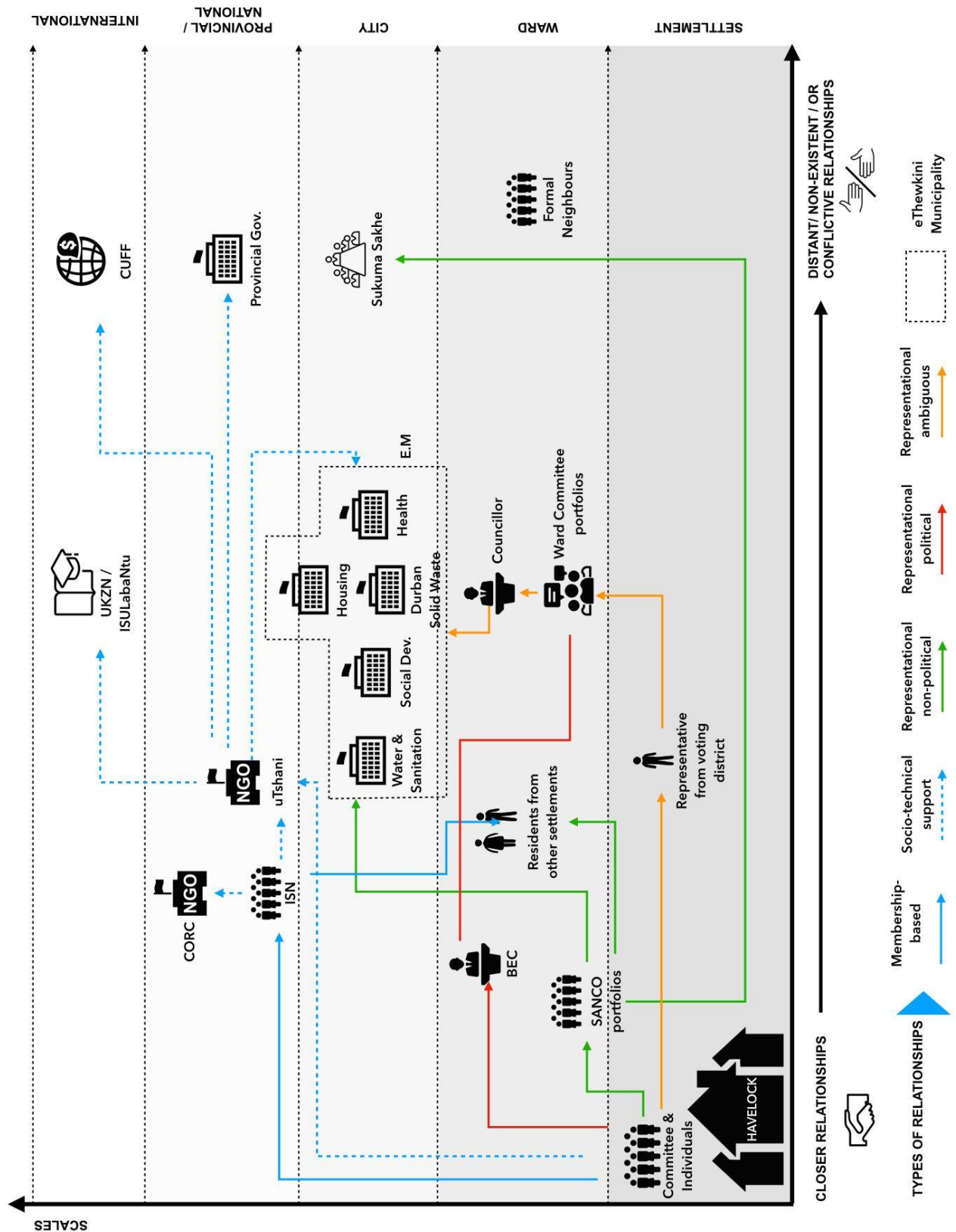


Fig. 4.5: Types of relationships that residents in Havelock have established in recent years to address development and upgrading in the settlement.

The ward committee is another structure that operates through portfolios, including health, water, transport, housing and development. The ward committee is a formal reporting structure, chaired by the ward councillor, and containing representatives from residents of both formal neighbourhoods and informal settlements across the ward. Through the ward committee meetings, residents have the opportunity to voice issues in their areas, which are then reported to the municipality.

Havelock does not currently fulfil a representative role in the ward committee and instead is represented by the delegate from the wider voting district, who is not a resident of Havelock (see Fig. 4.5). According to residents, in the past they enjoyed a stronger relationship with the ward committee. At present, the general view is that the ward committee is a new structure and that they do not have an established direct relationship. It is important to note that this perception may be related to the fact that the newly elected ward councillor, who also chairs the committee, belongs to a political party which is one of the main opponents of the party many residents support.

A third representative structure that residents in Havelock engaged with is the Branch Executive Committee (BEC). This committee is part of a political party, therefore only the residents affiliated to this political party participate in these portfolios. Currently, several residents are active in BEC portfolios and they regard this relationship as effective to have a more direct access to the ward committee. When we enquired about the political nature of this relationship and how representative it is of the whole community, residents explained that they are aware that this is a limitation, but they also noted that they enjoyed good relations with both SANCO (a non-political organisation) and with BEC (a political organisation). BEC was seen as providing them with better access to the ward committee while they work in establishing a relationship of their own.

These different arrangements demonstrate how community members tap into multiple parallel political and non-political relationships at the ward and city level, whether it is for accessing services or for negotiation and advocacy. This is also illustrated by the way that residents utilise different channels to gain access the municipality or speed things up, depending on the issue, the urgency or the relationship established with either SANCO, the councillor or the municipality department. One committee member and resident explains:

*"We report to the chairperson of SANCO and the chairperson goes straight to that department to report that particular problem. For example at Havelock we had the problem of house numbers and we did not report to the ward committee but instead we went straight to the department of housing."*

**Havelock committee member and resident**

Another elaborates:

*"We do contact the ward councillor as SANCO. We do sometimes go alone to the department without contacting the councillor because the municipality knows about SANCO's work in the community....Or sometimes it helps to make it fast or solve quickly [the problem] if the councillor also reports the problem that SANCO already reported. You know that the municipality is*

*delaying the response but once the councillor also reports [the problem] they know that the issue is urgent.”*

**Havelock committee member and resident**

Another structure used to influence decision-making at the city level is the Sukuma Sakhe, or also known in English as the ‘war-room’. Sukuma Sakhe is a formal structure that brings together municipality and provincial government departments, the ward committees, the general public and different organisations to discuss issues across the city and province. It represents another platform where communities can voice concerns about their areas directly to various state officials. Havelock residents noted that previous attempts to engage with the war-room have been unsuccessful, including instances when SANCO members tried to represent them on their behalf.

#### **4.2.2 Access to resources, professional services and socio-technical support**

As described in section 4.1.2, Havelock established an important relationship with the Informal Settlement Network (ISN) in 2011. This relationship was based on shared interests and the sharing of experiences. With the intervention of ISN, the committee was able to mobilise residents and encourage them to contribute to savings for the incremental improvement of the settlement, including paving for improving the passages, increasing the number of taps and for the reblocking project discussed in section 4.1.2.

By establishing a relationship with ISN, in itself part of the SDI alliance, Havelock gained access to socio-technical support from CORC, including professional services from architects and SDI members from Cape Town that supported the implementation of the profiling and reblocking exercise. At the same time, through uTshani fund, it has provided Havelock access to technical support from their staff, as well as access to financial mechanisms such as CUFF, which allowed them to fund small pilot projects such as the reblocking.

This relationship based on shared interests and experiences, opened up the settlement to wide range of actors and organisations at the city and provincial level, which contributes to the on-going advocacy and negotiation efforts of the community to be included in upgrading projects in the city.

#### **4.2.3 Relationships with local formal residents**

When discussing the relationship of Havelock residents with local formal residents, the committee was clear to point out that the relationship is non-existent at best, or conflictive at worst:

*“They do not like the settlement of Havelock and we do not have any relationship with them. I wish we can remove them [from the mapping exercise diagram under discussion] but it is fine, we can put them far from us although we are neighbours. They hate us and we just stay at Havelock by force. When we experienced the fire in the settlement, they did not provide any help to the community, instead they sprayed water on their cars with their hose pipes to protect them from the fire. That room we use within the settlement for the meetings, there were houses there before, they were burnt*

*by the fire, and the neighbours did not help us. The disaster management team came to stop the fire but they started to help the neighbours to spray the water in their yards before they came to us. All the assets of the people burnt by the fire while the disaster management team was busy with the neighbours.”*

**Havelock committee member and resident**

At the time of writing, there were no formal or informal platforms where Havelock residents and the local formal residents could meet and discuss issues related to the permanence and development of Havelock in the area. This is illustrated by the intervention of the local ratepayers association to stop the reblocking project in 2013 (see section 4.1.2).

However, there are instances when residents are in contact with their formal neighbours, although these are not perceived as relationships but more as contact based on circumstances, whether because of employment arrangements or because children from both areas attend the same schools and play together. Two residents explain:

*“The neighbours do not like us to stay in this area. We just have contact with them because some of the people from Havelock are working in their houses. We contact them through employment only”*

**Havelock resident**

*“Even now there are [formal residents’] children still coming in the settlement because some of the children that live there are in the same school and they are the friends.”*

**Havelock resident**

## **4.3 Drivers and barriers for community self-organisation in upgrading**

### **4.3.1 Barriers for community self-organisation in upgrading**

Lack of continuity: Lack of continuity in self-organisation strategies has led to the loss of valuable skills, knowledge and social capital, as well as the loss of interest and credibility among residents and potential new members. In the case of Namibia Stop 8, there was no strategy in place to ensure that residents would remain interested in contributing to savings and meetings after the conclusion of the building process. There was also no strategy in place to ensure that the skills and knowledge produced by the CCMT related to construction and project management were retained in the neighbourhood and/or transferred to the relocated residents. These skills and knowledge are particularly important for the ongoing and future housing extensions and community projects in Namibia Stop 8 as explored in Chapter 5. Additionally, in a housing project involving relocation such as Namibia Stop 8, the social capital and support network built through savings groups and the CCMT could have played a positive role in building social cohesion and driving community-led initiatives to address some of the neighbourhood issues as explored in Chapter 6.



Lack of material or immediate benefits as incentives: Residents mentioned the lack of tangible or explicit benefits (material, physical, monetary) as a common obstacle for mobilising and organising the community. People are reluctant to put time, money and effort into building well because they feel structures are temporary. This includes a general apathy towards voluntary work when the benefits are not immediate or tangible such as in building capacity and skills, or as one of the community researchers expressed:

*“Some people do not believe in working for the community voluntarily...[ ]  
They do not understand that by doing some voluntary work in the community,  
you are paid by getting education.”*

**Community researcher**

Lack of decision-making and conflict resolution: Across the three neighbourhoods, there was evidence of the lack of capacity or motivation of the residents to engage with decision-making or to engage with issues that might be confrontational. There was also evidence of conflict resolution not being considered important when discussing planning issues such as reblocking and allocation of plots, and evidence of vulnerable groups finding it challenging to have their views considered, particularly for women, renters, and the young. This was particularly important in cases where discussions focused on land, fencing, allocation of plots, ownership of spaces such as passages and public areas and debates on the use of land in the settlements.

Vulnerability to politicised interventions: Community organisation practices in the context of Durban are highly vulnerable to politicised interventions, from both insiders from the community and external actors. The case of Havelock described above, illustrates how political allegiances, power struggles between different committees, have either weakened the ability of the committee to be representative or establish partnerships, therefore affecting advocacy and negotiation efforts or in some cases, completely disrupting projects and collaborations.

Over-reliance on the committee, ward councillor or CSOs to lead initiatives: Communities are often over-reliant on local and city leadership to lead initiatives.

Tensions with formal residents: The conflictive relationship with neighbours in inner-city settlements such as Havelock, is a key barrier for improvement and in-situ upgrading. If any project and strategy is to be successful it will have to include mechanisms and spaces with which to build this relationship, explore trade-offs and negotiate in a non-confrontational way.

#### **4.3.2 Drivers for community self-organisation in upgrading**

Leadership and representative structures: Leadership and membership-based representative structures (such as FEDUP and ISN) and the establishment of community-based structures (such as community committees) have played a key role in organised and strategic responses to community issues, in contrast to reactive responses focused on survival. The introduction of these structures were crucial in driving self-organisation, opening up spaces for negotiation, for linking with external stakeholders and partners, and building capacity in the three communities.

Access to structures and networks at ward and city level: Accessing representational and decision-making structures at the ward and city level has allowed community members to tap into multiple political and non-political relationships, whether it is for accessing services or for negotiation and advocacy in the upgrading process.

Adaptability to new needs and circumstances: Community structures were built around self-organised practices according to specific needs. If needs would change, structures would be adapted to ensure sustainability. Drivers or incentives for mobilisation are updated according to changing needs (see the case of Piesang River in section 4.1 and the saving schemes). Keeping momentum for action is key.

An integrated approach: Building on the capabilities of communities and interests (i.e. mobilisation, sweat equity, need for housing and land) and integrating them to technical and financial strategies (e.g. saving schemes), allowed for the implementation of community-led strategies that promote ownership and control of the project as well as developing skills of community members.

## Chapter 5. Focusing on Housing in Upgrading



*Fig. 5.1: Residents discussing their housing stories, upgrading efforts and visions of dignified housing*

This section describes, and reflects on, the focus on housing (or the ‘top structure’) in upgrading efforts, both from: (i) the perspective of individual households: firstly exploring how they came to live in these settlements (Section 5.1), what they have done to improve their homes (Section 5.2), and their hopes for the future and visions of a ‘dignified’ home (Section 5.3); and (ii) the perspective of the state (specifically eThekweni Municipality) and NGOs and community-based organisations (Section 5.4).

The perspectives of households is drawn from individual household interviews in Havelock and Namibia Stop 8, and supplemented by data from focus groups with community members in all three communities. Reflections on the focus of the state, NGOs and CBOs on housing or top structure is drawn both from our analysis of the history of upgrading in South Africa and Durban, interviews and focus groups with municipality employees, and NGO and CBO actors, and data that emerged from our fieldwork in Namibia Stop 8 and Piesang River.

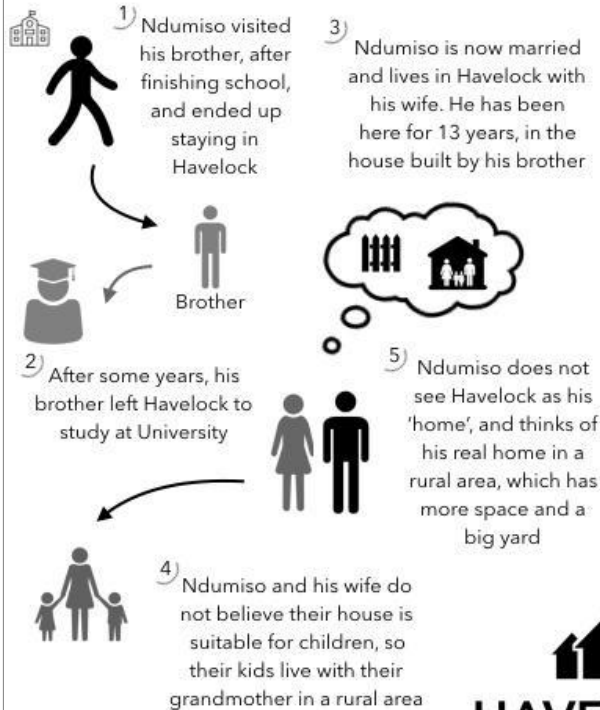
### 5.1 Housing histories

Participants in household interviews described an array of different histories that had led them to live in these communities. In Havelock our individual household interviews included discussion of how households came to live in these settlements. In Namibia Stop 8, the discussion revolved around their recent relocation from two informal settlements to Namibia Stop 8 and the comparisons residents make between their new houses and their previous accommodation in these informal settlements. The Piesang River case study had more of a historic focus. While a process of upgrading and development is still ongoing, there have been fewer significant changes in the recent past. We therefore decided not to collect data in individual household stories.

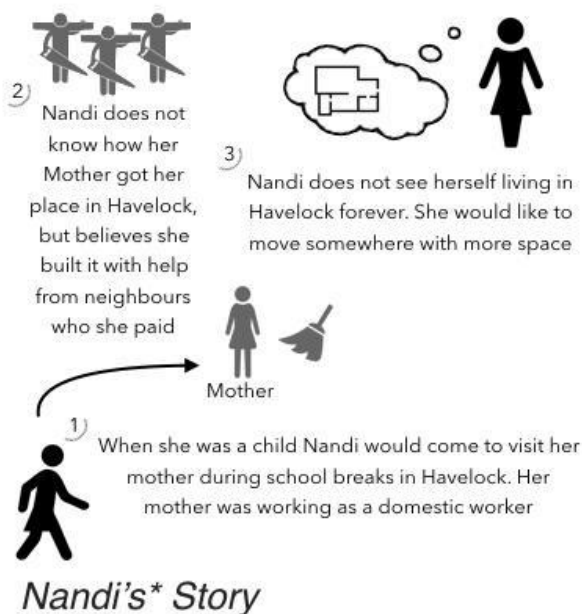
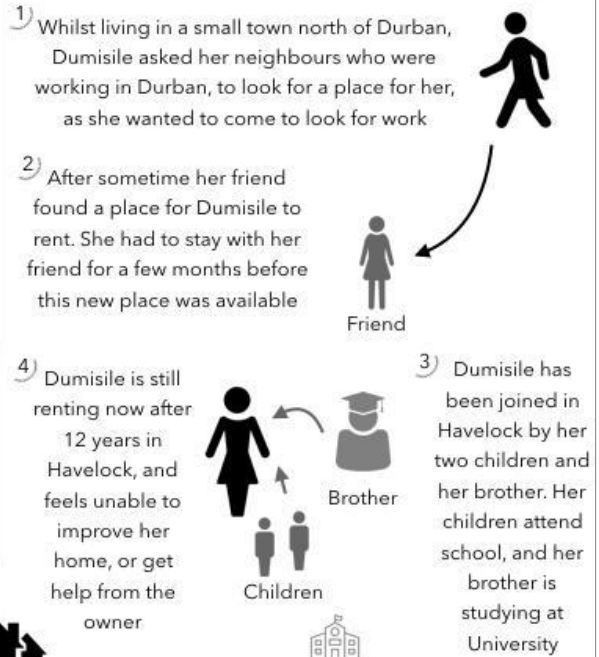
Figure 5.2 gives an overview of four specific examples of Havelock residents’ and households’ histories; though these stories are not intended to be representative, they give a sense of the types of dynamics, push and pull factors, and issues in residents’ lives.

# Havelock Housing Stories

## Ndumiso's\* Story



## Dumisile's\* Story



\*These are fake names to protect anonymity

Figure 5.2: Four examples of households' histories in Havelock.

## Family and friends facilitating migration

Family plays a large role in catalysing and facilitating migration dynamics. Their presence in the city or in specific settlements creates opportunity for individuals to move, typically in search of education or employment. This appears to happen without much clear planning as a whole family, and may be down to individual plans, for example, one resident explains:

*"I came here to visit my brother who was staying here...I spent some time with him while he was studying. He progressed in life and moved away from here. I was then left behind and continued living here."*

**Male Havelock resident (30-40 years old)**

Other residents' movements are more clearly driven by family dynamics and the instructions of older relatives. For examples, another participant explains how as she grew older, dynamics within her extended family - specifically her grandmother - meant she moved to Havelock to study:

*"My mother came to work here and there was a time when my grandmother ask my mother to take us with."*

**Female Havelock resident (30-40 years old)**

Whilst family is a common driver and enabler of movements into informal settlements, some residents believe these are not appropriate places for families to live in. This appears to be closely related to age, with some holding the belief that children should not live in the settlements. One resident explains:

*"I think I will remain alone but I will bring my family if I find another place. I do not like to bring my [young] family here."*

**Male Havelock resident (30-40 years old)**

Other residents used friends in a similar way - to facilitate moving - as others had done so with family. Residents described staying with friends until they found their place in Havelock, or asking friend to help in their search.

### **Temporary residence**

Residents also saw living in settlements such as Havelock as a temporary arrangement, for example one participant explains:

*"this is my house [not my home]. I do have a home in [rural area north of Durban] where there is a big land and a big yard. This is too small to be called a home."*

**Male Havelock resident (30-40 years old)**

Another resident explains similar feelings, related to space:

*"[Referring to where she will be in the future] I am not sure yet but I am not going to die here. When I say somewhere better I mean where there is a bigger space because I have children."*

**Female Havelock resident (30-40 years old)**

These distinctions between 'home' and 'house' give an insight into how the settlements are viewed by some. Individuals appear clear in their view as to what is a proper home: this is often the place where their extended family is, or where they grew up.

### **Informal arrangements for renting**

Residents that are renting in Havelock face specific challenges, not least because of the unpredictable nature of their residence in the shacks. Residents gave mixed reports on the situation with renting in the settlement. Some suggested there were few or no renters, and stated there is community rule -decided by the residents' committee - that no one should be renting in Havelock. However, many individuals interviewed reported that they were renting, with a range of relationships with the owner; some owners also lived in Havelock, whereas others lived outside the settlement; some were helpful or communicative whereas others were not. For example one residents describes a particularly unclear situation:

*"After some months [of renting], the owner of the shack wanted his shack back. But I am still using it but I am not renting anymore....I knew that [who they rented from] family but I heard that the husband died and I continued to rent to the wife but until today I do not know where she is and I even forgot the surname of that woman."*

**Male Havelock resident (50-60 years old)**

Other residents reported instances of the committee enforcing the 'rule' of no renting, thought some time ago, suggesting they told owners to sell shacks they were not living in for around R1500.

### **Movement catalysed by upgrading**

In Namibia Stop 8 the recent history of moving from informal settlements to NS8 dominated peoples' discussion of how they came to live in the area. For many people, the process was in essence mandatory because they were 'in the way of' planned services and/or infrastructure; their informal houses faced demolition, and they were offered homes in Namibia Stop 8. For others, their membership of FEDUP and the delivery of housing through FEDUP drove their movements. For example, one resident explains:

*"I moved to this area because I was a member of FEDUP. If I was not a member of FEDUP they would relocate me to another area not here."*

**Namibia Stop 8 resident**

This quote gives a sense of how FEDUP membership acts to create a 'half-planned' movement, as individuals choose to be members, but do not have control of developments as a whole. They also believe moving through FEDUP means they will not get moved elsewhere by the state. Another resident further gives a sense of the unplanned nature of the movements caused by upgrading:

*"We were [at home] and we saw people coming to put a 'X' sign on the door, and few days later they come to demolished our house, and relocate us in this house. My granny was a member of FEDUP"*

**Namibia Stop 8 resident**



When discussing movement from informal settlement to formal houses in Namibia Stop 8, residents were also quick to compare the previous home to the current one, often in a negative light, with size a common issue. The following extended quote gives a deeper sense of this, the conflict it caused, and the effect on families:

*"I have children...I had to leave them behind [when moving to Namibia Stop 8] because I [now] only have two bedrooms. I [brought with me] the girl only. When I raised that [as an issue] , I was told that the children could sleep on the floor. We had a six-roomed house before this one. We had a lot of furniture that cannot fit in this house...We [the resident and her husband] did not get along and we quarreled and I stopped talking...I told [my husband] that he has to try and get an RDP house for my sons, so they are able to stay in it with their wives. Otherwise you will not be able destroy my other house. I will have to take old zinc and build a shack near my [new] house, [but then] the government will ask why I put shacks here and I will tell them that I was given a small house".*

#### **Female Namibia Stop 8 resident**

Other residents also reported that they still 'keep' their old houses (i.e. either rented, or with other family living there), and that some people intend to go back to these homes at some point, because they preferred living in their informal houses.

#### **Migration, movement, and prospects for community-led upgrading**

These migration histories and family dynamics are important to understand when considering prospects for self-organisation and community-led upgrading efforts, particularly at the smallest scales such as community committees (as described in Section 4.1). These dynamics mean that populations continuously change in unpredictable and unplanned ways; sometimes this reinforces community ties and processes, other times it disturbs and breaks them. These dynamics also constantly throw up new issues, and make leadership challenging, for community leaders and committees; for example, in controlling rental agreements, expansion of houses or internal subdivision of houses. These dynamics also impact NGOs and their profiling practices; for example, their enumeration efforts may quickly become outdated or even co-opted due to population changes or the arrival of individuals with high status and power amongst the community.

## 5.2 Households' past upgrading efforts

### Havelock



*Figure 5.3: Havelock seen from the lower ablution blocks. This image gives a sense of the density and housing types in Havelock.*

After discussing households' wider histories, we discussed their past efforts to improve their homes. Havelock has many small shacks tightly packed along narrow foot passages (as shown in Fig. 5.3). This density restricts options for upgrading, extensions or home improvements. The shacks have wood walls, often supplemented by plastic sheets and mud, with plastic sheeting or corrugated metal for roofs. Regular incidents of water run-off entering the homes, means frequent maintenance is required. The upgrading efforts of residents in Havelock are typified by small improvements (such as replacing rotten wood or other sodden materials), with larger improvements or extensions rare due to lack of space or resources.

Many residents did not build the house they currently live in themselves. In some case this is because they rent it; in other cases they or a relative may have bought it, or a relative may have built it. Despite being built from wood, corrugated zinc, and plastic sheets, and without any building standards used, many shacks had been standing for many years (i.e. in some cases seemingly back to the settlements start in the 1980s).

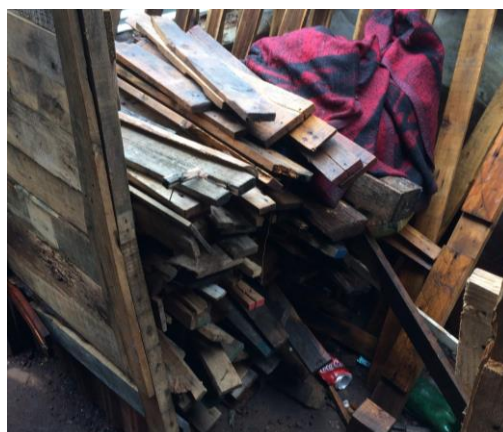
Where improvements have been made, they are often related to improving the materials used. This may be to improve stability, help with protection against water ingress, or to reduce risk from fire, as one resident explains:

*"When I bought it, [the house] was built with board and I have changed to use corrugated iron so that I will protected from the fire...I asked some boys living in this settlement to help and they were my neighbours...I bought the materials from the Coloured families around this area"*

**Female Havelock resident (30-40 years old)**



Corrugated iron was also a common improvement for the roofs of shacks. Wooden pallets are a key and plentiful material, with many stored in the settlement, ready for future use, shown in Fig. 5.4.



*Figure 5.4: Wooden planks from pallets stored between shacks in Havelock*

In many cases residents also reported regularly having to repair the materials or replace like for like, over and over again. For example, fixing holes in corrugated sheets. This types of smaller repairs were more likely to be used as solutions rather than wholesale changes in materials.

A key driver of upgrading efforts was the availability of materials; some residents reported the availability of materials dumped by the side of nearby roads, or materials being given for free by neighbours in formal housing, as being the most important help in improving their home. Others suggested having money to buy materials was a key barrier, as although there were often materials available for free (from a variety of sources), specific items were only available for purchase when they were needed.

The availability of labour did not appear to be an issue or constraint in upgrading efforts. Households can easily get help informally from neighbours, friends and family, either free of charge, in exchange for food or alcohol, or for a small charge. No residents reported hiring professionals to help with upgrading.

When asked about improvements, some residents also discussed changes they had made to the contents of their shack. These were typically getting new furniture and appliances (as in Fig. 5.5), or improving or replacing the flooring. As Havelock has an illegal electricity connection, many shacks have lighting and electrical appliances and consumer goods. Some residents referred to the internal electrical wiring when asked about improvements, even where these were rudimentary and appeared dangerous.



*Figure 5.5: An example, the television stand/bureau, of the type of furniture some residents cited as examples of improvements to their home. NB: Individuals in the photo are covered to protect anonymity.*

The clearest barrier to upgrading reported by residents was ownership. Those that rented felt unable to make improvements, as one resident explains:

*“I am renting this house and I cannot do anything to it, as you can see that it is leaking I spoke to the owner and she said she will renovate it but up to today she has not done anything. As I was refusing you to come inside it is because there is no space even to stand. All these blankets are wet as you can see.”*

**Female Havelock resident (30-40 years old)**

Others felt that as they were renting, it was not worthwhile improving the shack when they may not live there for long.

In relation to wider community-led efforts, it was interesting to note we did not observe or hear about collective efforts related to housing improvements; for example, by groups of residents or by the committee. There was also little evidence of experimenting with other materials, and this was not brought up by residents in interviews and focus groups. Both these ‘omissions’ by the community are likely related to the fact that these homes are considered temporary for some (as discussed in Section 5.1), or because residents believe they would not be allowed to use more permanent materials. These types of communal, and more advanced, individual housing improvements may be goals for more successful or mature community-led upgrading and self-organisation.

## **Namibia Stop 8**



*Figure 5.6: A view of houses belonging to FEDUP members in Namibia Stop 8*

As Namibia Stop 8 is a relatively recent development built from 2010 to 2014, with houses built of bricks and tile roofs, many of the houses remained unmodified; particularly the RDP houses provided by the government, which were smaller than the FEDUP housing and unplastered. Where improvements had been made residents had changed the interiors of their properties, for example, adding internal wiring, plastering internal walls, or adding floor tiles

and putting up ceiling boards. Other examples of upgrading discussed by residents included: adding one-story extensions to create additional bedrooms, communal space and on some occasions separate space that could be rented; building separate outbuildings, usually as bedrooms; and putting up walls and fences around their properties for security, and to demarcate their space. Some residents were in the middle of stalled or ongoing upgrades; gradually accumulating building materials as they had available income, or owning partially built extensions that would be finished in time. All of the residents we spoke to were either upgrading their homes themselves, with the help of family members, or using an informal network of builders, plasterers and casual workers. Figure 5.9 presents the upgrading stories of 20 individuals we interviewed.

Of these 20 residents, most started improving their house straight away or within the first year, including, painting, tiling, flooring, installing burglar bars, aluminium windows, gutters, electrical wiring, ceiling boards, and in one case an outdoor sink. 7 people stated that they had built extensions to their houses roughly 3 - 4 years after moving in. These extensions include adding outdoor buildings, ensuite bedrooms, extra kitchen and lounges, and a veranda. One resident explains why they made changes:

*“I do it so that my house will be looking good, and for the burglar bars....because my house is near the road and there is a crime”*

**Namibia Stop 8 resident**

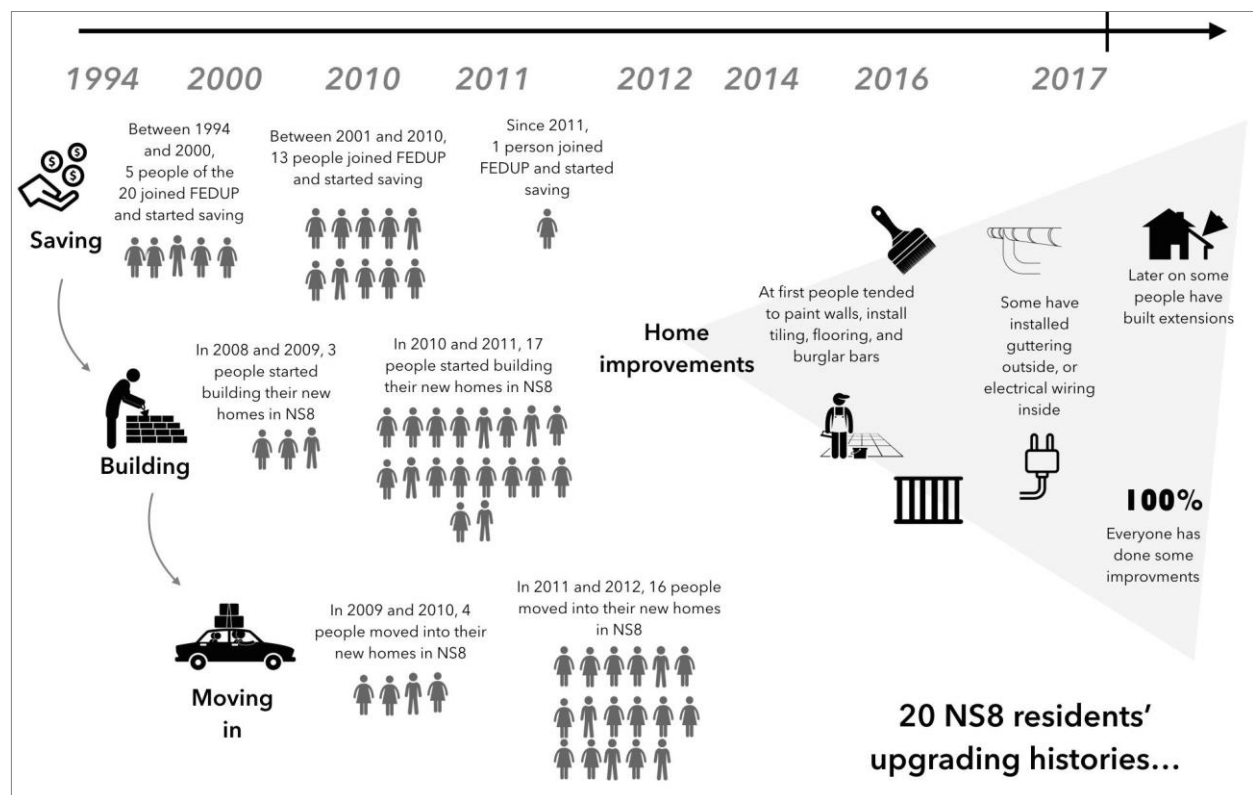


Figure 5.7: Upgrading stories of 20 individuals in NS8.

Another resident explains why they wanted to create more internal walls, common desire:

*"We made changes inside, we divided the dining room and kitchen with a wall and created the passages as well...We were not satisfied the structure of the house that is why we created the passages and this wall...This wall separating the kitchen and dining room we did as we do not want people to look at everything in the kitchen while we are sitting here"*

#### Namibia Stop 8 resident

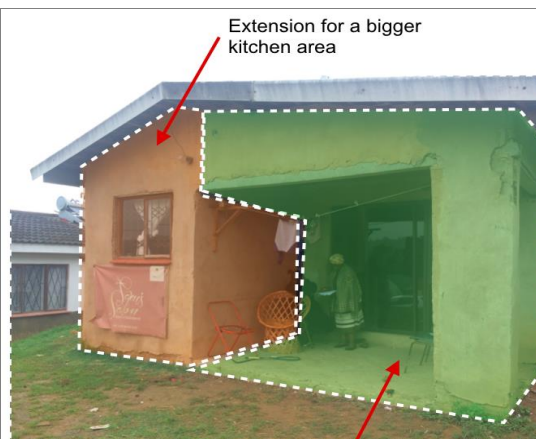
Boxes 5.1 and 5.2 describe in more detail two specific stories of major upgrading made by residents, including outdoor extensions and internal partitions.

##### **Box. 5.1 NS8 Upgrading Stories 1**

*Sibongile's\* mother-in-law started saving with FEDUP in the early 2000s before Sibongile herself took over in 2010. She extended her house in 2013, adding a bigger kitchen, and a porch, paying the a contractor R250 wages per week. Sibongile felt that the on numerous occasions contractor attempted to cheat her with poor quality materials or workmanship. After her poor experience with the contractor, and because of her interest in building and upgrading properties, she trained to become a construction manager. She has carried out further improvements to her home, and buys most of the materials in a shop inside a local supermarket.*

*In 3 years Sibongile plans to have a second story where she wants to have a living room and two more rooms for her children. She plans to supervise this building work herself.*

*Sibongile is proud of FEDUP and her savings but does not participate in savings activities anymore, she would gladly be involved in community-led activities but has seen no evidence of community initiatives happening in NS8 at the moment. She keeps saving, this time with stokvel a group of 9 women. They meet every week and they save in a 'merry-go-round' type scheme. However, they are in the process of opening a bank account and are designing a more sustainable way of saving that they can use for bigger loans, either to start a business or improve their house.*



*[Above] Initially extended to create space for a business (hair dressing). Not it is used for leisure*

*[Below] A view of the kitchen extension from the inside*





### **Box. 5.2 NS8 Upgrading Stories 2**

*Bheka\* used to live in Stop 8 and started saving with FEDUP in the mid-2000s. When his house was due to be constructed, he had a full-time job and little free time, so he hired a neighbour (at R150 per week to build and cover his 'sweat equity' contribution to FEDUP's house building process. Bheka's original house had 2 bedrooms, a toilet, a kitchen, and a living room. The first things he changed was the finish: i.e. tiles (R1,800), ceiling boards (R7,000), electricity (R2,500) and door handles etc. He then made the first big extension in 2015, which consists of 2 rooms that he rents out. He recently started another extension for himself and future family. He has no stable income so the construction has halted. He also mentioned this disappointment that he still doesn't have the land title for his property*

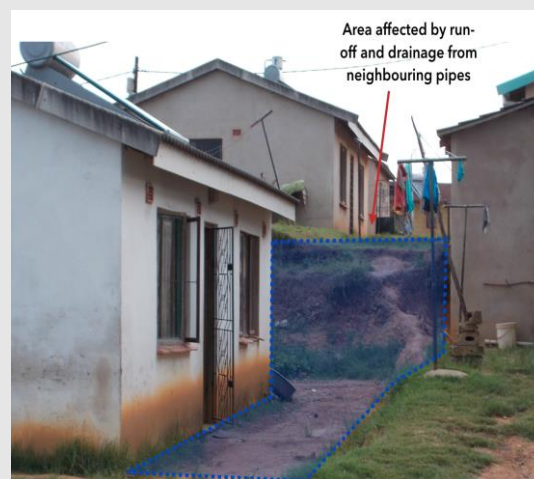


*Bheka's original house is located in the middle, with a separate extension highlighted in green and a new, unfinished extension in orange.*

It should also be noted that our interviews also highlighted many instances of residents' property upgrading negatively impacting on their neighbours; for example, by placing fences over their neighbours' gardens to claim some of this space as their own; or piping water away from their property, but onto neighbouring properties. We also discovered some stories of unsuccessful upgrading; for instance, one resident lived in a property that had been substantially damaged during an electrical fire caused by faulty internal wiring, while another had attempted to wall her property with her mother, but the wall had collapsed in a land slip. Box 5.3 describes one of these cases in greater detail.

### **Box. 5.3 NS8 Upgrading Stories 3**

*Busisiwe\* moved into RDP housing, and lives alone. She works in the morning as a street sweeper, so has to get up at 4am and leave by 5.30am. She paid a man she knows from Namibia to plaster her house when she moved in. She was (when interviewed) in the process of paying this person to build a wall around the property, which she financed through a loan; she was quite worried about crime and intrusion, and had problems with drunk people passing by her house and the neighbours playing music. She also had lots of problems with water drainage, where pipes from a neighbours property fed directly into the area outside her property, and this has water-damaged her kitchen. Despite living alone, she feels the space in her house is too small and cramped. She also mentioned problems with service intermittency – e.g. the water supply had been cut off for days at the time of the interview.*



*This photo shows the area around Busisiwe's home which is affected by poor drainage, from neighbours' pipes, and run-off*

In these relatively new formal houses, most improvements are made by people themselves, or with the help of neighbours, friends and family. People's ability to make improvements is driven by their income and the chance it affords them to buy materials. Despite sometimes working together on improvements, the communities' effort are still disjointed, with little or no communal planning or coordination. There is little formal guidance from others on the improvements they might make, and the state finds it difficult to monitor or guide these efforts too (as we will see in Section 5.4). These challenges pose significant problems-but also opportunities - for community-led and self-organised upgrading; there is a clear need for more coordination, and sharing of experiences. These may be entry points for stronger community engagement and coordination, even if they have not been overly compelling for residents in Namibia Stop 8 as yet.

### **5.3 Households' future improvements and visions of a 'dignified' home**

The final topics during the household interviews in Havelock were focussed on what future upgrades residents planned in their current location, and more generally what they viewed as a dignified home. The concept of 'dignified' was used to open discussion on improvements people would like to make in the future, but to avoid these discussions being overly constrained by practical realities, while also focussed on important basics, rather than a 'dream' home with less vital luxuries. To prompt the discussion we also asked residents to draw a dignified home on A4 or A3 paper. This topic was not covered in Namibia Stop 8 or Piesang River as these settlements have already gone through, or are going through, upgrading processes; therefore the research focused on those upgrading processes rather than future hopes.

Before exploring residents' responses on these topics, it is important to note some of the difficulties encountered. First, many residents were reluctant to suggest improvements to their current home, but rather, insisted they simply wanted a different or new home, elsewhere. This likely reflects the fact that there are many constraints on improvements, but also a specific form of social desirability bias on the part of residents - believing it unwise to tell outsiders that they could improve their current home, in case this reduces the chances of them receiving subsidised housing or having access to new housing elsewhere. Second, there was some confusion and discussion around the meaning of 'dignified'; in some cases residents did not query it, however in others, they asked for clarification on what was meant. When clarification was asked, we fell back on asking for what they would hope for in the future as a minimum, or suggested we wanted to know what their ideal home was. The latter prompted more immediate understanding, but is perhaps further from what was intended by 'dignified'. The community researchers also felt 'dignified home' was much clearer than 'dignified house' so this was adopted in the interviews. Third, many residents were reluctant to draw; they seemed to associate this negatively with school, or suggested they could not draw. This was mostly overcome with reassurance and encouragement but in a few cases the residents refused and the interviewer drew for them.

#### **Planned improvements**

Residents were quick to point out barriers to any immediate improvement plans. For example, the lack of tenure security, and the belief that the municipality wanted the settlement to be removed, meant some residents did not believe it was worthwhile investing in more durable or expensive materials (e.g. bricks, tiles). Another common restriction was space, particularly making use of any external space at the front of the home, which could theoretically be used to create a small yard, or space for socialising. In practice, some

residents felt they could not use the external space at all, because of potential conflict with neighbours, because they are not sure about who 'owns' the space, or because people pass by regularly. Others felt they could use the space, and did use it to sit, or dry clothes for example, but still felt there was a lack of privacy, meaning they would not invest time or resources in improving the space further. Space is also a key restriction for expanding the home more generally. Many residents simply do not have any space to expand into because of the density of homes in Havelock.

More space in the home was a strong priority for many. If they did have space, most reported wanting extra rooms, typically bedrooms. Extra rooms were wanted to create privacy, but also to separate functions, as one resident explains:

*"[Discussing what changes they would like]...more space for moving around. You cook in the kitchen and have the bedroom separate from the kitchen. To own the bedroom and not sharing with other members of the family. The room for the visitors and have the private space with my partner. The private space help us to enjoy with my partner."*

**Female Havelock resident (30-40 years old)**

Specific improvements planned included basic improvements to roofing, walls, and flooring to prevent or reduce the ingress of water. These were more akin to fixing problems or maintenance, rather than making substantial improvements to the home. Another key improvement hoped for was a safer electricity connection, either with safer wiring on the current illegal connection, or with help from the municipality to install legal electricity.

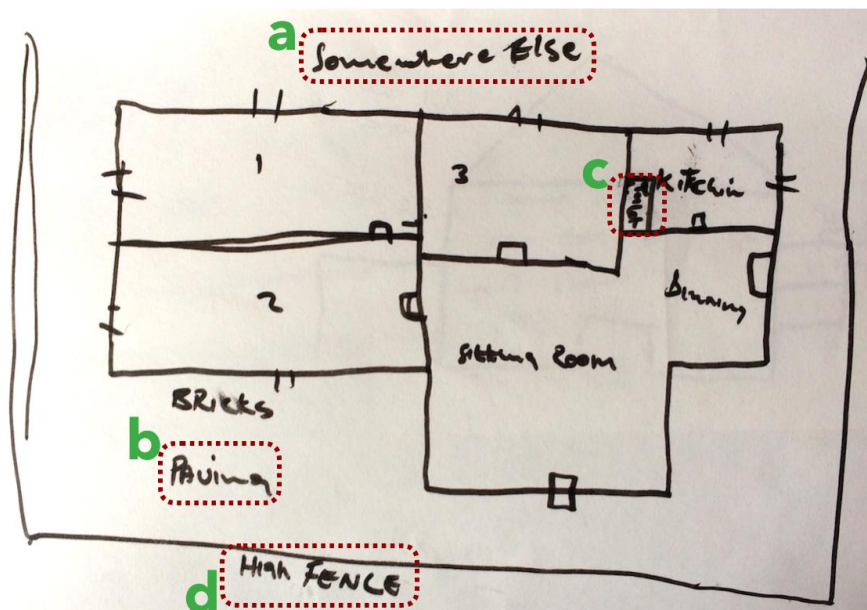
**Visions of a 'dignified' home**

Before drawing their visions of dignified home, some residents reflected more generally on what a dignified home was in their view. Lack of secure tenure were associated with indignity; this was connected to age, with residents reporting believing that with age it is more dignified to own a home. They also felt informality itself was undignified; for example, one resident stated:

*"A dignified home represents who you are, if you live in an informal settlement people look down on you"*

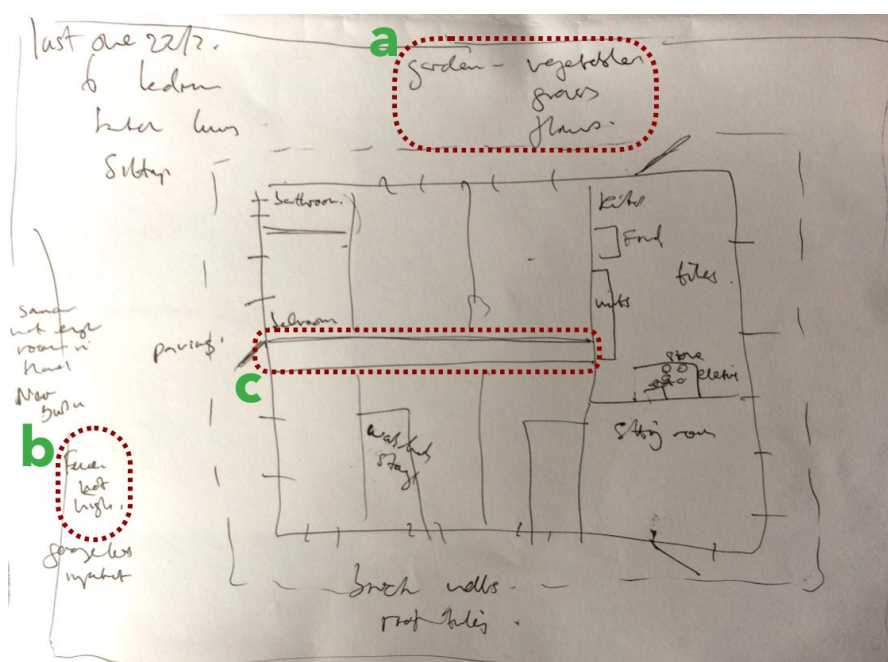
**Female Havelock resident (30-40 years old)**

Some residents specifically stated that a dignified home would have to be elsewhere than Havelock (as in Fig. 5.8), as the conditions and situation there prevented the possibility of a dignified home. This is related mostly to the lack of space and potential to use durable or high quality materials, and the lack of tenure security.



*Figure 5.8 - A drawing of a dignified home by a male resident.*

(a) The resident has noted that the home would not be in Havelock. (b) Paving is specified outside so the space can be used more easily without dirt causing issues. (c) A private toilet is specified, but the resident is happy for this to be next to the kitchen (others were not - see below). (d) A high fence is specific, for privacy and security.



*Figure 5.9 - A drawing of a dignified home by a male resident.*

(a) A garden with vegetables growing, grass, and flowers is specified. (b) A fence was suggested, but when prompted they state it did not have to be high. (c) A corridor is specified, this was mentioned in some cases but not others.

There were clear differences in preferences and visions of a dignified home between men and women. For example, women tended to have distinct features in mind such as: fences for safety; a veranda for socialising and shade; and creating distance between the kitchen and the toilet (as in Figure 5.11). Whereas men were less concerned about distance between kitchen and toilet, with some suggesting they should be next to each other, so as to save on construction costs. Men were also less concerned with having fences, reflecting less concerns around safety and privacy (as in Figure 5.9). Having a garage also appeared to be a concern for men, but less commonly women, both to house a car (an important status and dignity symbol), but also for other uses such as tools and equipment storage. One male resident suggested the living room was useful to display important things such as family photos and achievements. Some men mentioned wanting a 'boys room', a room where boys could go to



do 'boys' things', such as playing computer games; this was a separate room, detached from the house. Much of these differences in priorities were confirmed by responses during the community event. Here, residents were asked to pick from a list of priorities for improvements to their home; the most popular for women were: improved furniture, vegetable gardens, and privacy. For men, the most commonly picked options were: durable materials, and protection against run-off water.

Areas where there was more widespread agreement on characteristics of a dignified home included: having an additional entrance close to the kitchen or in the back of the house; having proper spaces to host visitors (one resident even gave the 'best' room for this purpose, with its own bathroom); kitchen and living rooms having open space; having good ventilation; and having corridors between rooms.



Figure 5.10 - A drawing of a dignified home by a female resident.

(a) A garage, which some residents wanted - car as an aspiration, and associated with dignity. Note, the style of the drawing; several were like this - not a floorplan, but front on, not 'realistic' - so we could see the rooms and roof.

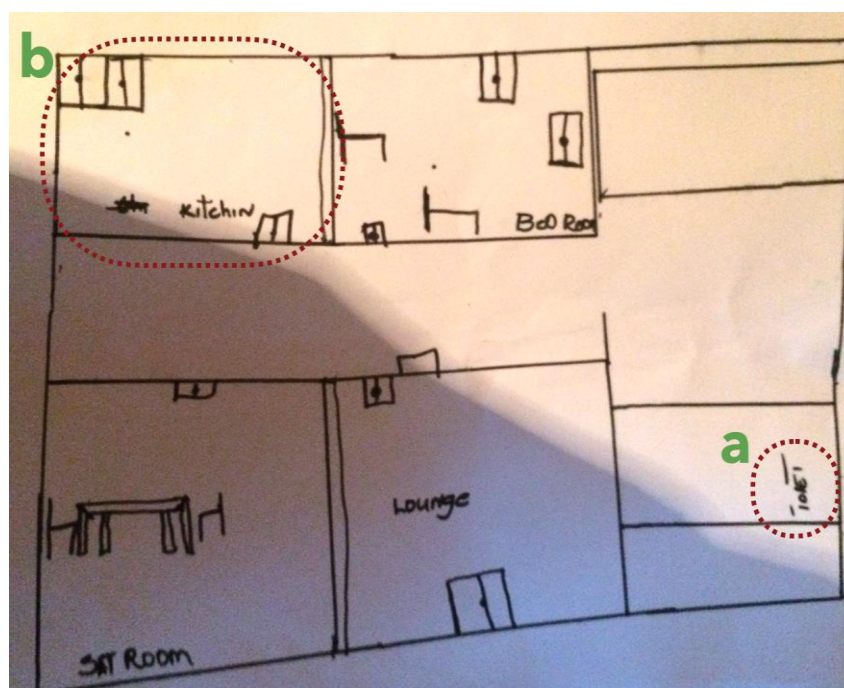


Figure 5.11 - A drawing of a dignified home by a female resident.

(a) The resident specifies the toilet should be far away from the the kitchen for hygiene. (b) the Kitchen was said to be the most important room in the home. Again, having built-in corridors was seen as important.

All of these envisaged improvements and visions of dignified homes, provide clear examples and targets for future upgrading efforts. However, they also pose questions and issues. For example, it seems clear that men and women have different visions and priorities for upgrading. In most, if not all, upgrading projects, it is likely taking account of these differences fully would be a luxury; finding solutions that make compromises, and that bring the community along together, without the marginalisation of some, is a key task for community-led upgrading. Many of the dignified houses envisioned also appear to be quite some way from being affordable under the housing subsidy or typical savings schemes, meaning a second key task for upgrading efforts is managing expectations and disappointments (such as that described above in NS8, in which a resident resented having a smaller new formal house).

## 5.4 The focus on top structure by state, NGOs, and CBOs

It is widely acknowledged that successful informal settlement upgrading requires more than just building houses, but also building communities people want to live in, with the coordination and services that they rely on and that connect them with the wider city. Despite this broad and common-sense consensus, there were many instances where participants in interviews and focus groups (mostly those with non-resident stakeholders) referred to a strong focus, by various parties, on top structures - i.e. on the physical structure of a house - at the expense of community infrastructure and services, and legal issues such as land rights. In this section, we explore some of the reasons behind this often cited focus, and some of its positive and negative consequences.

### Urgency and money framing housing interventions

The housing subsidies and grants used to support upgrading in South Africa are often related directly to 'how much' house they afford. Participants both from the municipality and NGOs stated they felt the connection between the two was long-lived and pervasive. This is related to the culture around 'one plot one home' and deep-rooted expectations of the state providing housing. One participant elaborates:

*"In the massive prioritisation of housing delivery post 1994, was the first capital housing subsidy offering from the new government and it was all about numbers. It was not about quality, [but the] the symbolism of giving people a piece of land where they had been barred from having land previously, it was very symbolic. Nobody was thinking too much at that stage about quality living environments, it was simply 'let's go, let's do it, there's urgency, massive backlog, just get the numbers up and then people can add on'. The intention of the housing subsidy was that it was a core house, a starter house and that you [residents] would add on incrementally as and when you got established"*

**Municipality official**

This quote gives a sense of the urgency behind the state's actions post apartheid, in the face of a large backlog for housing, and a strong political imperative. This urgency, and the causes of it, persist to the present. The participants stated they believed the assumption in

the past was that jobs and wider-services would appear through time and consolidate the new houses and communities.

The model of the housing subsidy providing the 'core' house also persists in Durban; one participant explains how it has morphed, yet persisted, through the years:

*"For many many years the City of Durban would build RDP houses and it was very much a civil engineering exercise. There was a standard unit, maybe you had two unit type house designs and they had been tried and tested, they'd been built somewhere else and then they got refined depending on cost they get bigger or smaller as the years went by, inflation eroded the subsidy and the house got smaller and then the subsidy would be increased and then the house would get bigger, then the building regulations would change, suddenly there were gutters, previously there were not. So it was very reactive. Rather than saying 'this is the quality we want, this is what we want to achieve, let's get the money that supports that.' It was always 'here is the money, this is the benchmark house' and it's still to this day, the benchmark house is a single freestanding, single storey, forty square metre house, concrete block, sheeting or tiled roof"*

**Municipality official**

Beyond the immediate urgency for housing action, financial pressures also lead towards and frame the focus on simple houses, without any neighbourhood planning or community engagement. Building on a 'one plot one house' basis is simply the cheapest and easiest thing to do. A participant explains:

*"[When] you start having row housing, or double storey, it gets more expensive, you're losing floor area under the staircase, so it has to have forty-eight square metres instead of forty square metres, and [additional costs are caused by] the complexity of setting it out and the party wall registrations legally, all that. Fire controls become more complex."*

**Municipality official**

The increased legal and financial complexity of developing more nuanced housing, including focus beyond the top structure, becomes prohibitive in many cases. Participants reported difficulties in setting aside budgets and getting procurement and service agreements arranged, in some cases describing agreements taking years to get in place, before any building could even begin. Legal concerns were reported around any type of housing that was not 'one plot one house' relating to fears that a freehold approach was unworkable.

A wider institutional culture and lack of capacity that inhibits efforts to move beyond 'one plot one house' was also described by one participant:

*"We had to spend so much time convincing [government department] that this was not only innovative, [but also] ticked a whole lot of boxes, prevented a whole lot of transit camps removals, relocations and it was the right thing to do. It still hasn't got the go ahead and then we thought we'll build [small demo project] as a starter and see how it goes, test it and even that I think*

*the project manager was dithering around and there were time restrictions. It just didn't get the attention it needed [due to many other competing projects and priorities]. So, huge capacity problems generally with how to operate."*

**Municipality official**

Even where the capacity might exist for developing alternative and better-planned housing, this always brings higher costs and more issues. Participants mentioned the geo-technical analysis required, the additional work requiring urban designers, town planners and architects, even on the most simple of sites, all representing additional costs which a the subsidy cannot typically cover.

The focus of the state was also acknowledged by NGO and CBO actors. They saw the state's focus on 'site and service' (with an inherent focus on one plot one house and top structure) approaches to upgrading as a barrier to successful upgrades, and specifically to community engagement and prospects of in-situ upgrades. The wider top-down approach adopted by the state was also seen as inherently flawed when in relation to engaging communities, building their skills and capacity, and improving prospects for long term housing solutions.

### **Recent changes?**

In Durban, this historical focus may be showing signs of shifting, at least at a strategic level. The municipality now have a formal model for prioritising settlements for upgrades based on a range of criteria including position relevant to infrastructure, social and economic facilities, public transport and potential livelihoods (NB: we were not allowed access to the specific workings of the prioritisation model that is used). This helps to bring in other factors (beyond top structure related concerns) to the decision on *where* to upgrade, but may not change the focus *when upgrades actually happen*. Indeed, the municipality team that actually scope and conduct specific upgrades, is separate from the team that runs the strategic prioritisation. In practice, the backlog is such that only a handful of settlements are likely to be prioritised at any one time, and the status of most is left unchanged. The municipality do make efforts to work in a 'joined-up' manner when making 'incremental' upgrades (i.e. installing basic services where a full upgrade is not expected soon), however this can be challenging as one official explains:

*"It's [working across departments] been difficult because we don't have, all the departments aren't within a cluster, we've got different clusters so the [department] sit in a cluster called [cluster name], there's another cluster that deals with [domain]...there's another cluster that deals with [other domain], so it's a bit of a challenge, trying to get everybody [together]..."*

**Municipality official**

The municipality have also shown some positive signs in response to reblocking exercises, which can play a significant role in shifting focus from the top structure towards layout and provision of services, especially when done with a community. However, one municipality official gives one perspective, that despite being helpful, this can be difficult for the municipality to carry out or be involved with:

*"[Responding to a question on how they viewed re-blocking was] I've heard of it, it's done by the [NGO] and I think it's very useful, it will actually assist the municipality in making way for services, so it's something that we would welcome, it's just a matter of getting the right departments to also embrace that initiative and saying, 'It makes sense what you're doing, let's do it, let's formalise this process'. The thing is, when there's processes done without communicating it to the municipality, people see it as new shacks coming up, new invasions, because people don't understand, so what happens is the...people who are living adjacent to informal settlements would say [to us] 'there's new shacks coming up, please do something' but in the meantime it's just the same shack that's moving...so without partnerships or even engaging with the formal community, there's going to be a lot of mistrust and miscommunication, so no, we've got to get that right before we start saying let's proceed. But in principle, I don't see it being a problem, I think it's a solution.*

**Municipality official**

### **Conflict and returns to informal settlements**

The most common consequences of a focus on top structure are the creation of conflict, either between residents, or between residents and the state, and the return of residents to informal settlements. Participants reported, and we also observed, informal and temporary buildings attached to formal permanent structures. These shacks on formal land might be used for small businesses, or rented out as homes, or simply be extensions to homes. Participants suggested the state has no ability to monitor or advise on these additional buildings. In some case these may be well placed and not cause any immediate issues, however in many cases these may be built beyond the planned plot, onto adjoining land, or across passages or space intended for drainage or services. Where they went beyond initial plots this was often a cause of conflict between residents, mentioned in both Namibia Stop 8 and Piesang River.

It was also a source of frustration for the residents with the state was that they did not know for sure what the boundary of their property was, and did not not have land rights so could not push back against those encroaching on their space. They felt it was the municipality's responsibility to give them this information and formal rights; in both cases there were long-running issues. In Namibia Stop 8, none of the residents had been assigned their title deeds for their property (in homes built between 2011 and 2014). However, looking for the other side, one municipality official describes how land titles can be difficult to handover:

*"If it's an upgrade project, and we're using a subsidy to upgrade the project, one of the requirements is to provide a title deed to the family so the title is compulsory. Sometimes what happens is you're in a rush to get a project going and we sometimes need to provide working plans of the infrastructure to the [various] departments...and there's a process of opening the register etc., and delays in those steps or that process will delay the issue of a title deed but the intention is to provide that...Sometimes what happens is there is no beneficiary who was allocated that house, either [they] sold it*



*informally...and now this is a new person and when we look at our records, [we say] 'you're not the person who's [listed here]', it creates a problem."*

**Municipality official**

The other issue that a focus on top structure creates is the return of residents to informal settlements, after they have been relocated in formal houses. This was reported by community members to us, but also reported by other stakeholders, for example, one participant elaborates:

*"People have been moved from informal settlements to be in this place [a specific new formal area] and we hear that there is a massive return to their previous locations, their networks are there, their livelihoods are there, people's schools are there.*

**Municipality official**

The push and pull factors are many, but many of the push factors are related to lack of services, lack of community, and lack of planning in new formal areas where top structure has been the focus.

Other issues reported by participants and residents, or observed, included: poor drainage planning resulting in unnecessary localised flooding, lack of privacy and safety (especially for women, caused by no lighting, poor layout and lack of fences), and problematic access to roads (e.g. having to walk through others' yards to access a road or passage). NGO and CBO participants also discussed the lost potential for engaging communities through a focus on top structure during upgrades. They felt that engaging communities on top structure would only take them so far, and a focus on communal space and services would increase the likelihood of enduring social capital; these and related issues are discussed in Chapter 6 and partially in Chapter 4.

There are many powerful and pragmatic reasons that the municipality and central government have historically focused on the top structure. There is also a tension in taking a more communal or neighbourhood-based approach focussed on services and infrastructure. For example, in Piesang River, residents and FEDUP leaders reported that their best successes had been in bringing people together around building their own houses, and that people had been less interested in efforts related to communal spaces. Similarly, in Havelock, community leaders were clear that they believed most residents would not volunteer to help with upgrading efforts on communal spaces or services.

In Namibia Stop 8 it is the communal spaces, and layout, that cause some of the biggest conflicts and issues for residents. This all demonstrates there is a clear need for community engagement and coordination beyond the top structure, but that the issues that need this are also those that cause much division and conflict in the community. Resolving this tension, and finding ways for upgrading to include issues beyond the top structure is key challenge for community-led upgrading approaches - whilst also making sure that the process does not become overly expensive, impractical, or create conflict,

## Chapter 6 Focussing on the neighbourhood scale in upgrading

This chapter focuses on neighbourhood issues in informal settlements and their relevance to upgrading and community-led processes in Durban. For this purpose, we explore the needs, expectations and most pressing concerns of residents related to their neighbourhoods, including basic infrastructure, public space, accessibility, layout and social dynamics. We do so by discussing the two different experiences of Namibia Stop 8 and Havelock. The former as an example of a new development that emerged from a relocation project, and the latter as an example of a highly dense and enclosed informal settlement located within a formal neighbourhood. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the opportunities and barriers of integrating neighbourhood issues into upgrading and community-led processes.

To explore these issues, we engaged residents in critical discussions about their neighbourhood and their city through a variety of tools, including mind mapping exercises, thematic walks with residents and community researchers, visual tools to discuss open spaces, services and infrastructure, and an interactive community event where priority and mapping exercises were held.

### 6.1 Neighbourhood issues in a context of relocation and new development: the case of Namibia Stop 8



*Fig. 6.1: Some of the tools utilised to discuss neighbourhood issues, including mental mapping and transect walks, and prioritisation tools in a community event*

In order to explore needs and priorities at the neighbourhood level, we utilised a series of tools (Fig. 6.1) to discuss separately the condition of: a) public spaces and social infrastructure, b) roads and access, including passages, and c) basic services, mainly water, electricity and waste management. After discussing the issues in each of the categories, residents were asked to discuss potential solutions, and most importantly, to discuss the roles and responsibilities of implementing projects or mobilising residents for this purpose. These activities were triangulated with mental mapping exercises and discussions in a community event, including a prioritisation exercise for the improvement of the settlement and a discussion on the ideal upgrading of the area.

Based on these activities, the main themes that emerged in Namibia Stop 8 are related to the ownership of spaces and the delimitation of boundaries. These themes will be discussed in the next section, in terms of how they impact the day-to-day experience of residents in the settlement, and how they are relevant for upgrading and community-led processes.

### 6.1.1 The importance of ownership and delimitation of boundaries



Fig. 6.2: Views of the passages, showing the poor condition, the lack of boundaries and the encroachment in people's yards

The most pressing concerns mentioned by residents in Namibia Stop 8 was related to the passages. These concerns relate to the lack of clear delimitation of boundaries between the houses, the poor condition of the passages, and the misuse and misappropriation of the pathways by some of the neighbours and the conflict this creates. The importance of this issue relates to both their everyday life, and the limitations to address the problem, whether as an individual or as a community.

Women mentioned their concerns over their safety and privacy when the adjacent space to their house is used as public passages. This results in strangers often walking past their front doors or windows throughout the day. This issue is related both to the fact that they are unable to fence their houses due to the lack of clarity on the boundaries, and to the overall layout of the settlement that did not take into account adequate access to some of the houses, particularly the ones located far from the main road.

This issue has a direct relationship with the maintenance, improvement and use of the houses. For example, some residents expressed the confusion and uncertainty over the lack of guidance about boundaries and how this affects their plans and visions for a better house:

*"[Referring to the improvement plans for this house] I do not know how to answer that question because we have no space even to build a verandah. I bought building blocks to build a fence and I could not because there is no space and we do not know the boundaries of our yard. As you can see here you have to walk carefully otherwise you will fall, even when you sweep the yard you have to be careful not to litter into the neighbour's yards. I do not know where my boundary ends because when I tried to do washing [the CCMT project manager] told me that my line is out of the boundary, now I do not know what to do. My neighbour has pegs and I do not, and when I asked [the CCMT project manager] if he knows when I can get pegs, he said they are still coming to put pegs for each house. We are still waiting for them until today."*

**Namibia Stop 8 resident**

For others, the uncertainty over ownership means that any significant expansion to the house can only be made once the ownership and delimitation of the boundaries are resolved:



*“Nothing yet [when talking about the expansion and improvement of his house], there is no space because these houses are close to each other. The pathway interrupts us because people are walking, in the future we are planning to fence and block this pathway.”*

**Namibia Stop 8 resident**

Another resident also referred to the misappropriation of the boundaries as a shortcoming of the housing project:

*“Many people are complaining with the boundaries and those who fence their houses took a portion of the neighbours’. [I hope] the research will make things better for FEDUP when they are building new houses and not repeating the same mistake.”*

**Namibia Stop 8 resident**

For some residents the lack of boundaries and the confusion over ownership means that others can misuse the immediate space outside of their house and interfere with social and productive activities of the household, such as gardening and playing (in the case of their children):

*“My children cannot play there without interference, we have no privacy”*

**Namibia Stop 8 resident**

*“I use it [the immediate space outside her house] for gardening and for growing vegetables. The space is too small and we have a neighbours’ water pipe passing through my yard...[ ] I am worried that if it breaks it will make a mess. The water coming from my neighbour comes into my house.’*

**Namibia Stop 8 resident**

The uncertainty and lack of guidance on the use of land also affects how residents can utilise the available open space in the neighbourhood. Residents acknowledged that open spaces are not necessarily scarce in Namibia Stop 8, but there are several issues that impedes them to be used more effectively by children or by groups that want to engage in productive activities such as urban farming.



*Fig. 6.3: Some of the different open spaces mentioned by residents as being misused, underutilised or generating conflict*

For instance, ‘the ground’, a large open space located in between the RDP houses and the FEDUP houses, was mentioned as the most important open space in the neighbourhood.

The space is not equipped with any sport or playground infrastructure, it is not maintained by the authorities, and the existence, if any, of plans for development have not been shared with the residents. This means that some residents have appropriated it for different activities such as football, gardening and even as grassland for livestock grazing. This unregulated use of the space has also created conflict among neighbours. For example, a women's group that grow vegetables in the area complained about other neighbours bringing animals for grazing and destroying their crops. A different women's group have tried to appropriate the area for their activities but have been discouraged by threats from other groups in the neighbourhood. The lack of maintenance of the area encourages people to use it for waste disposal or for illegal activities, making it dangerous and unattractive for residents. In a context like Namibia Stop 8, a settlement that is relatively isolated from the city and where livelihood and leisure opportunities are scarce, it is important not only to provide adequate open spaces, but also clear guidance and infrastructure to encourage a productive use of the space and minimise chances for conflict and misuse.

Finally, when discussing the opportunities and limitations to address issues with the boundaries and ownership, all the residents expressed reluctance to intervene. As discussed in section 4.1.1, this reluctance is based on several issues, including the fear of creating conflict, the current absence of community cohesion and self-organisation, the lack of a clear incentive such as a job opportunity or income, a general apathy towards voluntary work, and the fact that land is seen as scarce and residents may prefer to appropriate it for individual needs rather than collective. This demonstrates that even though residents agree that the issue with boundaries and ownership is the most pressing, this is also the most divisive and conflictive. This has implications for both spatial design in contexts of relocation and upgrading, as well as in community self-organisation, particularly with regards to conflict resolution and consensus building on critical issues.

## 6.2 Neighbourhood issues in informal settlements: the case of Havelock



*Fig. 6.4: Some of the tools utilised to discuss neighbourhood issues and community dynamics, including a participatory planning exercise and a community event*

Havelock is an informal settlement located within a relatively central northern suburb of Durban. The neighbourhood is on a steep slope, surrounded by formal housing and natural barriers. This enclosed condition, coupled with population growth, means that the settlement suffers from increasing densification, which affects living conditions and the provision of services. We aimed to explore the key issues that emerge in such a context in terms of the residents' daily experience, their priorities for improvement and how these relate to both in-situ upgrading and community-led approaches.

The findings below are based both on discussions of issues and priorities for the settlement, and on a participatory planning exercise utilised to understand, first, how residents envision the upgrading of the settlement, and second, to explore how residents discuss, prioritise and negotiate these improvements within the community. Two themes emerged as key findings for consideration in community-led upgrading projects in contexts similar to Havelock. The first theme revolves around the challenges of the site, such as location and density, which generate a series of problems for the residents, including flooding and runoff water, lack of adequate public spaces and issues with the passages in between houses. The second theme revolves around community dynamics when discussing the ideal upgrading of the settlement.

### **6.2.1 Challenges of the site: location and density**

When discussing issues at the neighbourhood scale, residents prioritised the following issues: the recurrence of run-off water and flooding particularly affecting the lower section of the settlement, the lack of adequate public and communal spaces for both adults and children, and multiple issues with the passages in between the houses, including their poor condition, their narrow width, their misappropriation and the lack of privacy.

Run-off water and flooding substantially affects and disrupts daily life of residents in Havelock, as illustrated through stories in Chapter 5. Issues with run-off water and flooding are also related to the surroundings such as the passages, the lack of drainage of any kind, the location of the shacks and the topography of the site. Because this issue is larger in scale and affects all the community, residents cannot solve the issue individually by themselves. Solutions will need resources, advocacy and the mobilisation of the community as a whole.

Currently, residents utilise the limited available land as open spaces for socialising and relaxing (e.g. gossiping, smoking, or playing cards). For this purpose, they can only utilise the passages, and the trees in both Sanderson Road (at the bottom of the slope, the main vehicular access) and at the top (i.e. top of the slope) of the settlement. There is also a clear tension between the spaces to socialise and the current location of the toilets / ablution blocks. Some people mentioned they feel embarrassed whenever using the toilets, as people tend to socialise around them because of the lack of other spaces. Both trees are also located near the ablution blocks. There is also a lack of safety when using toilets at night due to the lack of lighting. Some parents that live alone have their children visiting occasionally. Their children might have to sleep on the floor, and don't have much space in which to play. Children are also unsupervised in the neighbourhood when parents go to work, therefore they are constantly exposed to risk in the passages and open spaces, such as electricity wires and cars in the street.

With regards to the passages, the issues have multiple dimensions. In the context of Havelock, where internal space inside the house is limited, passages have been used as for extension (i.e. an outside space for the household, not an extension of the building) of the dwelling space and therefore play a key role in daily life, particularly for women and children. Some women reported wanting to use the space immediately outside their home to escape the heat inside during hot spells, or to utilise it as an alternative space to socialise:

*“The space outside my house is the passage for people walking but sometimes if it is hot I sit outside and use that little space. If it is cold we make the fire outside”*

### **Havelock resident**

Other residents consider the passages important to allow children play in a safe area, as the neighbourhood lacks adequate open spaces for playing and resting.

Despite the importance of the passages, there are many barriers to utilising them, including the lack of space, conflict between neighbours when trying to appropriate the space for temporal activities, and the poor condition including the lack of pavement and drainage. For example, one resident explains:

*“It is not easy to sit outside because there is a small, very small yard, but I remember that we have raised this with the committee, the passages outside are too small and slippery when it rains.”*

### **Havelock resident**

In a similar manner to Namibia Stop 8, all the issues discussed in this section have implications for both the physical improvement of the settlement and the self-organisation of the community. In terms of the physical improvement of the settlement, it is clear that passages, housing and quality-of-life are closely related. However the passages continue to be disregarded from any potential project in the area. Passages can play an important role in providing for leisure opportunities and safe spaces for children to play in. Most importantly, even a small improvement of the passages can have beneficial effects in the houses, by protecting against run-off water and flooding. These opportunities can be utilised in incremental upgrading, including in small pilot projects or in larger reblocking initiatives, to address multiple concerns and maximise their impact. If these opportunities are articulated properly to the communities, they can serve as processes to bring people together around collective projects that are not only focused on housing.

## **6.2.2 Community dynamics around the ideal upgrading of the settlement**

When discussing the ideal layout for the reblocking of the settlement the following issues dominated the discussions and negotiations among residents: the limitations for accommodating all the households due to the high density, and the conditions of the site and conflicts when discussing the use of the land that cannot be allocated for housing purposes.

The main concern when discussing the layout and how to arrange the houses was about maximising the space for housing and accommodating all the households in the settlement. The various arrangements tried using an architectural model were still not adequate to fit in the number of houses needed. Some residents suggested that it was important to allow people some privacy and avoid replicating the narrow corridors they currently have, while others expressed strong resistance to making passages wider if this means that houses will be smaller. This paradox created tense conversations and makes clear the need for residents to understand better the technical constraints of the site, as well as to explore other housing typologies and layout arrangements that allows them to remain in the site without compromising the quality-of-life and condition of the neighbourhood. There also needs to be a better understanding of the dangers associated with increasing density (e.g. fire).

The second issue that emerged from is the conflict around the use of land for non-housing purposes. Some plots of lands cannot be used for housing, such as the stream, the spaces around the toilets and the plots on top of sewage pipes. Even though these spaces have the



potential to be used for productive or leisure purposes, there is a strong resistance because it is felt that space needs to be maximised for housing. Women expressed interest in using the stream as a space for gardening and urban farming. However, this suggestion was met, on multiple occasions, with strong opposition by community leaders, mainly men. The reasons to oppose are related to the lack of land, but also to the lack of water and the possibility of flooding destroying the crops.

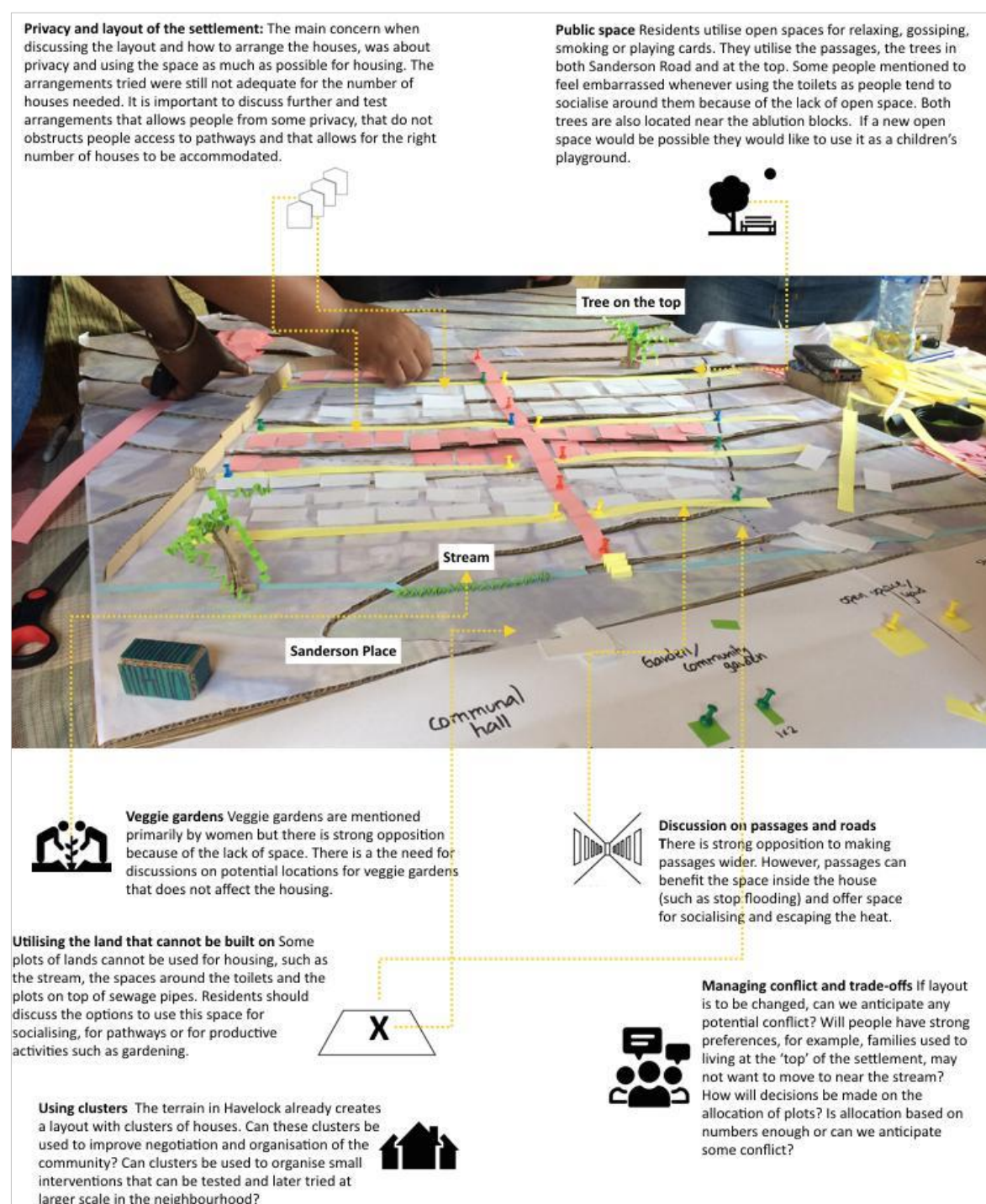


Fig. 6.5: Some of the emerging issues when discussing different arrangements for reblocking

## Chapter 7 Preliminary Conclusions

Rather than present further extended discussion of the findings detailed above, this section will briefly summarise the lessons learnt identified in the findings in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, and present some preliminary thoughts on policy implications and ways forward, as well as early implications for the toolkit. This material is provided here to seed and focus conversations between project partners internally, and with the advisory board.

### Lessons and policy implications

For each of the lessons identified, the table specifies an implication, as well as some ideas for ways forward. These are meant as provocations for further discussion rather than 'implementable recommendations'.

<b><i>Lesson</i></b>	<b><i>Implication / Ways forward</i></b>
Lack of continuity in activities, personnel and skills, and information/data have caused problems in all three communities, and are very likely elsewhere.	<p>Community-led upgrading efforts should have plans embedded for the sustainability of all three areas. Examples might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activities: Staggered and overlapping stages of activities so that there are no drop-offs in activity.</li><li>• Personnel and skills: Outside provision of skills and personnel that could be provided by the community should be a last resort. Where there are not acute health and livelihood issues in a settlement, it is preferable for communities to fail (and learn) themselves in upgrading efforts in collaboration with others, rather than have others 'succeed' for them in a top-down manner.</li><li>• Information/data: SDI and 100RC have ongoing efforts to digitise information on settlements and explore new ways of collecting, storing and using data. These explorations should specifically include work streams dedicated to the storage, management, and sharing of records and other data related to self-organisation activities.</li></ul>
Lack of incentives / immediate material benefits was reported to impact motivation for self-organisation activities.	Upgrading efforts should have in place plans for dealing with drop-off in engagement when housing has been delivered, or chronic issues have been mitigated. These could include specific efforts to convince people of the wider

	benefits (building capacity, learning, mobilisation, use of savings for wider community benefit) to self-organised upgrading efforts, using real examples from other communities. For example, in Piesang River FEDUP members introduced a loan system that provided residents with access to finance and a safety net for emergencies, both in terms of financial help and social support.
Existing cultures around decision-making and conflict resolution are not conducive to widespread engagement, and effective/mandated decision-making.	While debate and conflict within communities is to some extent inevitable during upgrading processes, groups encouraging upgrading efforts must consider how the voices of vulnerable and marginalised groups can be heard, and how decisions can be supported by whole communities, rather than be divisive and lead to factions or rival groups. Latent resentment and lack of support must be addressed rather than left ignored.
Decisions and activities are vulnerable to politicised interventions.	Community-led upgrading efforts could address political divisions head on, explicitly stating when they will utilise political channels and when they will use non-political channels. They should also have plans in place should political actors affect their self-organisation efforts - for example, communication plans. They may also wish to speak to political actors before/during upgrading efforts to ensure they do not feel bypassed.
Communities are often over-reliant on local and city leadership to lead initiatives.	Leadership and self-organisation efforts should be encouraged at every opportunity, with specific support for NGOs and community-based organisations that support local leadership. Examples from elsewhere should be used to inspire activity. Young people should also be specifically targeted for communications to encourage self-organisation.
Tensions with formal residents are high and can undermine upgrading efforts at any time.	Formal residents should be engaged with self-organised upgrading efforts where possible, and be made aware of plans to avoid misunderstandings. Safe spaces for discussions and exchanges of ideas between formal and informal residents must be nurtured, to explore trade-offs and negotiated solutions. For example, new communal spaces could be specifically used by both informal and formal residents as well as informal.

Effective and settled leadership and the use of representative structures facilitate upgrading and connections to other stakeholders	The use of representative, elected committees backed by enumeration and site-specific data has been shown to be effective in initiating negotiations with key policymakers. These should be encouraged by NGOs like the ISN (as happened in Havelock) and policymakers (as eventually happened in Piesang River). This leadership will need to be supported and periodically refreshed to ensure it reflects the ongoing concerns and make-up of the residents in the neighbourhood.
Access to structures and networks at ward and city level is vital to empowering communities and encouraging activities beyond those with immediate material benefit	Sharing descriptions of the informal networks that residents use to interact with local and city leaders and committees/portfolios, should be used as a template for similar activities elsewhere. Efforts should be made to ensure networks are not totally reliant on individual relationships, and can be sustained in the face of sudden changes and migration.
Adaptability to new needs and circumstances: Community self-organised structures and activities were built around specific needs. If needs would change, structures would be adapted to ensure sustainability.	Individuals who engage in these informal and often unseen connections should be encouraged to share their practice. As above, descriptions and sharing of the informal networks residents use to interact with local and city leaders and committees/portfolios, should be used to inspire similar activities elsewhere.
Building on the capabilities of communities and interests (i.e. mobilisation, sweat equity, need for housing and land) and integrating them to technical and financial strategies (e.g. saving schemes), allowed for the implementation of community-led strategies that promote ownership.	Mobilisation of the community, enumeration and implementation of savings have proven effective in providing the basis for effective lobbying for upgrading. Connections to technical services (but not those that can be provided by the community) should be sought out and encouraged.



## Implications for the project Toolkit

The findings from Chapter 5, describing some of the dynamics of communities, and their past and planned upgrading efforts throw up some important issues that our toolkit (Phase 5) will need to address, or at least be sensitive to. These are used here, to pose questions for the toolkit; again, these are intended as initial provocations for potential directions the toolkit could take.

<b><i>Characteristic of community</i></b>	<b><i>Question for the toolkit to address</i></b>
Residents regularly move in and out of communities, and there is circular migration by families and individuals.	How can constant migration and movement be dealt with? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the settlement's known 'hinterland' community? Include them in activities? Have more updateable/fluid lists of house numbers and residents.</li> </ul>
People view their home in the community as temporary for a variety of reasons	How can you deal with people thinking their house is temporary? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can benefits be taken with people if they leave?</li> </ul>
Building houses motivates people but it is inherently individualistic	How do you make house building more communal? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared communal spaces?</li> <li>• Shared facilities?</li> </ul>
Communal issues (e.g boundaries, use of passages and shared space) are often sources of conflict within the community	How do you manage and resolve conflict? How to anticipate conflicts more effectively?
Men and women often have different priorities	How do you ensure women's' views are heard and not dismissed?
Expectations can be raised quickly during upgrading efforts, leading to disappointment, disillusionment, and distrust when there are delays or promises are not delivered on.	How can expectations be managed? How can delays and failures be communicated and learnt from?

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