

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE SURVIVAL STRATEGIES OF THE POOR
IN THE MAKAUSE COMMUNITY IN PRIMROSE (GERMISTON),
EKURHULENI METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

by

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

Poverty remains a global challenge, particularly in developing countries like South Africa, where there is an increase in the total number of people affected by urban poverty. Despite economic growth and numerous poverty alleviation programmes, the urban poor in South Africa experience high levels of poverty, exacerbated by inequality, unemployment, macroeconomic policies and global politics. The magnitude of poverty is highlighted by poor access to housing, water and sanitation, electricity, health care and education. The latest Census report shows that 13.6 percent of people live in informal settlements in South Africa, 1.3 million households have no access to piped water and 8,242,924 people living in 748,597 households have no toilet at all (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

The primary objective of this study was to understand people's understanding of poverty in the community of Makause – an informal settlement situated in Primrose (Germiston), Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. A purposive sample of 32 participants was selected and field data were collected over a period of two months using in-depth interviews, observations, focus group discussions, documentary reviews and participatory learning and action processes (social maps and ranking). A combination of data collection methods was employed in order to explore different perspectives. This methodology was used to explore poverty and the survival strategies employed by poor urban households in the Makause community within the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach. The framework creates space for local people to explore their own views in relation to the conceptualisation of poverty and its impact, and to examine their survival strategies based on available assets in their community.

Emerging data illustrate that people's livelihoods in the community of Makause were adversely affected by forced removals. While the new community of Tsakane was better off in terms of access to basic resources and better quality housing, the people of Makause preferred their informal settlement with its limited resources and services. It was established that, while people were exposed to crime, homelessness, poor health, and a lack of water and sanitation, etc., the community of Makause is physically closer to amenities and job opportunities. Moreover, people have lived in Makause for many years; thus strong social capital exists in the community.

Therefore, the case of Makause depicts poverty as a paradox in a context where people have learnt to live with uncertainty and messiness in the eyes of outsiders. This situation depicts poverty as a complex and multidimensional phenomenon in a context of vulnerability.

The findings further suggest that people resist top-down development even when it is accompanied by the promise of a better life. Active community participation is required to tackle the correlation between underdevelopment and poverty. Overall, the study indicates that perceptions of poverty in Makause relate to a lack of access to basic needs such as proper housing, security, employment and food. The coping strategies adopted by the community reiterate that, despite challenges, people have strengths and assets that can be used to improve their lives. The study concludes that policy reforms and people-centred approaches are required to address systemic poverty.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

I, *Luyanda George Ngonyama* declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced
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Signed

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABCD	Assets-Based Community Development
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
ANC	African National Congress
DBED	Department of Basic Education
DA	Democratic Alliance
DFID	Department for International Development
DHS	Department of Human Settlements
DSD	Department of Social Development
COPE	Congress of the People
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EMG	Environmental Monitoring Group
EMM	Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
HBC	Home Based Care
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
LED	Local Economic Development
MACODEFO	Makause Community Development Forum
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NPC	National Planning Commission
NDP	National Development Plan
NEDLEC	National Economic Development and Labour Council
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessments
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal

RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
SLF	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
STATS SA	Statistics South Africa
UDM	United Democratic Movement
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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CHAPTER ONE

CONTEXUALISATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The notion of poverty is a contested terrain since it means different things to different people. Hence, a contextual understanding is imperative in order to arrive at common definitions and measures of poverty. This chapter begins with a brief overview of poverty in the global and South African contexts in order to locate this study of the definitions and extent of poverty as well as the coping strategies used in the poor community of Makause. The chapter further highlights the objectives, research questions, conceptual framework and the rationale for the study. It concludes with an outline of the different chapters in this dissertation.

1.2 GLOBAL OVERVIEW OF POVERTY

Despite global progress in economic development, human deprivations are still widespread. The context of poverty is worse in sub-Saharan Africa than other regions. Poverty indirectly accounts for 30 percent (18 million) of human deaths each year in sub-Saharan Africa. These include deaths due to starvation, waterborne diseases, lack of sanitation, Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (AIDS), a lack of water and conflict over limited resources (World Bank, 2008 cited in World Hunger, 2012). Moreover, nearly a billion people, mainly in developing countries, entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names. This underscores the widening gap between rich and poor nations (Shah, 2008). Measurements of poverty are still limited to quantitative measures, with Western and European countries modelled as classic examples of the desired path to economic growth. This is despite the fact that there is convincing evidence to suggest that this path to economic growth is not sustainable (Willis, 2005).

Thus, poverty remains a global challenge, particularly in the world's developing regions, with nearly a billion people still living in extreme poverty (UNDP, 2012; World Bank, 2008). Fifteen of the lowest-ranked countries in the 2011 Human Development Index (HDI) are in sub-Saharan Africa, which is home to 28 of the 30 countries ranked at the bottom. Out of 46 sub-

Saharan African countries, only two (Mauritius and Seychelles) are in the “high” HDI category, and only nine (Botswana, Cape Verde, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland) are in the “medium” HDI category. Of great concern for researchers and policy makers is that these low levels of achievement have been registered in all three dimensions of the HDI in relation to human well-being, which are a long and healthy life, education and knowledge and a decent standard of living. The HDI for sub-Saharan Africa as a whole was a third below the global HDI in 2011 (UNDP, 2012:11). Unlike Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross National Product (GNP), the HDI’s indicators of development are broader as they also relate to people’s well-being (Willis, 2005). Therefore the HDI is a proxy to measure poverty, since there is a correlation between development and poverty. It is thus inferred that countries that perform very well in the HDI are countries with low levels of poverty (*Ibid.*).

For example, Japan performs best with more than 83 years for life expectancy¹ compared with Sierra Leone that has the lowest life expectancy of 48 years. This means that people’s life expectancy in Sierra Leone is almost half of that in Japan. Expected years of schooling is 18 years in Australia, Iceland, Ireland and New Zealand compared with just 2.4 years in Somalia, underscoring the correlation between poverty and education. The income of the average person in a very high HDI country was almost 17 times that of the average person in sub-Saharan Africa in 2011. It is worth noting that, on all three HDI dimensions (health, education and income) the gap between Africa and developed countries remains vast (UNDP, 2012). The relationship between economic growth or perceived economic prosperity and poverty is complex. In the United States, for example, poverty is unevenly distributed, with African Americans highly affected, followed by female-headed households, with one out of every six children facing the likelihood of growing up poor (Parrillo, 2008). Based on this premise, Sen (2005: 23) points out that Bangladesh men stand “a better chance of living to ages beyond forty years than African American men from the Harlem district of the prosperous city of New York.” The author further observes that this remains a stark reality despite the fact that African Americans earn far more than comparative groups in developing countries. This example of “case poverty” demonstrates that economic growth does not always contribute to poverty reduction. Case poverty is always

¹In this instance life expectancy at birth has been considered as a proxy for health (UNDP, 2012).

visible in communities where “certain individuals or families do not share in the general wellbeing of society” (de Beer and Swanepoel, 2000: 2). The lowest poverty rates in the world are noted in Western Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand (Shah, 2008; Parrillo, 2008; World Bank, 2008).

Globally, the trickledown effect² within neo-liberal driven development is another dimension associated with poverty reduction. Proponents of this theory assert that a free market is essential to poverty alleviation particularly through markets forces and enterprise development. The role of the state in social development has diminished since neo-liberal economics promotes a reduction in social expenditure (Willis, 2005). It is argued that whilst developing countries struggle with underdevelopment and poverty, developed countries continue to prosper, benefiting from globalisation and other neoliberal economic programmes. Proponents of globalisation conceive the concept as a process of ‘freeing economies’ to enable free trade between countries. It is regarded as the best way to ensure economic growth (Theron, 2008:26). However, Hague, Hague and Breitbach (2011: 22) contend that this is an important but controversial concept. For instance, China and India are recognised as two growing economies in the developing world within the context of globalisation. This “success story” has been defined by high, sustained rates of growth of aggregate and per capita national income; and a substantial reduction in income poverty. China is described as the “factory” or “workshop” of the world due to the expansion of its manufacturing production, whereas India is the “office” of the world due to its ability to take advantage of Information Technology (IT)-enabled services off shoring (Sundaram and Cowdhury, 2011:111). While globalisation has losers and winners, its critics contend that the current patterns of economic growth based on globalisation are widening income disparities and act as a brake on poverty reduction in developing countries like South Africa. Moreover, globalisation promotes inequality and provides an international platform to spread a neo-liberal capitalist system based on the free market ideology (Hague *et al.*, 2011; Shah, 2008). Clearly, these underlying factors exacerbate poverty, resulting in developing³ countries being affected more than ‘developed’ nations.

² Trickle-down theory refers to the spinoff generated by economic growth.

³ The terms, ‘developing’ and ‘developed’ are placed in inverted commas because there is ongoing debate regarding this typology (Willis, 2005).

Economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa has not translated into employment creation in the past decade (UNDP, 2012: 35). The South African economy experienced positive economic growth at more than 1 percent per year from 1994, reaching above 2 percent from 2004 to 2008 and sustaining 55 quarters of positive (albeit low) economic growth before the 2008/09 global economic crisis. However the unemployment rate has stubbornly remained at 25 percent. Employment would have to increase by 1.7 million by 2014 or 6.3 percent per year to absorb new job seekers and reduce existing unemployment. Like the rest of the world, South Africa is currently experiencing ‘jobless’ economic growth (Development Indicators Report, 2013).

It has been reported that approximately 40 percent of the sub-Saharan African population has no access to basic services such as safe water, proper sanitation and electricity. Research indicates a correlation between the lack of electricity and health. Households resort to using unsafe sources of energy such as paraffin, fire wood, coal and other alternatives which are likely to cause indoor air pollution that is harmful to human health. This may result in respiratory diseases which directly affect girls and women who are mainly responsible for food preparation (UNDP, 2012:37). This underscores the correlation between underdevelopment and poverty. Richards, O’Leary and Mutsonziwa (2007) observe that the residents of informal settlements in South Africa have poor access to basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity. A lack of proper sanitation exposes people to water-borne diseases like diarrhoea, cholera and typhoid; treating such ailments might be more expensive than providing the most basic service, for example, a pit latrine (Richards *et al.*, 2007).

In order to address some of the development challenges presented in the above discussion the global community has adopted multinational development programmes such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs that emerged from the United Nation’s Millennium Declaration in September 2000 are specific, with clear, measurable targets such as reducing poverty among poor people worldwide by 2015 (Development Indicators Report, 2013). However, critics note that this model of development is still based on quantitative measures of development that fail to address structural inequalities (Heyneman, 2003). It is against this background that some scholars contend that unless policy makers and practitioners analyse poverty in its socio-cultural context, development will remain elusive (Swanepoel and de Beer, 2011; Willis, 2005).

1.3 POVERTY IN SOUTH AFRICA

The South African population has grown to 51,770,560 with 14,450,161 households. The median age of the total population is 25 years. Women constitute 51 percent (26,581,769) of the total population, while males constitute 48.7 percent (25,188,791) (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

South Africa is a middle income country with stable - albeit low - economic growth. The GDP increased by 2.5 percent in 2012 and is expected to grow by 2.7 percent in 2013, rising to 3.8 percent in 2015. Inflation has remained moderate, with consumer prices increasing on average by 5.7 percent in 2012; inflation is projected to increase by an average 5.5 percent for 2013 (Gordhan, 2013). The economy includes a modern financial and industrial sector supported by well-developed infrastructure, which operates alongside a subsistence informal sector, suggesting that the country has made significant socio-economic advances. Generally, it is observed that South Africa's economy has continued to grow, albeit at a slower rate, and that economic growth is important for poverty alleviation (Landman, 2003).

However, despite positive economic growth, which is central to financing development programmes, the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality remain the main development challenges facing South Africa. It is therefore not surprising that 19 years after the abolition of apartheid, the geographical, racial and gender composition of poverty still reflects past imbalances (Seekings and Nattrass, 2006; Aliber, 2002). In light of this understanding, Wright (2008) argues that poverty in South Africa is characterised by an uneven geographic spread and is mainly concentrated among black Africans (84 percent), Coloureds⁴ (60 percent), and Indians/Asians (20 percent), with only 13 percent of the white population being poor. Statistics South Africa (2008) notes that poverty is most prevalent amongst black people, especially in rural and poor urban communities and is linked to rural migration; high rates of unemployment; hunger and malnutrition; the inability to pay for or lack of access to health care and basic services; the disintegration of families; vulnerability; and the risk of homelessness and sometimes despair.

⁴ While it is recognised that these racial categories are socially constructed, the author uses them in this instance to facilitate understanding.

In addition, 61 percent of female-headed households are poor as opposed to 31 percent of male-headed households. This data implies that poverty has a gender and racial face in the South African context (Lund *et al.*, 2000).

Seekings (2007) deems the South African socio-economic environment unique due to the legacy of apartheid, which contributes to poverty in complex ways. Poverty is exacerbated by high income inequality and unemployment due to an array of factors, including past discriminatory policies and apartheid-engineered legislation characterised by laws that promoted separate development based on racial discrimination (Seekings, 2007). During the apartheid era, overcrowded 'homelands', which were mainly rural and underdeveloped, were established to accommodate black people, and also served as labour reservoirs supplying cheap labour, particularly to the mines (Aliber, 2002). Despite these realities, development in South Africa is largely based on quantifiable measures of development. This is evident in the National Development Plan (NDP) which aims to achieve mainly objective development goals by 2030. Thus, poverty is limited to an objective reality, measurable through quantitative indicators of income and access to services and outcomes such as health, education, nutritional status, employment, employability etc. (National Planning Commission, 2011).

The statistics demonstrate that South Africa has not done much to dismantle apartheid inherited inequalities. It still remains high as reflected in both income and assets. At an income level, just over 50 percent of national income continues to go to the richest 10 percent of households while the poorest 40 percent of households received just over 5 percent of income. This inequality is exacerbated by large wage gaps in key economic sectors (Development Indicators Report 2013). The backlog of services for the poor and vulnerable as well as inadequate resource distribution as a result of the legacy of apartheid have resulted in high levels of unemployment; 25 percent of the population are unemployed and dependent on welfare assistance with some 16,018,967 million people receiving social grants from the state (Statistics South Africa, 2012; SASSA, 2012).

In terms of assets there is a general concern amongst commentators that South Africa has not adequately addressed the land question. The 1913 Natives Land Act limited African land ownership to 7 percent, which was later increased to 13 percent through the 1936 Native Trust

and Land Act of South Africa. This Act also restricted black people from buying or occupying land. The 1937 Native Laws Amendment Act prohibited Africans from buying land in white urban areas except with permission from the government. These acts perpetuated urban poverty as black people were forced to become squatters without secure land tenure (Hall, 2013).

Unlike other countries with a single poverty line, South Africa has adopted three national poverty lines. Research indicates that 26.3 per cent (12,871,658) of South Africans live below the lowest poverty line of R305 per month. This is a food poverty line and refers to the amount of money that an individual will need in order to consume the food required for a minimum energy intake. It has been reported that 38.9 percent (19,025,108) of the population live below the middle poverty line of R416 per month. This is a lower bound poverty line, which refers to the food poverty line (R305) plus the average amount derived from the non-food items of households whose total expenditure is equal to the food poverty line. Furthermore 52.3 percent (25,593,339) of South Africa's population live below the highest poverty line of R577. This is an upper bound poverty line and refers to the food poverty line (R305) plus the average amount derived from the non-food items of households whose total food expenditure is equal to the food poverty line. It is argued that these poverty lines are quite comprehensive since they take into consideration both the cost of goods and services as well as changes in consumption patterns over time (Development Indicators Report, 2013).

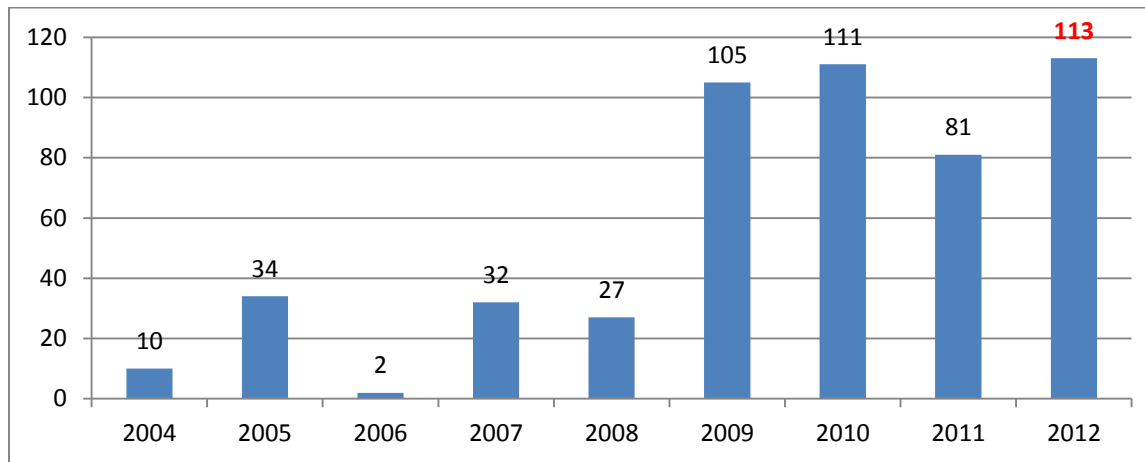
Whilst some aspects of poverty apply mainly at an individual household level, that is: low income, food shortages, overcrowded homes, and so forth; others are more applicable at the community level; for instance, lack of access to clean water and public facilities such as schools and health care. De Beer and Swanepoel (2000: 2) elucidate this distinction by referring to individual or household level deprivation, on the one hand, as case poverty, while "community poverty", on the other hand, "manifests itself where almost everyone is poor". This suggests that the latter not only affects individual households but the entire community and often leads to the vicious cycle of poverty that perpetuates the deprivation trap (Chambers, 1983). Lack of access to basic services is not only a manifestation of poverty, but may constitute a direct violation of basic human rights, which are protected by the South African Constitution (1996). Section 26 of the Constitution states that: (i) Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing, (ii) The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to

achieve the progressive realisation of this right, and (iii) No one may be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished, without an order of court made after considering all the relevant circumstances.

Despite a progressive constitution the realisation of these rights remains a distant reality for many poor urban communities particularly those living in informal settlements due to massive unemployment and unprecedented inequality (Hickey, 2011:45). Bond (2006a) argues that current macroeconomic policies contribute significantly to the country's unprecedented levels of poverty. Socio-political conditions linked to global politics drive the current socio-economic situation in developing countries like South Africa. As a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), South Africa is not only interested in building its national economy, but also has to compete at a global level (Brown, Green, and Lauder, 2001). In this context, measures of development are largely based on quantitative indicators, hiding deep inequalities that exist between poor communities and more affluent areas. However, the inequalities that exist between nations on a global scale are also reproduced within national boundaries. Hence poor communities have not received any tangible benefits from current economic growth. The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) (2013) reports that, more than 16 million people depend on government social grants as a primary source of income.

Whilst the government has taken bold steps aimed at eradicating the root causes of poverty by adopting a range of poverty alleviation programmes and a progressive legislative framework (to be discussed in chapter two) based on the rights-based approach, service delivery challenges in South Africa remain formidable (Theron, 2008:36). There is much dissatisfaction with the quality of services provided by government. Bond (2005) observes that the serious community protests which began in 1997 at the El Dorado Park township in Johannesburg were catalysed by poor service delivery. Residents organised themselves in 1999 when the Soweto Electricity Committee Crisis (SECC) developed a formalised and sustained social movement. Since then, community protests have become a norm due to poor service delivery (Alexander, 2010). The Municipal IQ Hotspots Monitor presented in Figure 1 has reported a sharp increase in municipal service delivery protests since 2004. The year 2012 accounts for 22 percent of protests recorded between January 2004 and July 2012, with 1 January to 31 July 2012 recording more protests than any other year since 2004.

Figure 1: Major service delivery protests from 2004 to July 2012



Source: Municipal Hotspots Monitor (Municipal IQ, 2012)

It has been noted that, “the trend of violent protests remains a key concern, with 88% of protests in July turning violent. Almost half of July’s protests (46per cent) took place in informal settlements and speaks to the desperation of these communities living on the margins of local economies during the bitter winter months” (Municipal IQ, 2012). Bond’s (2005) analysis suggests that the challenge of most community protests in South Africa lies in people’s failure to organise themselves. As a result, the protests do not generate the desired outcomes due to lack of sustained intervention.

Theron (2008:36) and Hickey (2011:44) argue that since the South African government adopted the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy, a neoliberal policy supported by the WTO, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, poor South Africans have become more vulnerable to social and economic exclusion. It is in this context that Heyneman (2003) critiques the Western-driven development of the World Bank. It is argued that the approaches to development that have been adopted illustrate the dynamics of the international political economy in an era of global competitiveness. Interestingly, the South African government continues to promise a “better life for all” while macroeconomic policies reflect conservative Western economic policies that are totally divorced from the needs of the poor. This demonstrates the gap between theory and practice (Theron, 2008:39).

The Nature of Urban Poverty

Like elsewhere, rural households in South Africa mainly rely on agriculture to sustain their livelihoods, either through subsistence farming or through employment on commercial farms. In South Africa, the collapse of agricultural production due to various factors, including natural disasters exposes rural households to poverty and compels them to look for alternative livelihoods. The drought experienced in South Africa between 1986 and 1992 reduced production on commercial farms and resulted in an estimated 80,000 farm workers losing their jobs. People moved out of rural areas to urban areas in search of employment opportunities to improve their livelihoods, while others moved to urban areas in search of better services (Bank, 1999). Poverty remains high in rural areas; more than two-thirds of the households in the rural provinces, of Limpopo and the Eastern Cape live below the R577 poverty line against the national average of 52.3 percent. In the more affluent provinces of Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, poverty headcount levels are about 30 percent (The Presidency, 2012a).

Research suggests that urban poverty is concentrated in informal settlements or 'slums', which are mainly populated by people who have moved from rural areas in search of job opportunities in the city (van Vuuren, 1997:9). Due to limited opportunities, some people's dreams are shattered as they find themselves exposed to new forms of deprivation, which leave them susceptible to social and economic exclusion. However, alternative forms of livelihood strategies can ensure that they avoid living in far flung remote areas. Moreover, city life provides access to sporadic job opportunities, thus allowing them to survive without a sustainable source of income as they can afford to live with less means. The limited job opportunities in the urban areas of South Africa as in many other developing countries, decreases the chances of rural-urban migrants finding employment. Scholars such as Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002) argue that when people move from rural to urban areas, they carry poverty with them; hence the establishment of informal settlements in urban and peri-urban areas. In a developing country like South Africa unemployment and rapid urbanisation are the main drivers of urban poverty.

Due to the effects of structural adjustment programmes and globalisation, urban poverty is on the increase as the poor feel the consequences through retrenchments, contracting-out and unskilled manual jobs in the informal economy, abolition of controls and subsidies on food and other

prices, reduced public spending and wage freezes (Rakodi, 2000). Due to low levels of skill and knowledge, the poor are the hardest hit as they become the first targets of cost recovery, restructuring and other cost cutting mechanisms to maximise profits. Although urban poverty remains a serious challenge, the literature acknowledges that the incidence of poverty in urban areas is lower than in rural areas (Wratten, 1995).

Although urban poverty is interlinked with rural poverty, scholars identify distinct features that characterise urban poverty. The following constitute the four main distinctive characteristics of urban life (Moser *et al.*, 1996:9; UNDP/UNCHS and World Bank, 1996:9):

- Commoditisation (or monetisation) of labour, food, services and so forth. Urban residents rely heavily on purchased services and goods rather than those produced at the household level, meaning that there are fewer subsistence activities. Furthermore, labour is usually directed at earning a wage or for the production of goods/services to be sold rather than at subsistence activities.
- Environmental hazards in the urban context are often more serious, particularly in low income communities. The notable characteristics of low-income communities include: (a) inadequate access to environmental services (water, sanitation, engineering services, drainage, and solid waste management); (b) poor quality housing; (c) overcrowding; and (d) settlement on marginal or degraded land. These factors increase the health risks to the poor, with corresponding economic costs for health care and lost or reduced productivity. This is evident in Gauteng, where some informal settlements are built on dolomite or mining dumps, thus exposing residents to environmental challenges such as sink holes and mine dust, which may compromise their health status. The Makause informal settlement is a case in point, as it is built near a mine dump.
- Social fragmentation. The vulnerability of urban dwellers may also be high because community and inter-household mechanisms for social security are less likely to operate in urban than in rural areas. Urban areas are often characterised by higher levels of violence, alcohol, and drug abuse, and a greater risk of motor vehicle accidents.
- Overcrowded living conditions (slums). It is common for small dwellings to accommodate a large number of people.

Informal Settlements in South Africa

The urban poor “...live overwhelmingly in informal settlements... on land that they have themselves occupied, without benefit of legal title or any official permission, and in houses they have created and then improved with their own hands. They depend absolutely on no one but themselves. They have built their own city, without reference to the whole bureaucratic apparatus of planning and control in the formal city next door, and they are rightly proud of what they have achieved” (Hall and Pfeiffer, 2000:15). This is a good description of informal settlements in South Africa, whose residents live in hardship without secure land tenure, feel deserted by the state and are exposed to all kinds of hazards but continuously strive to survive.

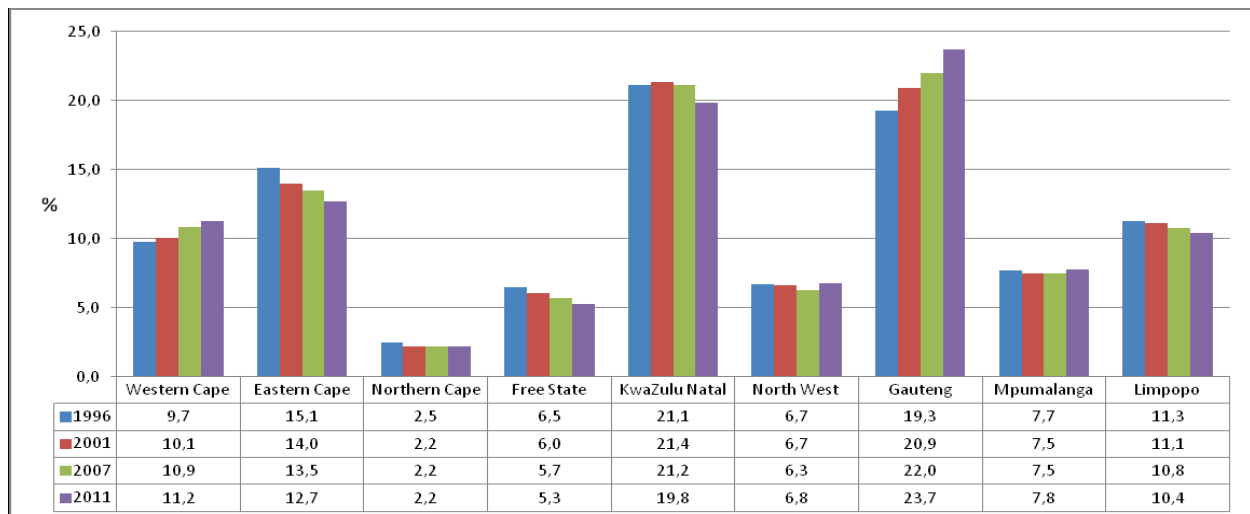
Huchzermeyer (2000) and van Vuuren (1997:4) assert that the term ‘informal settlements’ refers to unauthorised, uncontrolled or unplanned urban settlements. However in South Africa the term is generally associated with a temporary housing structure usually found in transit camps or formally proclaimed serviced sites for housing development and is also associated with settlements resulting from land invasions. The Department of Human Settlements (DHS) (2009:16) identifies the following main features of informal settlements: illegality and informality; inappropriate location; restricted public and private sector investment; poverty and vulnerability; and social stress. UN Habitat defines an informal settlement as a residential area where a group of housing units has been constructed on land to which the occupants have no legal claim, or which they occupy illegally; or an unplanned settlement/area where housing is not in compliance with current planning and building regulations.

Informal settlements constitute an integral part of the main urban areas in South Africa due to rapid urbanisation. Despite the underdevelopment common to most informal settlements, they provide a solution as a place that is affordable or a place of convenience; for example, they are usually located near to areas with job opportunities. Argenti and Marocchino (2005) assert that urbanisation often takes place in a spontaneous and unregulated way. The city expands where there is space, where it is easier, often in the absence of any infrastructure and services, giving rise to fragmented areas and even slums. It is common practice to establish informal settlements on the periphery of formal townships. Each settlement can be described as unique, depending on what attracted people to that specific area (van Vuuren, 1997). Numerous common experiences

are shared by the residents of informal settlements, including poverty, underdevelopment, social cohesion and a lack of basic infrastructure. Most of the economic activities that take place in these settlements (informal sector activities) fall outside the formal societal and institutional structures by which people’s survival needs are normally met. People take initiatives to help themselves when societal structures fail for whatever reason to provide assistance or opportunities (van Vuuren, 1997). Livelihoods in informal settlements are determined by people’s capabilities, activities that take place in the settlements or surrounding areas, and assets or resources people possess or can access (*Ibid.*).

As argued earlier, the residents of the informal settlements have poor access to basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity. In this context informal settlements remain a formidable challenge to government due to interprovincial migration from predominantly rural provinces to urban provinces like Gauteng; this is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Percentage distribution of total population by province: Census 1996, 2001, 2011 and Community Survey 2007



Source: Stats SA (2011)

Figure 2 shows a gradual decline in the percentage share of the total population in the following provinces: the Eastern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo since 1996. However, the Western Cape, North West and Gauteng have recorded increases since 1996 and Gauteng shows the largest increase of 1.7 percent, from 2007 to 2011. The Northern Cape has remained constant at 2.2 percent of the total population since 2001, whereas Mpumalanga showed a decrease of 0.2

percent between 1996 and 2001; however, it remained constant between 2001 and 2007 at 7.5 and showed an increase of 0.3 percent in 2011. In term of population size, Gauteng and the Western Cape showed an increase in their percentage share of the population (Statistics SA, 2011). For instance, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality in which Makause is located accommodates a population of approximately 3,178,470 million with a population growth rate of 2.5 percent per annum (Statistics South Africa, 2011). It is one of the most densely populated areas in both Gauteng and the country. This confirms the rapid rate of urbanisation in South Africa.

Access to social services such as schools, primary health care and housing constitute some of the challenges directly associated with rapid urbanisation, especially when the rate of urbanisation surpasses that of urban development programmes (Todaro and Smith, 2003: 336). For instance, about 85 informal settlements in the Gauteng province were formalised in 2008 and with only 36 eradicated in 2009. It is part of the government's urban renewal plan to upgrade existing informal settlements especially those located on suitable land or to relocate people to alternative land (Mokonyane, 2011). Unfortunately, due to the lack of consultation with affected communities, such programmes are often associated with community resistance, as people are moved to alternative land located on the periphery of urban settlements far from schools, amenities and job opportunities. As alluded to earlier, the location of an informal settlement is often influenced by the availability of activities that are essential to sustain the poor's livelihoods.

The inability to access quality education is cited as another formidable challenge in the South African context. The Education White Paper No 5 notes that approximately 40 percent of young children in South Africa grow up in conditions of abject poverty and neglect (Department of Education, 2001 cited in Lemmer and van Wyk, 2010:120). The latest statistics reveal that only 28.4 percent of South Africans over the age of 20 have completed Grade 12 (Matric), while only 33.8 percent reached high school, 8.6 percent had no schooling at all and 12.1 percent have a tertiary qualification (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Access to education is a serious challenge confronting poor urban communities, particularly the residents of informal settlement as there are no schools in most of these settlements. This compromises children's education and their prospects of finding a job. Research indicates that children growing up with poor parents are

likely to be uneducated, thus entrenching poverty within the household (Bauch, 2011). Undoubtedly, this contributes to the vicious cycle of poverty.

Education is very critical in South Africa in order to break the cycle of chronic poverty, which reproduces itself from generation to generation. The intergenerational transmission of poverty makes it a social problem (Bauch, 2011; Hulme and Shepard, 2003). “Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant (can) become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of a farm worker (can) become the president of a great nation” (Mandela, 2010). This underscores the importance of education in breaking the cycle of poverty (Swanepoel and de Beer, 2011). It is therefore imperative for the government to ensure that all children have access to education as guaranteed in the South African Constitution. Section 29 of the Bill of Rights guarantees the right of all South Africans to basic education. The lack of such services illustrates the absence of a comprehensive mechanism for informal settlement intervention in South Africa (Huchzermeyer, 2000).

This study was conducted in the Makause informal settlement in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, Germiston. Having reflected on the definitions and measurements of poverty, as well as its causes and impacts, this empirical study seeks to create a space for local people to explore their own subjective views in relation to the conceptualisation of poverty. It further examines the survival strategies that the community has embraced. There is a paucity of studies on the survival strategies relevant in African economies (Mtapuri, 2011). Therefore, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

A description of the study context is presented in the next section.

1.4 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The Makause informal settlement is located in ward 21 in Primrose near Germiston in the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (EMM), in Gauteng Province. EMM is a metropolitan municipality that forms the local government of the eastern region of Gauteng. EMM was established in 2000 as an amalgamation of the former local administrations of the nine towns in the East Rand, namely Alberton, Benoni, Boksburg, Brakpan, Edenvale/Lethabong, Germiston, Kempton Park/Tembisa, Nigel and Springs, along with two other councils, the Kyalami Metropolitan Council and the Eastern Gauteng Services Council. The name Ekurhuleni means place of peace in Tsonga (Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011). It is a modern urban area with well-developed infrastructure consisting of a road network, airports, railway lines, telephones and electricity supporting a well-established industrial and commercial complex. The municipality is home to the OR Tambo International Airport, the busiest airport in Africa (Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011).

Ekurhuleni's economy is larger and more diverse than all the municipalities in Southern Africa, with a total annual budget of R21 billion. It accounts for nearly a quarter of the Gauteng economy which, in turn, contributes over a third of national GDP. Ekurhuleni contributes approximately 7 percent to the country's spending power and about 7.4 percent to the nation's production (Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011:28). It is sub-Saharan Africa's most commanding region in terms of trade and industry with a high concentration of industrial activity, including sectors such as machinery and equipment (37 percent), other chemicals (35 percent), metal products (33 percent) and plastics (29 percent) (Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011:16).

Despite this positive outlook, the EMM has high levels of unemployment (28.8 percent) and underemployment, and 30 percent of the local population lives in poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2012). However, the Gauteng City Region Observatory notes, that Ekurhuleni's "broader unemployment figure is 39.5 per cent, thus implying that over 1,185,000 people in Ekurhuleni have no known income sources. Of these people, 61 percent are young people of 34 years old and below. This is a major source of worry for us because what it implies is that nearly four out of every ten young people in our city are unemployed" (Gungubele, 2013). Due to the high

unemployment rate, the majority of people live below the poverty line on the urban periphery, far from job opportunities and social amenities with limited transport facilities. Access to transport is a real issue for the poor that influences the locational decisions made by squatters. It is observed that, “the poorer a household, the greater the role of transport expenditure in the poverty cycle” (Huchzermeyer, 2000: 317). Many people in Ekurhuleni still live in overcrowded informal settlements (119 informal settlements) without adequate access to social infrastructure and limited access to emergency services (Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011).

The EMM also has a higher HIV prevalence rate of 34.0 percent in the general population than the Gauteng Provincial HIV prevalence of 30 percent in the general population (Department of Health, 2011). It had the second highest number of maternal orphans in Gauteng in 2009 (25 percent) following the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality at 29 percent. Together, these two districts are home to 54 percent of the province’s maternal orphans. There was a sharp increase in the number of orphans from 16,423 in 2003 to 21,403 in 2004 (Department of Social Development, 2010). This underscores the impact of the AIDS epidemic in EMM. The challenges experienced by poor communities include poverty related diseases, such as TB (all versions), and inequitable access to health care facilities. Ekurhuleni has a high rate of infant and child malnutrition, as well as crime and unacceptably high levels of domestic violence (Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011). Due to mining activities and industrialisation, environmental problems such as geological instability (51 percent of the under surface area covered by dolomite) and pollution are common in Ekurhuleni. However, some unique environmental opportunities, such as rivers and agricultural assets have also been identified which have not been exploited for sustainable livelihoods by the local community (Gungubele, 2013; Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011).

Many people in Ekurhuleni still live in overcrowded informal settlements without adequate access to engineering and social infrastructure. The creation and promotion of sustainable human settlements is, therefore, an important priority. There is a massive housing backlog as evidenced by the 119 informal settlements. The situation is getting worse as the influx of people is set to continue and many informal settlements are situated on land not suitable for housing. Well-located land suitable for housing development is not readily available (Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011:24).

The study area, Makause, is an undeveloped informal settlement, built on dolomitic ground and located near a gold mine and a mine dump in Primrose near Germiston. Attempts to relocate residents to a safer site failed dismally in the face of community resistance (Low, 2007). The unsafe environment exposes residents to serious environmental challenges. For example, a woman was buried alive in a mining shaft in 2008 and could not be rescued by emergency services (community leader). Despite this the community wants government to rehabilitate this land as it is close to most amenities critical to sustain their livelihoods. The development of Makause and other informal settlements near Germiston has had negative economic effects on local businesses. For instance, in 2004 BMW moved out of Germiston due to the proximity of the informal settlements, a move that was highly criticised by the municipality. The municipality needs the tax money contributed by companies such as BMW to maintain and service the informal settlements, while local people need the jobs created by such companies to sustain their livelihoods (Huchzermeyer *et al.*, 2004:5).

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Conventional poverty indicators suggest a decline in the number of poor households in South Africa (MDG Report, 2010; Development Indicators Report, 2013). On the contrary, the poor households have not seen the difference in their life, as development is still defined by the non-poor and professionals. Poverty remains a daily experience for the majority of people living in informal settlements. These settlements have limited access to basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity and roads and public facilities such as schools, libraries and health care centres and are highly affected by rapid urbanisation. Moreover, crime and violence are a daily reality in these areas (Todaro and Smith, 2003: 336; Richards *et al.*, 2007 and Huchzermeyer, 2004). Scholars such as Chambers (1997) argue that genuine development is interested in people's lived experiences. Rather than relying on perceptions of poverty based on professionals' analysis, development from below should be promoted.

The situation in Makause is no different from other informal settlements in South Africa. In worst case scenarios, some poor households are exposed to chronic poverty with insufficient money to buy food, leading to starvation and malnutrition. Poverty is thus a lived reality which manifests in 'chronic' underdevelopment.

In such situations, the majority of people rely on social grants and alternative livelihoods in order to sustain their households.

1.6 OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Against this problem statement, in undertaking this research study, the researcher sought to:

- gain a better understanding of the definitions and nature of poverty in the Makause community;
- Investigate the survival strategies employed by poor urban households in the Makause community.

In so doing, the researcher hopes to contribute to ongoing research on poverty in South Africa and the survival strategies employed by poor households in informal settlements as a response to poverty.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Key questions to be addressed:

- What are the specific socio-economic challenges confronting people living in the Makause community?
- How do poor households conceptualise and understand poverty?
- What are the survival strategies employed by individual households in the Makause community?
- How does the community benefit from government poverty alleviation programmes?

1.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The framework of this study is based on the United Kingdom's (UK's) Department for International Development's (DFID) concept of the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA), which concerns itself with the "creation of livelihood opportunities and strategies of poor and excluded people" (Neefjes, 2000: 91). In this context, a livelihood entails "the capabilities, assets and activities which are all required for a means of a living" (Chambers and Conway, 1992:7; Neefjes, 2000:82). The framework seeks to explain livelihoods as assets, whether social, human, natural, physical, or financial. Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:10) define assets as both the material and non-material resources that one has or can access in order to survive.

Furthermore, the SLF highlights the linkages between micro and macro level policies and how they affect people's livelihoods; thus addressing those elements that make people susceptible to poverty. The critical aspect of the SLF, which makes it relevant to this particular study, recognises that whilst people often encounter problems, they also have the capacity to address the challenges they face. These realities are captured in Amartya Sen's (1999) capability approach - a conceptual framework that is embedded in the notion that knowledge for livelihood security is both contextual and relational. Linked to the capability approach, the SLF embraces assets-based community development (ABCD) (McKnight and Kretzmann, 1993), which ultimately aims to shift people from being mere clients of development to full citizenship (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003).

It is therefore appropriate to utilise the SLF as a conceptual framework as this study aims to move beyond people's needs to investigate existing survival strategies for livelihood security in the Makause community. ABCD within SLF will assist the researcher to focus on the assets available within and outside the community of Makause as opposed to limiting the study to an exploration of poverty. The SLF is utilised because it is a holistic, people-centred approach that recognises that the factors that keep people in the "deprivation trap" are intertwined and multidimensional, reflecting clusters of disadvantage (Chambers, 1983:112). This necessitates an understanding of local, national, and international policies that impact on poor people's livelihood strategies. Perceived in this way, the SLF provides a paradigm shift from a linear, predictable and piecemeal kind of development to a holistic, people-centred approach (Neefjes, 2000).

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter two presents a review of the relevant literature focusing on conceptualisations of poverty, the measurement of poverty, poverty eradication strategies, and the survival strategies employed by urban poor communities within the SLF.

Chapter three outlines the research design and discusses the samples and sampling method, data collection methods, the pilot study, data analysis methods, reliability and validity, and ethical considerations, as well as the limitations of the study.

Chapter four focuses on the discussion and the interpretation of the research findings. This chapter begins with a profile of the Makause community, followed by a discussion on the emerging themes related to the definitions and nature of poverty in the community. The research findings are divided into two chapters, four and five.

Chapter five is the continuation of the research findings. This chapter focuses on the poverty indices based on people's subjective views.

Chapter six presents a conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES IN URBAN POVERTY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains a very complex phenomenon to scholars and development practitioners, alike (de Beer and Swanepoel, 2000). Consequently, various studies have been conducted to analyse the multidimensional nature of poverty. As illustrated in this chapter, poverty means different things to different people (*Ibid.*) and definitions and concepts related to poverty continue to evolve. This chapter explores the relevant literature by presenting contemporary discourses related to the definitions and nature of poverty in the South African context. It further discusses the survival strategies that poor people use to secure their livelihoods. The discussion is linked to the SLF as a conceptual framework that will be utilised in the discussion of the findings to guide the analysis.

The following section presents the major approaches and concepts that have framed the definition and analysis of poverty.

2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF POVERTY

Development planners and policy-makers regard poverty reduction as the most fundamental objective of development policy. It is recognised that the way poverty is defined and measured is key in providing a framework for developing poverty reduction strategies. To this end, data on poverty needs to be generated and definitions of the phenomenon need to be developed to allow changes over time to be measured (Klasen, 2000). Based on this premise, it is critical to understand the contested nature of poverty and its definitions (Swanepoel and de Beer, 2011; Willis, 2005; de Beer and Swanepoel, 2000).

An analysis of social and economic deprivation demonstrates that the phenomenon of poverty is deeply political, ideological and philosophical with many contestations. It is therefore crucial to note that poverty is a social construction. This clearly underscores the significance of analysing poverty from the perspective of the poor (Chambers, 1993). Poverty theories that are informed

by the non-poor remain meaningless to the poor who are the subjects of poverty. It is apparent from the literature that poverty is a complex concept, which means more than income deprivation, and can have different meanings for different people. These different meanings make it very challenging to conceptualise poverty (Swanepoel and de Beer, 2011; Willis, 2005; de Beer and Swanepoel, 2000).

Consequently, Laderchi, Saith, and Stewart (2003) contend that while there is worldwide agreement that poverty reduction is the overriding goal of development policy, there is little agreement on the definition of poverty. To devise policies to reduce poverty effectively, it is important to address this gap. For example, Meth (2006) observes that poverty is political because it relates to the allocation or distribution of resources, and reflects the impact of past and present policy choices. Hence, poverty remains a contested concept (van Wyk, 2010). Based on this premise, debates on how poverty should be conceptualised, defined and measured go beyond semantics and academic hair-splitting. It is therefore vital that the concepts, definitions and measurements of poverty are theoretically robust in order to make them appropriate to the society in which they are applied (Daniels, 2012). It is in this context that Odekon (2007) proposes two definitions relating to poverty, that is, the narrow definition which focuses on the lack of material goods, and the broader definition which incorporates numerous other factors such as living conditions, health, transport, and community life.

Clearly, the manner in which researchers, politicians, activists and ordinary people understand and articulate the concept of poverty is influenced by social, economic, political and philosophical discourses. These underlying discourses and narratives are not neatly aligned; suggesting that the concept of poverty as it exists in ordinary language has an inherent ‘messiness’ about it. This allows the concept to be used in very nuanced and complex ways (du Toit, 2005). It is argued, for example, that, “the conceptualisation, definition and measurement of poverty in a society is a mirror-image of the ideals of that society: In conceptualising, defining and measuring what is unacceptable in a society we are also saying a great deal about the way we would like things to be.” Mbuli (2008:12) echoes similar views by arguing that the concepts used to define poverty determine the methods employed to measure it. This, in turn, influences the programmes that are implemented to address poverty. In the same vein, Bellu and Liberati (2005:7) state that due to multiple meanings of the term, it is important to tailor the

concept of poverty to the appropriate context; fully realising that there is no general concept that can safely be assumed to hold true for all countries. For example, a study conducted in Zimbabwe illustrates that the definitions of poverty are socially constructed and largely dependent on people's perceptions (Mtapuri, 2011).

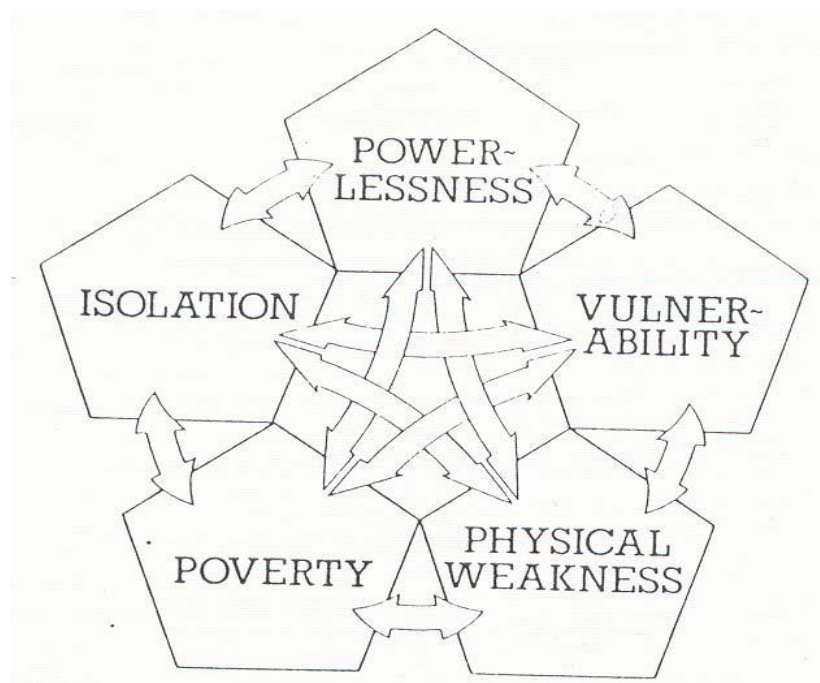
Influenced by the World Bank's conceptualizations of poverty, de Beer and Swanepoel (2000) provide useful conceptual understandings of poverty classified according to the level of disadvantage, namely: absolute and relative poverty. Absolute poverty suggests that, "an individual is so poor that his/her next meal may mean the difference between life and death" (World Bank's, 1980:2). Measurements of this kind of poverty are based on objective and quantifiable measurements. On the other hand, "relative poverty is an expression of the poverty of one entity in relation to another entity" (World Bank's, 1980:3). Simply put, the relative approach to poverty is based on the idea that people are poor in relation to the community or society in which they live. Reflecting on the vulnerability of black African Americans highlighted in Chapter one, "the concept relative poverty refers to people whose basic needs are met" (World Bank's, 1980. 3), but remain disadvantaged when compared to others in their social environment. Put differently, relative definitions of poverty are based on people's subjective views. For instance, Wilson and Ramphela (1989:14) cite a community member, Mrs. Witbooi, who defined poverty as, "not knowing where your next meal is going to come from, and always wondering when the council is going to put your furniture out and always praying that your husband must not lose his job, to me that is poverty." This position is consistent with the World Bank's assertion (cited in Daniels, 2012:29), that is, "to be poor is to be hungry, to lack shelter and clothing, to be sick and not be cared for, to be illiterate and not be schooled." Another subjective definition of poverty by a community member states, "don't ask me what is poverty because you have met it outside my house, look at the house and count the number of holes. Look at my utensils and clothes that I am wearing. Look at everything and write what you see. What you see is poverty" (cited in Lotter, 2011:20). In general terms, relative poverty is a situation when available income does not meet the subjective needs of an individual; thus personal necessities cannot be maintained (Odekon, 2006).

Based on the above discussion, it is clear that the concepts, definitions and measurements of poverty should be appropriate to the society in which they are applied (Studies in Poverty and

Inequality Institute, 2007). Furthermore, the definitions draw attention to the correlation between inadequate food intake, the lack of housing and access to reliable sources of income. According to Fowler (1997), control over commodities determines one's ability to influence decisions on how such commodities are generated and distributed. In other words, a lack of power and influence is another dimension of poverty. From this perspective, poverty can be defined as "... a human condition where people are unable to achieve essential functions in life, which in turn is due to their lack of access to and control over the commodities they require" (Fowler, 1997:4). Fowler provides a broader perspective of poverty which includes the quality of life, which is determined by a person's access to and control over commodities. These include tangible aspects such as food and income, and less tangible factors such as education and good health.

Generally, the definitions of poverty point to the fact that policy makers and planners define poverty differently from the people who are directly affected by it. Based on people's own perceptions of poverty, Chambers (1993) conceptualised poverty as a deprivation trap that leads to a vicious cycle of poverty.

Figure 3: The Deprivation Trap



Source: Chambers (1983)

The deprivation trap illustrated in Figure 3 above identifies five clusters of disadvantage: poverty, physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability and powerlessness. Each of these disadvantages serves to reinforce and aggravate the others; the overall effect is to “trap the poor in deprivation”, leading to a vicious cycle of poverty (Chambers, 1983; 112). Reflecting on this cycle, Burkey (1993) recognises that the root causes of poverty give rise to other socio-economic problems; that further give rise to other problems. This scenario is well-illustrated in a study conducted in Malawi by Kadzandira *et al.* (2002) among the poorest of the poor, who are affected by unemployment, HIV and AIDS, drought, and other related problems. The root causes of poverty lead to further problems such as increased school dropout rates, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, debt, violence, hunger and so forth. This is the kind of trend, according to Burkey (1993), which leads to a vicious cycle of poverty, which Chambers (1983) perceives as a deprivation trap. Seen in this way, the cycle of poverty, which results in the deprivation trap, reproduces itself from generation to generation. As a result, Dinitto and Dye (1983: 55); Hulme and Shepard (2003: 405) maintain that, “poverty is a way of life passed on from generation to generation in a self-perpetuating cycle. This culture of poverty involves not just a low income, but also attitudes of indifference, alienation and apathy”. Therefore, breaking the cycle of poverty primarily demands an analysis that appreciates that poverty is systemic. The next step would be to develop systems and policy reforms to transform society. This would entail a critical analysis of political, social, cultural, economic and psychological factors that perpetuate poverty (Swanepoel and de Beer, 2011).

2.3 MEASUREMENTS OF POVERTY

The preceding sections briefly alluded to quantitative and qualitative measures of poverty. Poverty measurements help policy makers to determine the wellbeing of society, the welfare of the members of society most vulnerable to economic conditions, the standard of living and the state of deprivation among citizens (Bhorat, Powell and Naidoo, 2004). According to Sen (1979:285), the measurement of poverty helps to identify, “who are the poor?”, and to construct a profile of the poor in a given society. In order to achieve this, Booyesen (2001) refers to two main approaches to the measurement of poverty; the monetary/utility approach and capability approach/social indicators.

The Monetary/Utility Approach

Woolard and Leibbrandt (1999) assert that the monetary approach to the identification and measurement of poverty is the most commonly used with its methodological elements derived from economic theory. It measures the percentage of the poor in the population by dividing the poor from the non-poor. This approach identifies poverty with a shortfall in consumption (or income) from some poverty line. The monetary approach is also referred to as the conventional approach to measuring poverty. As described by Booyesen (2002), it requires a single monetary indicator such as income or consumption to assess the extent of poverty. This requires that the minimum level (poverty line) or the cost of a bundle of goods be identified. A poverty line divides the population into two groups, that is, those below the poverty line, who are considered poor; and those above the poverty line, who are not considered poor (Woolard and Leibbrandt, 1999). A person living on less than “a dollar a day” is considered poor. As alluded to earlier, this model is based on absolute approaches to the measurement of poverty as it adopts the general poverty line for low income countries. The poverty gap is defined as the amount of monetary transfer that would be necessary to lift the income of a poor person to exactly the poverty line (Klasen, 1997:55).

Using income and consumption to determine poverty is a classic example of an absolute measure of poverty alluded to earlier. It is a convenient way of generating information that is essential to formulate policies and design poverty alleviation programmes. However, critics argue that a poverty line creates a bias towards the measurable and often overlooks the non-measurable aspects that determine the quality of life of any individual or community. As Chambers (1997:162 – 179) states, this restricts the analysis of poverty to what can be measured, creating reductionist realities (Chambers, 2000). It is also argued that using income and consumption to measure poverty excludes poor people’s narratives and experiences as they are defined by professionals such as economists, planners, academics and so forth, for their own convenience (de Beer and Swanepoel, 2000). This argument resonates with Mtapuri’s (2011) findings from a study conducted in Zimbabwe to depict the limitations of objective measurements of poverty based on universal truths. The participants in the study did not measure poverty solely in terms of money. They were also interested in available assets from the community’s standpoint. The study participants indicated that people who were considered well off possessed cattle, houses,

land, ox-drawn ploughs, gardens, wheelbarrows, and so forth. Interestingly televisions, telephones and cell phones were at the bottom of the list, as these modern inventions were not perceived as symbols of advantage and wealth.

By investigating the definitions and nature of poverty in Makause, together with the strategies used to secure livelihoods, this study also relies on local people's narratives as opposed to conventional definitions and approaches.

The Capability Approach and Social Indicators

According to Sen (1999), who pioneered the capability approach, development should be seen as the expansion of human capabilities rather than the maximisation of utility, or its proxy, money income. In this framework, poverty is defined as deprivation or failure to achieve certain minimal or basic capabilities, where 'basic capabilities' are 'the ability to satisfy certain crucially important functioning up to minimally adequate levels (Sen 1993 cited in Laderchi *et al.*, 2003:14). This assertion is in line with the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) view, which also defines human development in relation to the expansion of capabilities, while deprivation is defined as the lack of basic or necessary capabilities. The UNDP (2003) conceptualises both the extent and experiences of poverty by considering factors beyond income. It is in this context that the organisation recognised sustainable development as multidimensional, "encompassing economic, social, political, cultural and environmental dimensions" (UNDP, 2003:3). This approach is in contrast to limited views and measurements of poverty that are limited to monetary indicators (Sen, 1999). Rather, it is concerned with human development and the degree to which people's social needs are met. It relates to capabilities and functioning (Klasen, 1997:53).

The capability approach measures well-being by examining the ability to achieve certain states of 'doings' and 'beings' or so-called 'functionings', for example: the ability to be healthy, well-fed, well-educated, mobile, and well-integrated into a community. Monetary resources are considered only as a means to enhance well-being, rather than as the actual outcome of interest. Therefore, monetary resources remain instrumentally related to the achievement of well-being,

but do not exhaust the causal chain (Sen, 1992 cited in Klasen, 1997). Equally important is the relationship of people to the resources that they have and the commodities that they require to meet their basic sustenance requirements (Sen, 1999). The application of the framework suggests that a person is judged by their capabilities, that is to say, what they can or cannot do, or can or cannot be. It is noted that the resources that are required to achieve some minimum level of capability may vary over time and by community (Sen, 1999; Sen, 1985). In the same vein, Sen (1999) notes, that, the relationship between income and capabilities can vary greatly between communities and between individuals in the same community. Thus a numerical poverty line based on means such as income does not address variations in personal or social characteristics.

At the centre of the capabilities approach is the notion of a society that finds all individuals worthy of respect irrespective of their financial position in society. Ultimately, the approach rejects monetary income as a measure of well-being, and instead focuses on indicators related to the freedom to live a valued life. In light of this understanding, it can be argued that the South African Bill of Rights propagates this kind of freedom (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Based on this premise, Nussbaum (2002: 130) argues that it is necessary to produce a list of elements that would reflect what a complete good life for a human being would be. The UNDP, for example, has developed a composite indicator consisting of three variables considered essential elements of life: longevity, knowledge and decent living standards. These variables are measured by life expectancy at birth, adult literacy, and per capita income respectively; these are combined into a single index, known as the Human Development Index (HDI) (Willis, 2005). The South African Constitution (1996) also asserts that equality, human dignity, freedom and security are key elements of wellbeing.

The Alternative Approach

As noted in the preceding sections, conventional poverty estimates, including monetary and capability ones, have been criticised for being externally imposed and not taking into the subjective views of poor people themselves into account. The participatory approach pioneered by Chambers and others aims to change this condition in order to encourage participation in decision-making. It is argued that people should be able to reflect on what it means to be poor,

and the magnitude of poverty from their own perspective (Chambers, 1994; Chambers, 1997). Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), that is employed to encourage participation and critical reflection, is defined as “a growing family of approaches and methods to enable local people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act” (Chambers, 1994).

This approach to development applies a range of contextual data collection and data analysis methods which “attempt to understand poverty dimensions within the social, cultural, economic and political environment of a locality” (Booth, Holand, Hentschel and Lanjouw, 1998:52). The methods derive from and emphasise poor people’s ability to understand and analyse their own situation. A range of tools has been devised, including the use of focus groups; transect walk, participatory mapping and modelling, seasonal calendars, wealth and well-being ranking. The large variety of methods can be used flexibly, according to the situation. This contrasts with the other approaches, where a more rigid framework and methodology is involved (Chambers, 1994).

Linked to this line of thinking is the SLA, which integrates the notion of participation within the context of available assets (capabilities). To address poverty, it is essential to recognise people as citizens with a role to play in their own development (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003). It is against this background that Chambers (1995) argues that livelihoods are determined by people’s capabilities (skills, knowledge, attitude and health status); activities (things that people do); and the assets or resources people possess or can access (Chambers, 1995). Seen in this way, a livelihood is a combination of activities, assets (natural, physical, financial, human, and social), and access to these, and capabilities that are mediated by institutions and social relations to enable an individual or household to make a living (Satge, 2002). To this end, the SLA framework puts people at the centre of development. It recognises that the poor manage complex asset portfolios. Thus, the SLA seeks to understand the multiple livelihoods that people pursue and the changes occurring over time, the resources used in livelihood activities, the constraints faced and the available opportunities. Ultimately, this approach aims to enhance existing capabilities in order for local people to be better able to pursue their own livelihood strategies.

The next section focuses on practical poverty alleviation strategies in the South African context.

2.4 POVERTY ERADICATION POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The dawn of democracy in 1994 brought the possibility for South Africa to address poverty and inequality, to restore the dignity of its citizens and to ensure that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, as advocated in the Freedom Charter. In line with the democratic dispensation and the constitutional mandate that guarantees socio-economic rights, South Africa developed a new set of policies and programmes to redress past imbalances and improve people's quality of life. This has involved a meticulous effort to undo the social and economic relations of apartheid and create a society based on equity, non-racialism and non-sexism (MDG Report, 2010). In this political climate, a paradigm shift from social welfare to social development interventions was also endorsed. The latter approach is considered developmental as it seeks to empower the poor rather than create dependency through hand-outs (for example, food parcels) (Patel, 2005).

Consequently, a developmental approach asserts a comprehensive poverty alleviation strategy, which according to Mokate (2005: 16) aims to: (1) meet people's basic needs; (2) promote sustainable economic growth; (3) promote development and job creation; (4) develop human resources; (5) ensure safety and security; and (6) promote the transformation of a people-orientated democratic state. However, other scholars argue that the developmental state has shifted the responsibility for social development to poor communities in order to reduce social expenditure as part of neo-liberal capitalist-driven policies (Bond, 2006a). It is argued that respect for human rights is a necessary condition for socio-economic outcomes (UNDP, 2003). Meeting people's basic needs is linked to human rights as espoused in the South African Constitution. For instance the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) has the mandate to collect information from various government institutions regarding the implementation of specific programmes towards the realisation of the Bill of Rights (SAHRC, 2009).

This section reflects on three key development plans adopted in post-apartheid South Africa to address poverty, that is, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), GEAR and the latest National Development Plan (NDP). All the three interventions broadly aim to integrate social and economic development; however, there are ideological differences between them. A detailed discussion focusing on each intervention is presented below:

From the Reconstruction and Development Programme to the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy

The RDP was the first post-apartheid poverty alleviation strategy, adopted by the Government of National Unity. This integrated socio-economic policy framework sought to mobilise people and the country's resource to eradicate apartheid and segregation and build a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa and was therefore interventionist in its orientation. It primarily aimed to integrate economic growth and development in an ambitious and integrated socio-economic policy framework, through reconstruction and redistribution. The priorities of the RDP were primarily premised on the provision of social services to all South Africans (Adelzadeh, 1996). The RDP planned to address social and economic problems such as violence, the lack of housing, unemployment, and inadequate education and health care, and promote democracy and economic growth (African National Congress, 1994). The Programme's priorities included job creation, and the provision of land, housing, water, electricity, and transport, a clean and healthy environment, nutrition, healthcare and social welfare to all South Africans. It was envisaged that government investment in social and physical infrastructure would stimulate economic growth.

Policy shifts were noted in June 1996 when the government adopted the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy, a macroeconomic strategy that prioritised economic growth (Habib, 2013).

According to the Department of Finance (1996:1), the vision of the GEAR strategy was to promote,

a competitive fast growing economy which creates sufficient jobs for all work seekers; a redistribution of income and opportunities to benefit the poor; a society in which sound health, education and other services are available to all and an environment in which homes are secure and places of work are productive.

However, Habib (2013) observes that the key elements of the GEAR strategy, among others, were based on cuts in state expenditure, the privatisation of state assets and "liberalisation of foreign exchange and new allowances intended to attract foreign investment" (Habib, 2013: 80).

In the end, the focus on economic growth translated to the reduction of tariffs and the promotion of a strategy for export-led growth. The intention was to deliver higher rates of economic growth which would result in the creation of more jobs to eradicate poverty (Gathiram, 2005:124). While the need for redistribution was acknowledged, the emphasis was on accelerating economic growth in the hope that the poor would ultimately benefit from the “trickle-down effect” (2013: 77). The neoliberals believe that if the state leaves the economy in the hands of the private sector and market forces, an efficient economy will emerge (Shepherd and Robins, 2008:162).

However, the shift in economic policy exacerbated poverty and inequality due to “the growing problem of unemployment and a poor record of delivery in respect of some important areas of social and physical infrastructure” (Habib and Padayachee, 2000: 255). While the racial income and wealth gap is narrowing in some areas, this is misleading as it is limited to a few emerging ‘black’ bourgeoisie (Habib and Padayachee, 2000). Therefore, there is a widening gap between the rich and poor within “trickle down” economics (Habib, 2013). It is in this context that critics of GEAR such as Brown *et al.* (2001) and Isaacs *et al.* (2002) argue that the GEAR strategy contributed to joblessness as it prioritised accelerated trade liberalisation, encouraged privatisation of services and promoted the deregulation of markets. Based on this premise, Bond (2006a:221) maintains that the GEAR strategy should have been termed “Decline, Unemployment and Polarisation Economics (DUPE)”. In support of this view, Aliber (2002:15) maintains that GEAR is incompatible with goals of the RDP since it has little to offer in addressing poverty and inequality. He further argues that the GEAR strategy stresses the importance of social grants as opposed to job creation in addressing poverty, thus creating dependency. Other GEAR opponents such as the tripartite alliance and civil society argued that GEAR is ideologically different from the RDP since it resembles a domestic version of the World Bank’s Structural Adjustment Programme where economic growth takes precedence over other considerations.

Having realised the limitations of the current macroeconomic policy, the cabinet adopted the NDP in 2012 as a government plan aimed at achieving development goals by 2030. It is argued that the NDP acts as a vehicle to promote the government’s macroeconomic policy, primarily aimed at growing a globally competitive economy. It is a comprehensive development plan with

specific targets set for 2030. It outlines a new development vision for the country. This plan has not yet been implemented due to on-going ideological debates. Opponents of this plan, such as COSATU, argue that it has been influenced by neoliberal economic policies with no direct benefits for the poor (COSATU, 2013). It is further argued that the NDP is not sustainable as it fails to pursue the vision of re-industrialising the economy and is premised on undermining workers' rights. More than 400 pages of the NDP are restricted to quantitative measures of poverty, while overlooking people's quality of life (Coleman, 2013).

Against this policy background, the next section presents specific government strategies in the fight against poverty.

Contemporary Strategies and Approaches to Poverty Alleviation

The government's development agenda is located within international declarations and plans such as the MDGs. In September 2000, South Africa joined the international community in adopting the eight MDGs derived from the United Nations Millennium Declaration (MDG Report, 2010). Through the MDGs, the United Nations (UN) presents a blueprint for poverty reduction in developing countries, including South Africa. A brief overview of the eight goals is provided below:

Goal One: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. The proportion of people living in extreme poverty in developing countries should be reduced by at least half by 2015.

Goal Two: Achieve universal primary education. There should be substantial progress in primary education and universal primary education should be achieved in all countries by 2015. This target aims to ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike will complete a full course of primary schooling. Whilst the official South African MDG Report (2010) indicates that government is on course to achieve this goal, the reality on the ground indicates that children in informal settlements like Makause do not have access to primary education. A detailed discussion on children's access to education in Makause is presented in chapter four.

Goal Three: Promote gender equality and empowerment. This goal strives to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education not later than 2015.

Goal Four: Reduce child mortality. This goal strives to reduce the mortality rate of children under the age of five by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015.

Goal Five: Improve maternal health. The target is to reduce the maternal mortality rate by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015.

Goal Six: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. This goal seeks to reverse and curb the spread of HIV and AIDS by 2015 and halt the incidence of malaria and other major diseases. However the majority of poor urban communities do not have access to primary health care facilities, including access to reproductive health care services by women. South Africa will not be able to meet some of the targets related to this goal, especially the HIV and AIDS targets. The initial failure of the country's political leadership to respond appropriately to the HIV epidemic hampered efforts to prevent new infections. However, the new administration has adopted a comprehensive response to HIV and AIDS. For instance, 2.5 million people are receiving antiretroviral treatment in public health care facilities, thus reducing AIDS-related mortality (Sidibe, 2013). However, the social challenges related to HIV and AIDS go beyond putting people on antiretroviral treatment and will continue to affect future generations.

Goal Seven: Ensure environmental sustainability. This goal aims to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources. This goal has two related targets; firstly, to halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2015, and secondly, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. This goal is appropriate in the context of this study as it concerns the livelihoods of the poor who are usually located in informal settlements. South Africa is battling to meet the targets set in this goal as is evident in slow housing development, particularly in urbanised provinces like Gauteng. The country has not developed a comprehensive housing development strategy in the context of rapid urbanisation.

Goal Eight: Develop a global partnership for development. The target of this goal is to develop and further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system.

In order to monitor progress and developments in each country in implementing the MDGs, the UN expects countries to present a progress report; this should contain observable/measurable outcomes at the national level. South African reports for the 2010 MDG Report indicate that the country has already met some of the MDGs and is on track to meet others. However, critics of the MDGs such as the Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG) (2005), the Community Law Centre, the BLACK SASH, Peoples' Health Movement South Africa and the National Welfare Social Services and Development Forum (2010) have warned that the numerical/statistical indicators of MDGs should not be seen as ends in themselves. Instead, the EMG encourages practitioners to consider the meaningful contribution that states are making to changing people's quality of life. This is very applicable in SA where the latest Census (2011) has confirmed growing inequality between the 'rich' and 'poor'; the country's MDG reports overlook this stark reality. While South Africa is the richest African economy in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it remains "one of the most unequal societies in the world" (Satgar and Williams, 2008: 71).

In support of this view, the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLEC) (2005:5) acknowledges that MDGs are an important step forward in fighting poverty but argues that meeting these goals will require more action from the government. The multidimensional nature of poverty in South Africa, with inordinately its high unemployment rates and the highest Gini coefficient in the world require a unique approach. It is further argued that MDGs lack the accountability mechanisms provided by international human rights instruments. Similarly, Bond (2006b) perceives the MDGs as an unnecessary distraction. He asserts that the MDGs stall genuine engagement with real actors who are committed to progressive social change. Thus, the MDGs are inadequate in addressing context-specific grassroots development since they are based on universal realities. NEDLEC also regards MDGs as a reformist agenda that will not empower the poor.

The MDGs put human development, poverty, and people and their lives at the centre of the global development agenda for the new millennium. Despite their limitations, these goals are not

merely aspirations but provide a framework for accountability. Furthermore, they are not restricted to outcomes but form a compact that holds poor and rich governments accountable for opening their markets, providing more aid and debt relief and transforming technology. However these goals are unlikely to be met unless there are fundamental changes in how government and multilateral institutions operate as well as the reallocation of public resources to health and female education, stronger political commitment from government, stronger resources for poverty eradication programmes, better prioritisation of health expenditure and a clear policy focus (NEDLEC, 2005, 6).

The South African government has developed a number of programmes to enhance the livelihoods of the poor. The key programme is based on social grants. According to the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) (2012), the social security system provides social grants to millions of beneficiaries. Social grants are the most reliable and predictable source of income for poor households, thus making this a successful social security programme in the South African context. Frye (2006) and Aliber (2002) note that the success of social grants as a key strategy in poverty alleviation is based on the following advantages:

- Simplicity of directing money into poor households;
- Benefits of reliability of income;
- Developmental impact in terms of human nutrition and health,
- Promoting job search, and
- Promoting social and community capital.

Social grants constitute 3.4 percent of GDP (Development Indicators Report, 2013). There would undoubtedly be a higher poverty headcount index in the absence of this social security programme, resulting in the elderly and children living in extreme poverty. The Department of Social Development (DSD) (1997) states that social security nets create an enabling environment for poor households to provide adequate care for their members, especially children and those who are vulnerable. When such programmes are combined with capacity building, people can be released from the poverty trap.

The main social grants are the: Old Age grant; War Veteran’s grant; Disability grant; Grant in-Aid; Child Support grant; Foster Child grant; and Care Dependency grant. Table 1 illustrates that approximately 16,018,967 South Africans were recipients of social grants in 2012.

Table 1: Number of Social Grants Recipients in 2012

Type of grant	Amount by April 2012	Number of recipients by December 2012
Old Age grant	ZAR1,200	2, 838, 621
War Veteran’s grant	ZAR1,200	606
Disability grant	ZAR1,200	1, 180, 063
Grant in-Aid	ZAR280	71,629
Child Support grant	ZAR2,90	119, 216
Foster Child grant	ZAR770	504, 893
Care Dependency grant	ZAR1200	11, 303, 939
Total		16, 018, 967

Source: www.sassa.gov.za

Furthermore, the DSD has also implemented the Poverty Relief Programme encompassing a wide range of social and income generating projects. Government has established other broad poverty programmes to assist the poor to access health care services and education. The key programmes are the National Health Act No. 61 of 2003 that provides for free primary health to all citizens including the treatment of chronic diseases and HIV and AIDS and the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996, which amongst other things makes school attendance compulsory for learners between the ages of seven and 15 years and provides for fee free schools which accommodate 40 percent of public school learners nationally in 13,853 schools. The government has also made provision for learners from poor households to be exempted from the payment of school fees in fee paying schools. Government has introduced the school nutrition programme and there is provision for free scholar transport to assist poor learners in rural areas and informal settlements (Lemmer and van Wyk, 2010:53). All these programmes have been established to

ensure that children from poor households are not limited by their socio-economic conditions and can use education to escape the cycle of poverty.

Various public works programmes such as Community-Based Public Works, Working for Water and Land Care were introduced in South Africa in the mid and late 1990s. These were amalgamated under a single umbrella, namely, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), which currently represents the government's primary and virtually all-inclusive response to poverty reduction in the area of public works. It is a short to medium-term national programme covering all spheres of government and state-owned enterprises, and aims to utilise public sector budgets to alleviate unemployment. It also seeks to mobilise private sector funding, as well as shift industry approaches to goods and services beyond the programme (Public Service Commission, 2007). The programme seeks to create 4.5 million work opportunities by 2014 through the promotion of social services such as home-based care (HBC) and early childhood development (ECD) centres. These programmes rely on volunteers who are paid stipends which provide some livelihoods support (Development Indicators, 2013). For most volunteers these stipends are their only source of income and they assist them to escape the deprivation trap. However, Willis' (2005) analysis implies that the neo-liberal agenda has shifted the responsibility for care to communities. Despite these challenges, the EPWP partially contributes to the upliftment of the poor. To date, the programme has created more than three million job opportunities (Department of Public Works, 2013).

As part of the development agenda, the government also promotes a subsidised housing scheme. The programme is directed at redressing landlessness and joblessness which has its roots in the process of dispossession, the 1913 Land Act and subsequent apartheid policies (Sexwale, 2013). Section 26 (1) of the South African Constitution states that everyone has the right to access adequate housing. Enjoyment of this right should not be subject to any form of discrimination. In order to realise this constitutional mandate, the Department of Human Settlements has developed a comprehensive policy framework premised on the provision of housing to the poor, better known as RDP houses. The primary legislative framework that guides government's housing strategy includes: the 1995 White Paper on new housing policy and strategy; the Housing Act 107 of 1997 which repeals all apartheid discriminatory laws relating to housing; and the Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997 which provides security of tenure and

protection from arbitrary evictions for landless people and lays down proper processes to deal with unlawful occupiers without compromising their dignity. The Act pays special attention to vulnerable groups and criminalises evictions without a court order. Housing delivery to the poorest of the poor, many of whom live in or around informal settlements, remains the main focus of the Department's housing delivery strategy. Chapter 13 of the National Housing Code sets out rules for the in-situ upgrading of informal settlements. Central to the Code is recognition that housing development should take place where people are located (Department of Human Settlements, 2009). Linked to this programme is the government's Breaking New Ground (BNG) policy that was launched in 2004. This specifically aims to eradicate informal dwellings by developing decent houses. The programme is acknowledged as one of the most expansive housing programmes in the post-apartheid period; it has delivered more subsidised houses than in any other country in the world (MDG Report, 2010:95). It is estimated that this programme has delivered 3.3 million houses at a cost of R85 000 each since 1994, despite the delivery of 3.3 million houses, there is still a backlog of 2.1 million (Sexwale, 2013).

The programme commits the government to improve informal settlements and provide housing to the homeless; broaden the range of housing finance; ensure minimum standards for housing provision and ensure the attainment of Goal 7 of MDGs, that is, environmental sustainability (Department of Housing, 2004). However, Huchzermeyer (2000) contends that the challenge in South African housing policy is the failure to embrace community-based development. As a result, the interventions are not contextualised to the needs of local people, the poorest of the poor and squatters. 'Red tape' and bureaucracy still characterise housing development; hence the ongoing dispute between landless people and the government. This is despite the politically correct language used in the policy framework.

Linked to the government subsidised housing scheme, each local municipality is compelled to provide individual households with free basic services which include 6kl water per household and a basic sewer of 6kl per household per month. Indigent households are provided with additional free basic water of 3kl per household and an additional free basic sewer service of 3kl per household per month (Gungubele, 2013). Informal settlements are provided with communal chemical toilets, free basic electricity of 100kwh per month, and free communal refuse collection once a week. It is therefore evident that access to housing provides residents with other benefits.

Indeed housing development provides people with basic services such as electricity, water, sanitation, refuse removal and a physical address (Lotter, 2011:89; Hague *et al.*, 2011: 193) These basic necessities are recognised as part of the socio-economic rights enshrined in the South African Constitution. Furthermore, Hague *et al* (2011:193) contend that housing development provides people with employment (although very limited in South Africa due to the tendering process) and a formal address enables them to contribute to local tax and promotes local economic development (LED).

Developmental local government relies on the LED strategy to push back the frontiers of poverty. This strategy aims to strengthen the local economy at the municipal level. LED promotes anti-poverty strategies. This is in line with the principal responsibilities of the municipality, which are to create a regulatory framework and ensure access to municipal services, employment creation, security and protection from crime and natural disasters, and coordination and integration (Rogerson, 2007). LED is critical at the municipal level as it contributes to poverty alleviation. According to van Zyl (1994:4) the process of economic development of an area includes:

- A sustained improvement in people's quality of life;
- Sustained reduction of poverty levels;
- Structural transformation of the society in terms of politics;
- A culture and economy which lead to greater productivity, income and choices for people; and finally;
- Modernisation of the economy.

A fundamental criticism of LED as a government strategy is that it promotes the neo-liberal agenda of GEAR at a micro-scale. This is observed in the promotion of SMMEs as key in poverty alleviation within the local government sphere. Critics argue that this kind of development is not sustainable since the demand-side could suffer if every poor person were to become a business owner (Haughton, 2002).

2.5 SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS APPROACH

As indicated in the previous section, the SLA is used to guide this study. The approach, which was developed by the Department for International Development (DFID), concerns itself with the “creation of livelihood opportunities and strategies of poor and excluded people” (Neefjes, 2000: 91). The SLA is adopted since it is a holistic, people-centred approach that recognises that poor people are not just passive recipients of development, but have a sense of agency to define their own development agenda. It further promotes participation (DFID, 1999) to ensure sustainable development, which is defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland Report cited in UNDP, 2003: 2). Ultimately, the SLA puts people at the centre of development to achieve the goal of sustainable development. It recognises that the poor are the managers of complex asset portfolios. It further seeks to understand the multiple livelihoods that people pursue and the changes occurring over time, the resources used in livelihood activities, the constraints faced and available opportunities. The approach aims to build the capacity of local people in order for them to be better able to pursue their own livelihood strategies. The SLA requires action to enhance people’s participation in devising their livelihood intervention options and adopting people-centred strategies; raise the human capital status of households and communities; combat the devastating the impact of HIV and AIDS epidemic; promote formal and informal employment; and ensure appropriate utilisation of natural resources (UNDP, 2001).

The Core Principles of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

According to DFID (1999:7) a programme which is oriented toward poverty reduction activities should possess the following core elements:

- **People-centred:** This puts people at the centre of development whilst using their strengths and assets. Hence, it is a strengths-based approach to development as opposed to focusing on people’s weaknesses and deficits (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003; McKnight and Kretzman, 1993).
- **Responsive and participatory:** Participation is at the heart of community development. Genuine participation requires active community involvement in all stages of a

community project, particularly in the decisions that directly affect them (Hogan, 2002). Partnerships can be formed with poor people and their organisations, as well as with the public and private sectors. Partnerships should be transparent agreements, based on shared goals. Goldman, Franks, Toner, Howlett, Kamuzara, Muhumuza, and Tamasane (2004:4) argue that it is important to understand the nature of the partnership and the real locus of power, as some interventions inhibit equal partnerships. This requires the identification of stakeholders and ensuring meaningful participation in development programmes. The inclusion of poor people and other traditionally excluded groups in priority setting and decision making is critical to ensure that limited public resources build on local knowledge and priorities, and in order to build commitment to change. However, sustaining inclusion and informed participation usually requires changing the rules in order to create space for people to debate issues and participate directly or indirectly in local and national priority setting, budget formation, and the delivery of basic services (World Bank, 2002).

- **Sustainability:** There are five key dimensions to sustainability: economic, institutional, social, environmental and resilient. All are important and a balance must be found between them (Neefjes, 2000).
- **Conducted in partnership:** Partnerships can be formed with poor people and their organisations, as well as with the public and private sector. Partnerships should be transparent agreements based on shared goals (Kadozo, 2009:44).
- **Empowerment:** This is a contested concept that means different things to different people. Scholars agree that empowerment is about expanding people's opportunities to make choices in life; that is, increasing people's autonomy to make decisions that affect their lives (Rowlands, 1995). The World Bank (2002) also maintains that empowerment is the expansion of freedom of choice and action. It means increasing one's authority and control over the resources and decisions that affect one's life. As people exercise real choice, they gain increased control over their lives. Poor people's choices are extremely limited due to a lack of assets and their powerlessness to negotiate better terms for themselves with a range of institutions, both formal and informal. The World Bank's definition of empowerment is consistent with Sen's (1999) conceptualisation of the capability approach. Empowerment is regarded as "the expansion of assets and

capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives” (World Bank, 2002:10). Access to information, inclusion and participation, accountability and local organisational capacity are considered the key components of empowerment (*Ibid.*).

Types of Sustainable Livelihoods Assets

There is recognition within the SLA that both households and individuals have strengths and assets irrespective of the socio-economic challenges that they are confronted with (Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002; Carney, 1998). The five different assets are as follows:

- Human capital: includes skills, knowledge and ability to labour.
- Social capital: this is about social relationships and social networks of support such as church groups, community stokvels or saving clubs, burial societies, traders’ association and income generating groups, political groups, and so forth. These are social resources on which people draw in pursuit of livelihoods or which they can rely on in times of crisis for support (Tacoli, 1999: 8).
- Natural capital: land and natural resources, including resources such as water, firewood, grazing, and building materials.
- Physical capital: physical infrastructure such as machinery, buildings, equipment, roads, etc.
- Financial capital: access to finance, including wages, savings, pensions, credit and items that can be sold such as cattle, cars, furniture and recyclable materials, providing households with livelihood options. This refers to almost anything that can immediately be converted to cash. In the South African context this includes access to social grants such as the child support grant and old age pension.

Scoones (1998) maintains that more assets/capitals for sustainable livelihoods exist than the five noted above. While he mentions 'political capital' as a sixth asset, he also argues that there are many others.

Poor People's Livelihood Strategies

The urban poor engage in a range of survival strategies in order to mitigate the impact of poverty whilst sustaining their livelihoods. Unlike people who depend on the formal sector, where a job is a source of livelihood, poor people's livelihoods in the informal sector are diverse and often complex (Philips, 2005). Different household members find different sources of food, cash and support. Their livelihood strategies involve "many things: to sniff around and look for opportunities, to diversify by adding enterprise and to multiply activities and relationships" (Chambers, 1997:165). Many of these activities are not classified as 'employment' in the formal sense. Nevertheless, Devey, Skinner, and Valodia (2006) recognise that the informal economy has grown both in size and importance. Increasingly, people who are socially and economically marginalised are actively involved in building their own businesses in the informal economy. For instance, according to May, (2012:6) the rigid requirements of the formal economy have compelled millions of poor South Africans to establish stokvels. These are safety nets that provide financial security and social wellbeing. The evidence suggests that about 11,400,400 people belong to 8,118,307 stokvels in South Africa and that they collectively save R448 billion a year. These are people considered non-bankable or high risk by conventional financial institutions. The research further reveals that Gauteng has the highest (24 percent) stokvel membership, followed by Limpopo (20 percent), North West (11 percent) and KwaZulu-Natal (14 percent) which account for 70 percent of all stokvels and 69 percent of the stokvel population. The provinces with the lowest number of stokvels are Western Cape at 6 percent, Mpumalanga with 7 percent, and Eastern Cape and Free State both at 8 percent (May, 2012:6). Unlike conventional banks, the entry requirements of stokvels are flexible as they are determined by members. Investing in alternative livelihoods such as stokvels provides the poor with obvious economic benefits. It is in this context that some commentators have pointed out the significant decline of the formal sector of the economy.

Chambers (1997) notes, that, diversifying income sources is important to the urban poor in order to reduce risks and uncertainty. Tacoli (2002) is of the view that the location of an informal settlement and the activities that take place in the neighbourhood (mining, manufacturing and agriculture) or surrounding areas, and the assets or resources people possess or can access

determine the nature and the extent of survival strategies to sustain livelihoods. Other factors may include transport availability and costs.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that poverty is a complex phenomenon which cannot be confined to conventional definitions. The various definitions and measurements of poverty illustrate its subjective nature. Linked to international and national debates, this chapter provided an analysis of how government policies have evolved from the RDP to GEAR to the latest NDP. The fundamental differences between the three plans to address poverty and underdevelopment were noted. Major strategies that government relies on to address poverty were also discussed. Finally, the conceptual understandings that will be used to frame the argument in the analysis and discussion section of this dissertation were presented.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the methodological aspects of the study that employed a qualitative design. Data were collected in the Makause community during June and November 2012. Follow-up interviews were conducted March 2013 to address knowledge gaps. The aim was to engage community members to develop subjective definitions of poverty based on their daily experiences as well as reflecting on survival strategies. This chapter presents the research design adopted in the study, including the data collection methods that were utilised to gather information. It explains the processes followed to gain community entry, discusses the sampling methods and presents the selected sample of research participants. It also highlights some of the challenges experienced during data collection and concludes with the limitations of the study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is located within the interpretivist paradigm, which is exploratory (Neuman, 2006). This paradigm is relevant in a study of this nature because it is primarily interested in people's subjective views. The study employs qualitative methodological approaches with a view to exploring and understanding poverty and the survival strategies adopted by Makause community members. Creswell (2013:45) maintains that qualitative research is a process of understanding that is based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. Exploratory research seeks to establish how people cope in the setting in question, what meaning they give to their actions and what issues concern them. Furthermore, Babbie and Mouton (2006:72) state that, "ultimately, scientific inquiry comes down to making observations and interpreting what you have observed."

This research study is based on fieldwork consisting of in-depth individual interviews with 12 research participants, and two focus group discussions (FGDs) consisting of 10 participants each.

3.3 SAMPLING METHOD, SAMPLE AND SAMPLE SIZE

Prior to commencing with data collection, the researcher had to gain entry into the community through negotiations with community leaders. This helped the researcher to gather basic information beforehand about the community of Makaue since he was not familiar with the study area. This assisted the piloting of the research guide and in building trust and cooperation in the community. Creswell (2013:57) supports this approach to community work by maintaining that it is necessary to negotiate access at the beginning of the study. Furthermore, this provided an opportunity to recruit research participants with the assistance of Makaue Community Development Forum (MACODEFO). A separate meeting was arranged with a community leader who voluntarily agreed to coordinate appointments for individual interviews. This community leader accompanied the researcher around the community and visited prospective participants to explain the aims and objectives of the research, and secured interview appointments and times to pilot the research guide.

A pilot study offers an opportunity to test the interview guide with the kind of participants that will be used in the actual research study and is usually informal, with few participants. The pre-test schedule contains the same questions and is administered to people with the same characteristics as those that will participate in the research study (de Vos Strydom, Fouche, and Delport, 2006:331). The interview guide was pre-tested with a few participants from the community. The pilot study enabled the researcher to establish a relationship and create a rapport with the community. It also helped the researcher to estimate the time the interviews would take and identify possible challenges, gaps and areas of emphasis during probes. All the identified concerns were taken into cognisance during the actual data collection. The pilot test group discussion lasted more than two hours. It confirmed the relevance of the research guide as there was no need to modify the set of questions.

A sample of 32 participants, which consisted of community members and an EMM official, was selected from the local community using purposive sampling. Participants from diverse backgrounds were selected in order to avoid biasness and to ensure a truly representative sample. Gender balance, diverse political affiliation, age group, economic diversity and social status were taken into consideration as reflected in the profiles of participants presented in chapter four.

Patton (1990) argues that the aims of the research largely determine the research participants to be selected in a purposive sample. A purposive sample allows a researcher to select information-rich cases. The author further argues that, “the information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research” (p.169). The researcher selected the research participants with the assistance of the MACODEFO. As noted to earlier, a local field worker who is familiar with the community was appointed as the research assistant; he escorted the researcher around the community. The small sample size of 32 is adequate in a qualitative study of this nature since the objectives are not concerned with the generalisation of the findings (Babbie, and Mouton, 2010). Rather, they employ in-depth discussions which are resource-intensive (Hawtin, and Percy-Smith, 2007).

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

As noted earlier, this is a qualitative research study that is exploratory in nature. It utilised a triangulation of data collection methods to ascertain local people’s subjective views on poverty and their survival strategies. Mouton and Marais (1996: 91) observe that, “Denzin coined the term triangulation to refer to the use of multiple methods of data collection.” It is argued that a combination or triangulation of data collection methods is the most appropriate way to ensure reliability (Babbie and Mouton, 2010; de Vos *et al.*, 2006). This procedure allows the researcher to easily validate and cross check findings as each data source has its own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, triangulation allows the strengths of one procedure to compensate for the weaknesses of others. The data collection methods relied on a participatory research methodology working with two FGDs to develop local poverty indices. In this context, the researcher employed multiple data gathering techniques rather than relying on a single technique in order to address some the disadvantages associated with a single technique. The next section provides an outline of what each method entailed.

Documentary Review

A documentary review provided the researcher with empirical evidence of the phenomenon under study. The collected documents were compared with data gathered by means of other techniques for consistency. Documentary analysis was undertaken at various stages during the

data collection process. As de Vos *et al.* (2006:317) suggest, the researcher requested and analysed the following key MACODEFO documents: (i) meeting agendas, (ii) minutes of meetings, (iii) financial records such as household budgets and community projects' financial statements, (iv) progress reports and (v) official correspondence with various stakeholders including but not limited to, affidavits and letters. Furthermore, official documents directly related to the community of Makause were sourced from the EMM office. All these documents contributed to a better understanding of the community and the role played by the EMM with regard to service provision. The reliability of the documents was compared with the data collected through the face-to-face interviews and FGDs. All the documents collected were verified in terms of their date and contents, as Babbie and Mouton (2006:120) suggest.

The advantages of a documentary study are that it is relatively cost-effective and more affordable than interviews and FGDs. Furthermore, it is non-reactive compared with other methods of data collection where participants are aware that they are being 'studied'; and the contents of documents are not affected by the activities of the researcher (de Vos *et al.*, 2006: 319). The limitation of documentary study, particularly reports or statistical records, is that they are often incomplete, which means that there are gaps in the database that cannot be filled in any other way (de Vos *et al.*, 2006:318). This was the case in Makause, as some households did not keep records of their income and expenditure. Due to the high levels of crime in the area and fear of fires and floods, records were not kept in the MACODEFO office; instead they were kept at home by different MACODEFO members.

Participant Observation

The purpose of using this technique was to gather information in the natural setting. Creswell (2013:166) defines observation as "the act of noting a phenomenon in the field setting through the five senses of the observer... you may watch (the) physical setting, participant's activities, interactions, conversations and your own behaviour". Babbie and Mouton (2006: 295) and de Vos *et al.* (2006:283) list the following advantages of participant observation: participants participate fully in the activities of the community; the researcher does not stand out as an outsider as he/she is forced to be familiar with the subject; by merely observing, the researcher will achieve the most objective experience of the community; participant observation provides a

comprehensive perspective of the problem under investigation as it can be done anywhere; and data are gathered directly and are never retrospective.

De Vos *et al.* (2006:285) warn researchers against the following disadvantages associated with this data collection method: there is great potential to inhibit the natural response of the respondents; the researcher is exposed to a limited experience of the community in which the research takes place; gathered data can seldom be quantified because of the small number of participants normally used in studies of this nature; and data can easily be manipulated by the researcher, thus creating problems with regard to validity which might compromise acceptance by the participants.

As part of this activity the researcher attended two community meetings and conducted one household observation. The first community meeting was in June 2012 and included the screening of a local documentary in an open community meeting space, hosted by MACODEFO. This was filmed during the infamous relocation by the EMM. The community was also shown similar documentaries filmed by the Abahlali basemjondolo network. This activity concluded with a public discussion facilitated by community leaders. This provided essential information with regard to the relocation, the broad socio-economic challenges facing the community and the intervention strategies developed in response to these challenges. It was observed that this was part of a mobilisation strategy developed by community leaders in light of further threats of relocations by the EMM. The community events enabled the researcher to identify key role players, major developmental issues and the level of social cohesion in the community.

In July 2013 the researcher observed the MACODEFO executive meeting. This was a regular meeting which discussed a range of issues such as the maintenance of water taps which were vandalised by criminals, community safety, and complaints about the clinic, funding for crèches and so forth. After the meeting the researcher was accompanied by the research assistant to conduct a household observation. The household under study belonged to a 32 year old single mother with two children, working as a domestic worker in Germiston. The main reason for the visit was to observe people in a natural setting whilst they continued with their daily life.

During the sessions, detailed notes were made of empirical observations and interpretations of the phenomena under investigation. This allowed for data to be gathered that could not easily be obtained through interviews.

In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews based on the research guide were conducted in October 2012 with 12 research participants. The purpose of using face-to-face interviews was to provide space for individual interviewees to share their personal experience of poverty and survival strategies using the available assets at their disposal. This provided interviewees with the opportunity to participate freely, without fear of intimidation by a large group. Interviewees had the option to remain anonymous and most chose to take this route.

This data collection method is best suited to qualitative research since it allows for interaction between the researcher and the participants. It also allows participants to use their own words and phrases to share their experiences without being limited by structured questions (Struwig and Stead, 2001:18), thus enabling a fruitful conversation between the researcher and the participant. This is appropriate in an exploratory study of this nature, where the researcher had little insight into the everyday realities of the community. Using an interview guide, the researcher gathered evidence from research participants in the comfort of their own homes. The interviews provided the researcher with a narrative account of their household survival strategies; income and available household assets. As much as the researcher tried to focus on these key research questions, the process was very interactive as interviewees provided comprehensive responses. To increase the level of participation, all the interviews were conducted in the local language.

The main advantage of using face-to-face interviews is the ability to gather large amounts of in-depth data quickly and effectively in a natural setting (de Vos *et al.*, 2006:299). Where necessary, the researcher posed probing questions in order to solicit in-depth information depending on the personal experience, interests and level of education of the research participant. This method was helpful in achieving the main aims of this study. Unlike structured interviews, which are rigid (de Vos *et al.*, 2006:299), research guides are flexible and allow for probing, enabling elucidation of vague and unclear responses (de Vos *et al.*, 2006:299).

During face-to-face interviews, researchers need to guard against common limitations that are directly associated with this method of data collection. Some participants may share limited information with the researcher, particularly relating to salary and additional sources of income. Furthermore, the researcher needs to ensure that the interviews do not become therapeutic sessions used to express personal problems and unhappiness with community dynamics (de Vos *et al.*, 2006:299).

Focus group discussions

Two separate FGDs discussion were facilitated in November 2012 on different days, with 10 participants in each group. The first FGD focused on developing local poverty indices and the second focused on drawing a social map. Socio-economic challenges were discussed in both FGDs. However it should be noted that the process was very generic; as a result there was overlap in the FGDs in some instances. The FGDs took approximately two hours with a short break of 10 minutes after the first hour. As with the face-to-face interviews, an interview guide was used to facilitate the FGDs to solicit information from the research participants in a group context. The FGDs provided an opportunity for collective views, whereas individual interviews were limited to individual opinions. The FGDs focused on consensus building especially on key issues such as the conceptualisation of poverty at community level, social mapping, local poverty indices and socio-economic challenges.

The participants were also asked to recall different periods, events and activities that shaped their community. The researcher used the FGDs to confirm some of the issues picked up by the researcher during observation or one-on-one interviews. On the basis of these questions participants provided a range of responses which were later discussed by the FGDs and consensus was reached on the answer. All the responses were recorded on a flip chart and participatory assessment techniques such as voting and ranking were used to reach consensus.

However in some instances it was difficult to reach consensus. Also interesting to note, were the sharp contradictions expressed by participants when developing local poverty indices; hence the group decided to use terms such as declining poor and improving poor.

These techniques are based on a reversal of learning as advocated by the SLA. They allow the researcher to learn directly from the participants without preconceived ideas about the content of the data that will be collected; emphasise the sharing of information and ideas between the participants and between participants and the researcher; and seek diversity. Instead of seeking averages, the focus is on identifying contradictions and anomalies, and on visual rather than verbal communication. This facilitates participation by semi-literate group members (Weyers, 2001:129–131). A relaxed atmosphere was created, where participants shared stories, jokes and future aspirations whilst being sensitive to the local culture.

As de Vos *et al.* (2006:301-312); Welman, Kruger, and Mitchell (2005:203 - 204) and Babbie and Mouton (2006: 292) argue, the main advantages of FGDs are: the ability to collect large amount of data and observe a large amount of interaction within a short time; the fact that participants do not discriminate against each other (for instance, in both FGDs there were a few foreign migrants; youth and women); a high level of group interaction which helps to fill the gaps (for instance all the participants benefited from an update provided by the community leader on the current court case); they provide the opportunity for participants to learn from one another; allow for group synergy, that provides the space and potential to uncover important constructs which may be lost with individually generated data; create a fuller understanding of the socio-economic challenges and livelihood strategies rather than focusing on individual households; stimulate the spontaneous exchange of ideas, thoughts and attitudes in the 'security of being in a crowd'; and allow multiple viewpoints or responses to be obtained in a shorter period of time than individual interviews. The FGDs also enabled the researcher to test and verify some of the information gathered during observation and face-to-face interviews.

Babbie and Mouton (2006: 292) and de Vos *et al.* (2006:312) assert that FGDs can be costly and require a researcher skilled in group processes to encourage passive participants and protect them from undue influence or being inhibited by active participants; the researcher should also ensure that all issues raised are discussed in a respectful manner without social posturing. The researcher noted reluctance on the part of some participants to disclose their source of income. However participants were encouraged to write down their income for submission to the researcher. Fortunately all participants were able to read and write.

All the participants were friendly and respectful without being defensive and generated concentrated data on the topic of interest. The researcher also observed how different groups responded to different questions, depending on their interest and knowledge. For example, the researcher observed that women contributed more than men during the discussion on local poverty indices, even though there were slightly fewer women participants.

Social Mapping

Another technique used during the FGDs was social mapping. Social maps were used to show critical information about the community such as natural resources, fields and land usage, the spatial arrangement of a house/use of space by different groups, where people live/population density, water taps, communal space, social services and amenities/markets and the taxi rank (Theis and Grady, 1991).

During the social mapping exercise 10 participants were split into three groups (one group of four and two groups of three participants each). They were then asked to draw their social maps. Each group was given an opportunity to present. Thereafter, all participants had to collectively agree on a map that closely represented their reality. Through consensus building, one map was selected; however, members still added a few aspects that were missing. The social map provided valuable information which is sometimes taken for granted by the community.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

In the second phase, the researcher used deductive and inductive logic. Thematic analysis was used to compare and analyse the participants' different perspectives to identify similarities, differences, patterns and themes in order to make sense of the data collected, whilst at the same time identifying any inconsistencies and contradictions (Creswell, 2013:45-186). This information was then matched and compared with the research objectives and research questions. The literature on poverty and sustainable livelihoods was consulted to substantiate the research findings. In some instances, verbatim quotes from research participants were used to concretise the research. Strauss and Corbin (1990:68) recommend using actual phrases of the words of real people. In the researcher's view, this method of data analysis is the most appropriate to fulfil the

objectives of this study as it integrates different perspectives, taking the contextual specifications and uniqueness of each participant into consideration.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to data collection the researcher applied to the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)'s Ethics Committee for ethical clearance. The ethical clearance application included a full research proposal, with the interview guides and a copy of the informed consent form. During the data collection process, the researcher adhered to the ethical standards stipulated in UKZN's research ethics policy. The purpose of the research study and the rights of participants were explained, including their right to suffer no harm, self-determination, privacy, voluntary participation and the right to decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time (Creswell, 2006:57; Babbie and Mouton, 2006:520 and Neuman, 2006).

The researcher also assured the participants that their rights and privacy would be upheld, that their responses were confidential and that all necessary steps would be taken to avoid any harm. No false expectations were created that participants would benefit from this study, either directly or indirectly. The researcher explained to all participants that this was not an intervention study; however, once completed the community will be able to access the study and be at liberty to engage with its contents.

Confidentiality

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, participants' full names are not used. Pseudonyms were constructed in consultation with the research participants. The respondents were informed that their confidentiality is guaranteed and that their identity will remain anonymous. However in the context of FGDs, it was agreed that confidentiality is not possible and therefore participants agreed on ground rules which included the principle of shared confidentiality. This is in line with basic human rights principles and provides protection against stigma and social exclusion. To ensure confidentiality, participants were not asked to provide their identity document, name or residential address (Babbie and Mouton, 2006; Neuman, 2006).

Informed consent

No participant was coerced to participate in this study; participation was purely voluntary (Babbie and Mouton, 2006:521). In order to protect the integrity of the study, all participants were requested to sign a letter of consent. All did so and these were safely filed.

Reliability and validity

Hawtin and Percy-Smith (2007:128) argue that, “research results are reliable if there is a reasonable expectation that if someone else undertook the same investigation they would obtain similar results”. On the other hand, “validity considers data to be valid if it measures what it purports to measure” (Hawtin and Percy-Smith, 2007: 129). Henning *et al.* (2004) recognise that these two concepts presuppose that people cannot change their minds. Unlike quantitative studies, a qualitative study is a social inquiry that is exploratory in nature (Babbie and Mouton, 2006); therefore there is room for people’s perspectives to keep shifting. It is in this context that Lincoln and Guba (cited in de Vos *et al.*, 2006) argue that since qualitative studies are not concerned with generalisations, they are less concerned with the reliability and validity of data. Nonetheless, every attempt was made to adhere to the objectives of the study, guided by a clear research design and interview guides and the data collected were safely stored.

To ensure validity, the study presents a true account of the survival strategies and coping mechanisms employed by the Makause community. Furthermore, the researcher established mutual understanding and trust with the research participants. Qualitative studies are concerned with “trustworthiness, credibility, dependability and conformability” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 cited in Henning *et al.*, 2004:7). A dialogue with the community regarding the authenticity of the findings was carried out as suggested by Henning *et al.* (2004). To ensure the reliability and integrity of the data, the researcher collected the data himself.

3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study provide a clearly subjective account of the poverty and survival strategies of the research participants in Makause; however, as this is a qualitative study with a small sample of 32 respondents, the findings cannot be generalised.

During data collection, the researcher should have ideally engaged the community from conceptualisation to the implementation phase. However, this was not feasible due to time and financial constraints. The researcher explained to all participants that this was not an intervention strategy; however, once completed the community will have the opportunity to access the findings of the study as members of the public and are at liberty to engage with its content. No false expectations were created of the research process, directly or indirectly. The researcher hopes that the findings of this study will be used to strengthen sustainable livelihoods in Makause and elsewhere.

The following constraints were identified during the process of data collection: Initially, the researcher intended to interview the ward councillor and an official from the DSD, however this was not possible due to their busy schedules. The researcher could not source any official data from the EMM. This was a serious barrier as there was no documentation of the community profile and official statistics about the Makause population. Therefore the researcher had to rely on pockets of information collected by community leaders and various community groups in order to profile the community. Most of this information was validated during FGDs.

3.8 CONCLUSION

The qualitative research method used in this study enabled the researcher to listen to the words expressed by the participants during the face-to-face interview sessions and FGDs; he became engaged and gained a better understanding of local people's subjective views on poverty and the survival strategies employed by individual households. The voices of the poor urban households in Makause have shaped the outcome of this study. It is acknowledged that the methods utilised for a research study must be appropriate to the context and resources available in the community and that they should be sensitive to local conditions, culture and internal dynamics in order to achieve success and sustainability.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter three discussed the methods that were utilised in carrying out this study. This chapter integrates the empirical data with the analysis and discussion. As noted earlier, this study explores the subjective views of community members in relation to the definitions and nature of poverty in Makause, together with the strategies used to cope with the situation. Data collection methods consisted of documentary review, observations, individual interviews, two separate FGDs and participatory tools (social maps and ranking). The findings are presented in broad themes that emerged during data analysis. Therefore, this chapter seeks to address the study objectives by providing a subjective account of poverty and the survival strategies of the research participants in Makause. The discussion of the findings is divided into two chapters, four and five. Chapter four begins with the profile of the Makause community, followed by a discussion on the emerging themes related to the definitions and nature of poverty in the community. Chapter five focuses on the poverty indices based on people's subjective views. The analysis ends with a conclusion.

4.2 A PROFILE OF THE COMMUNITY AND RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

According to local residents, Makause was established as temporary shelter in the mid-1980s by retrenched migrant mine workers who had worked on the nearby mine. The settlement started with approximately 250 people in 1994 and increased to approximately 15,000⁵ people on 63 hectares of privately-owned land (MACODEFO, n.d.). Most workers came from other provinces and neighbouring countries such as Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland and Malawi. The South African mining industry is infamous for providing male-only hostel accommodation, which is linked to employment at the mine. Once retrenched, workers are forced to look for alternative

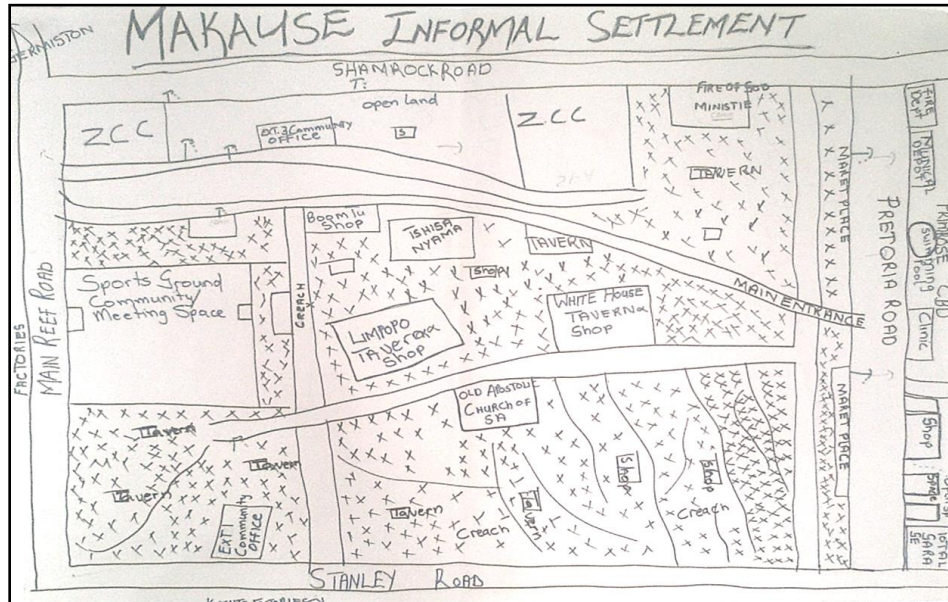
⁵ These numbers are based on estimates by community leaders as there are no official statistics relating to Makause. The EMM does not have any data as Makause is located on privately owned land.

accommodation with relatives or friends in nearby townships - in this case Katlehong, Tokoza and Vosloorus. These black African townships are often located far from job opportunities. The establishment of the Makause settlement was closely linked with the advent of democracy in South Africa. Residents took advantage of the transitional period and established the settlement in a former white area, strategically located near amenities, including shops and with access to transport and job opportunities. As Huchzermeyer (2000) observes, such factors guide poorer households in making locational decisions. Makause residents are able to walk to the nearby industrial area to look for work and also engage in various livelihood activities such as collecting recyclable material in the established suburbs. Due to its strategic location, Makause remains attractive to many job seekers in Ekurhuleni as well as those from outside Ekurhuleni. Therefore it is not surprising that residents have resisted relocation to alternative land, as they fear that they will lose their livelihoods. As noted in later sections, they have access to a continuum of livelihood strategies in Makause.

The Makause settlement is divided into three extensions: 1, 2 and 3. Extension 1 is located in the east of the Makause settlement, with access to the Pretoria Road which divides the settlement and Primrose. The resources and services in this extension include the taxi rank, a makeshift recycling centre, the sports ground which is used as a community meeting space and eight water taps serving about 7,000 residents. Extension 2 is located in the middle of Makause with access to Stanley Road, which links the settlement with the industrial area. There are nine water taps in this extension. It is argued by some residents that this is the most densely populated extension with 8,000 to 10,000 people, and it is regarded as very dangerous in terms of crime, especially at night. Extension 3 is located in the west of the Makause settlement, facing Germiston, with access to the Main Reef Road which leads to Germiston. It is estimated that 2,688 people reside in this section. The MACODEFO office is located here. There are seven water taps in this extension.

In the process of data collection, participants were given an opportunity to collectively draw a social map of their community. The crosses (X) in the diagram represent informal houses in the settlement of Makause.

Figure 4: Makause social map



Source: Field data (Ngonyama, 2013)

The photo provides a visual image of housing conditions in the informal settlement of Makause.

Image 1: Makause informal settlement



Source: Field data (Ngonyama, 2013)

The Research Participants

Table 2: A Summary profile of the research participants

Location		Gender		Education			Source of income			
		M	F	Matric	Secondary	Primary	Employed	Self employed	Social Grant	Other
Ext. 1	7	3	4	2	0	5	4	2	6	1
Ext. 2	11	6	5	3	4	4	4	7	6	0
Ext. 3	14	8	6	2	7	5	3	5	8	3
Total	32	18	14	7	11	14	11	14	22	4

Source: Field data

As noted in chapter three, 32 participants participated in this study recruited from the three extensions in Makause. Table 2 describes the 32 participants in terms of their various socio-economic characteristics. These variables were deduced from emerging data and were deemed necessary in a study of this nature. It was established that socio-economic characteristics influence how people perceive poverty. For instance, it emerged from the findings that a 23 year old single male with Matric perceives poverty differently from a 65 year old male with primary education.

It was reported that 22 of the 32 participants receive social grants. It is common practice for poor people to access social grants while employed or self-employed; hence the overlap with regard to the source of income. This indicates that being employed in their context does not necessarily mean that Makause residents can afford to secure livelihoods. To a certain extent, they are still vulnerable to poverty. It should also be noted that four of the participants referred to as ‘other’ are people with no stable source of income. They survive on casual work and rely on the support of family, friends and charitable organisations.

Table 3 provides a detailed profile of the 12 participants who participated in the in-depth interviews. Most of the participants were not comfortable with their names being divulged. The researcher therefore allocated a unique number to each participant as a pseudonym.

Table 3: A profile of the interviewed participants

Pseudonym	Location	Gender	Age	Level of education	Marital Status	Source of Income
Participant # 1	3	M	40	Secondary	Married	Community organiser
Participant # 2	2	M	42	Secondary	Married	Factory
Participant # 3	3	F	56	Primary	Widow	Unemployed
Participant # 4	2	M	29	Matric	Single	Recycling
Participant # 5	1	F	60	Primary	Single	Business
Participant # 6	2	F	50	Primary	Single	Domestic worker
Participant # 7	1	M	23	Matric	Single	EPWP
Participant # 8	3	M	65	Primary	Widower	Pensioner
Participant # 9	3	F	51	Primary	Married	Self employed
Participant # 10	3	M	38	Secondary	Married	Factory
Participant # 11	2	M	42	Matric	Married	Self employed
Participant # 12	3	F	32	Secondary	Married	Domestic worker

Source: Field data

Working on the principles of constant comparison, saturation of themes and simultaneous collection and analysis of data, the researcher collected narratives from the 12 research participants in Makause. The participants were all residents of Makause and their ages ranged from 23 to 65 years. The lowest level of education was primary school with Matric being the highest level of education.

By building a relationship of trust with the research participants, the researcher created an environment that encouraged all the participants to communicate their own interpretation of poverty in Makause based on their personal experience. What struck the researcher were the diverse responses pertaining to the definition of poverty and the survival strategies employed by individual households in order to overcome poverty. For instance some walked to work in the morning and used public transport only in the afternoon, whereas others used the child support grant to set up income generating activities.

Although all the participants were seriously concerned about local underdevelopment none indicated any willingness to be relocated or regretted staying in Makause. Instead, they all wanted housing development in Makause and were hopeful about the future. To help contextualise the study findings, a brief biographical profile of each research participant is presented below.

Participant #1

The first participant is a 40 year-old male from extension 3. He has secondary education and paralegal training. He originally came from around EMM to settle in Makause in pursuit of independence from his family. He is a community leader and refers to himself as a fulltime community organiser. He does not have a reliable source of income and survives on financial support from partner organisations. He stays with his wife who is a domestic worker and they have three children. On average their joint income is R2, 500.00 per month.

Participant #2

The second participant is a 42 year-old male from extension 2. He has secondary education. He is employed as an assistant car mechanic in Germiston. He stays with his wife and two children who attend school in Edenvale. He is one of the few people with a stable job amongst the research participants. His total income is R3, 000.00 per month. His wife is unemployed.

Participant #3

The third participant is a 56 year-old female from extension 3. She only has primary education. Her husband passed away a few years ago. She is unemployed and survives by undertaking various activities such as selling tea, cleaning people's houses and fetching water with a wheel

barrow. Although this is not a stable job, she manages to generate about R1, 500.00 per month, including the child support grant which helps her to raise her granddaughter.

Participant #4

The fourth participant is a 29 year-old male from extension 2. His highest level of education is Matric. He is involved in recycling and considers himself self-employed. He supports his siblings. On average he generates about R1, 300.00 per month. He would like to go back to school one day.

Participant #5

The fifth participant is a 60 year-old single mother from extension 1. She only has primary education. She survives by selling various commodities including second hand clothes, and considers herself as a business woman. Her child will be graduating with a university degree this year whilst the other child will be writing his final Matric examinations. She earns an average income of R2, 000.00 per month.

Participant #6

The sixth participant is a single 50 year-old female from extension 2. Her highest level of education is primary school. She is a domestic worker who receives a child support grant for her two grandchildren. Her daughter passed away five years ago due to TB. Her total monthly income is R1, 900.00.

Participant #7

The seventh participant is a 23 year-old single male from extension 1. He completed Matric in 2011. He was advised by a friend that he should come to Makause to search for employment. To date he has not found a job and volunteers as a school security guard as part of the Expanded Public Works Programme. He receives a monthly stipend of R1, 200.00.

Participant #8

The eighth participant is a 65 year-old male from extension 3. He only has primary education. His wife has passed away. He survives on his old age pension (R1, 200.00 per month) and stays with his child and grandchildren.

Participant #9

The ninth participant is a 51 year-old mother from extension 3. She only completed primary education. She stays with her husband, three children and two grandchildren. She survives by selling vegetables at the taxi rank. One of her children completed Matric and is looking for a job. Her average income is R2, 900.00 per month.

Participant #10

The tenth participant is a 38 year-old male from extension 3. He could not finish his schooling. He came to Makause in search of a job to support his wife and children. He works as a semi-skilled worker in the nearby factory. He walks to work every day in order to save money. He earns R2, 500.00 per month.

Participant #11

The eleventh participant is a 42 year-old male from extension 3. After completing his Matric he attended an FET collage but dropped out due to a lack of funds. He came to Makause in search of better job opportunities. He was retrenched in 2010 by a panel beating garage and has opened a small spaza shop selling mainly cold drinks and beer. He supports his wife and children in the Eastern Cape. He is a community leader and participates in community activities. He survives on an income of R1, 200.00 per month.

Participant #12

The last participant is a 36 year-old female from extension 3. Her highest level of education is secondary school. She was invited by her aunt to come and live in Makause whilst she was a teenager; she dropped out of school after failing Matric. She is domestic worker and receives a child support grant for her three children. She stays with her unemployed partner. She is also active in various community activities. They survive on R1, 500.00 per month.

4.3 CONCEPTUALISATION AND THE UNDERSTANDING OF POVERTY

One of the objectives of the study was to gain a better understanding of the definitions and nature of poverty in the Makause community. This section integrates individual and collective understandings of poverty.

Participants provided a broad and contextual analysis of poverty, taking into consideration individual experience, socio-economic challenges and available opportunities in their community. For example, all the participants defined Makause as an undeveloped settlement. However all demonstrated great appreciation for the assets available in their community and in nearby Primrose, a factor which attracted them to the area in the first place. For instance participant #5 argued: “If my house is built here I will know that I am rich as I will be staying in town like other people who stay in the suburbs.” This suggests that participant #5 recognises that owning a house is likely to improve her wellbeing. It was observed that owning a proper house rather than a shack will provide access to other basic services such as electricity, water, sanitation, refuse removal and a physical address. All these basic necessities, which are regarded as part of the socio-economic rights in the South African Constitution (South African Constitution, 1996), are currently not available in the community of Makause.

Another participant provided the following answer:

On daily basis we experience poverty, we eat poverty, we smell poverty, you go outside you see poverty, people die because of poverty and poverty is everywhere in Makause (Participant #3).

This assertion validates van Vuuren’s (1997) claim that residents of informal settlements share common experiences such as poverty, underdevelopment, and a lack of basic infrastructure.

The findings indicate that due to poverty and underdevelopment, the living conditions in the settlement are extremely poor. A state of poverty was portrayed when participants were asked to develop a social map. The main features of the map were shacks with mushrooming small businesses on street corners and a small soccer field used as community meeting place. This demonstrates the extent of chronic poverty and the multidimensional nature of poverty (UNDP,

2002) in Makause. Some participants defined poverty based on its impact at an individual household level and highlighted the lack of basic material goods such as food, clothing, cash, poor health and children not going to school because there is no money to pay for school fees and transport. The participants observed that if they were working they would be able to pay for such necessities. A correlation between poverty and unemployment is highly visible in this community. As one participant lamented, “the majority of people in this area are unemployed as a result they are poor. They cannot even afford to buy basic necessities” (Participant # 6).

Similarly, a 23 year old male participant who has passed Matric but was unable to find a job perceives poverty as:

Being hungry and unable to look after myself, I am even not sure if I will ever develop, for instance, get married and have my proper house and stay with my family, with a proper paying job.
(Participant # 7)

Laderchi *et al.* (2003:9) observe that there is no theory of poverty that would clearly differentiate the poor from the non-poor. Reflecting on participant #7’s statement, the distinction between doing well and doing poorly is largely based on one’s ability to run and maintain a household, take care of oneself, access employment opportunities, own a home and invest in family relationships. This demonstrates that poverty is not simply being deprived of basic necessities such as food, and clothing, but is also about living in a situation of hopelessness, uncertainty about the future, and alienation from “mainstream society” (Terre Blanche, 2004 cited in Grieve *et al.*, 2007: 309). This line of thinking is shaped by personal circumstances in what de Beer and Swanepoel (2000) regard as relative definitions of poverty. Such circumstances might not necessarily be measured by conventional poverty indicators which rely on “questionnaires that tend to construct a standardised, short and simple reality” (Chamber, 1997:164). This understanding validates Sen’s (1999) argument that income is not the only measurement of poverty. Despite the situation, participant #7 demonstrated a high level of resilience when probed further. He indicated that he is saving to further his studies in 2014.

It was established that variations in levels of deprivation characterise the community of Makause. This observation is consistent with Klasen's (1997) view that differences in the type of housing; mobility, access to clean water and sanitation, health facilities, education and employment can significantly differentiate the poor from the non-poor. Therefore, these variables are essential for both individuals and households. Thus, escaping poverty depends on improving personal (individual) capabilities, increasing access to resources (assets), and participating in livelihood activities (Neefjes, 2000).

During the FGDs, the participants were requested to share strategies used by the community to identify poor households. It emerged that they employ a range of strategies to identify poor households based on their knowledge of local conditions in order to provide assistance to the poor. As one member explained:

People here know each other since we have stayed together for many years; we know the situation of each household (Participant #10).

This assertion suggests that strong social capital exists in the community of Makause. It was further reported that the community has adopted criteria based on non-conventional definitions of poverty to identify the poor individuals and households, namely:

- Somebody with “filthy” children wearing old clothes who are not attending school as he or she cannot afford to pay the school fees and pay for transport;
- Households whose houses (shacks) are built using mixed and weak building materials such as cardboard, “black plastic⁶” and old or burnt corrugated iron. As a result houses leak when it rains and can be very cold in winter. Such a house also becomes an easy target for rats, and usually such a house will be dirty inside;
- Unemployed, elderly individuals who are sick or have a disability, sometimes staying alone or with many grandchildren, with no Identity Document (ID) who consequently do not have access to a social grant and therefore no source of income;

⁶ Usually not an appropriate colour for building a shack as it is associated with bad luck.

- A starving and a hungry person experiencing chronic food shortages who is supported by neighbours to feed his/her children after school. He/she depends heavily on food supplied by charitable organisations that usually visit once a week on Sundays;
- A person who does not have his/her own place to stay because she/he cannot afford to build or rent their own home and as a result will sleep on the street and collect food from the municipal dump;
- Somebody who is always eating bread and atchar as they cannot afford to buy proper groceries to cook;
- A person always looking suspicious when seeing somebody carrying groceries;
- A house with no heating – no paraffin or coal stove – they cook outside, especially in summer.

Based on these subjective criteria, poor members of the community are identified and registered by community leaders or designated people. In most cases, neighbours inform community leaders of indigent households and they are supported by their neighbours. They are also prioritised by the community when assistance (food parcels and clothes) become available from charitable organisations which usually visit the settlement on Sundays. At the top of the indigent household list are vulnerable people, that is, people with disabilities, child-headed households and terminally ill people. Linked to the identification of the poor households are local poverty indices, which focus mainly on available assets in the community.

An analysis of the vulnerability context is the first step in the SLA (Neefjes, 2000). The next section interrogates the community's understanding of poverty and vulnerability.

4.4 MAPPING PEOPLE'S VULNERABILITY TO POVERTY

As noted in earlier chapters, there are elements of disadvantage that keep people in a deprivation trap. According to Chambers (1983), issues such as physical weakness, powerlessness, poverty, isolation and vulnerability keep people trapped in a cycle of deprivation. Breaking the cycle of poverty therefore requires addressing these factors to protect people from vulnerability. It goes without saying that a household or individual's inability to deal with risks, shocks and stresses leaves people susceptible to vulnerability (Satge, 2002). In the community of Makause, it was

found that people are vulnerable to poverty, homelessness, ill-health, and social and economic exclusion. In some instances, this is due to factors beyond their control. It emerged during the FGDs that these root causes of poverty are a direct consequence of the relocation to the Tsakane area. In October 2006, the EMM declared Makause unsafe for human settlement after a woman died as a result of falling into an old open mine shaft in extension 3. Based on this tragic incident, a private security company (colloquially referred to as the 'red ants') was contracted by EMM in January 2007 to relocate affected residents to Tsakane Township in Brakpan; about 40km from Makause. The Makause residents applied for an urgent court order to stop the evictions; however 10 days later the company demolished their houses. They were promised houses and services but when they arrived at the new location they were given temporary homes. To their surprise, the infrastructure (electricity, flush toilets, running water and refuse removal) which had been promised by the EMM was non-existent in their new location. Furthermore, the area was far from schools and amenities and transport costs were unaffordable. According to Lotter (2011) infrastructure is regarded as basic services in many countries; however, the situation is different in Makause.

It is for this reason that all the participants identified the relocation to Tsakane as the major event that had a significant impact on their livelihoods, which were either destroyed or lost. These include loss of employment and the education of their children. The relocation process contradicted the values cited in South Africa's housing policy (Department of Human Settlements, 2009), which asserts that housing development should take place where people are located. On the contrary, the people of Makause were evicted and placed in a new community; thus the government violated clause 26 of the Bill of Rights which asserts that, "no one may be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished, without an order of court made after considering all the relevant circumstances..." (South African Constitution, 1996: 7). In addition, the notion of developing people where they are situated is a critical policy intervention since most informal settlements are established based on services that attracted residents to the area (Huchzermeyer, 2000). Put differently, the informal settlements are directly linked to livelihoods opportunities; therefore relocations often have an adverse effect as observed in Makause. It goes without saying that sudden events such as forced removals undermine household livelihoods, thus leaving people vulnerable to risks. The capacity to deal with risks

and manage losses depends on the resources available to an individual or household (UNDP, 2002).

It was reported that the majority of those who had been moved to the new settlement returned to Makause after a few days to re-join the residents who had chosen to remain behind. This was despite the fact that they did not have a place to stay when they came back as their stands were occupied by new people. The EMM did not make any arrangements to ensure people's safety and security by improving the 'unsafe area'. Fortunately, community leaders managed to mediate between the old owners and the new occupiers and they were fully integrated back into the community. However, insecurities around land tenure continued to deepen already existing vulnerabilities. All the participants confirmed that they live in constant fear of eviction. This goes back to the land question discussed in chapter 2. Lack of access to land is responsible for perpetuating urban poverty as black people were forced to become squatters without secure land tenure (Hall, 2013).

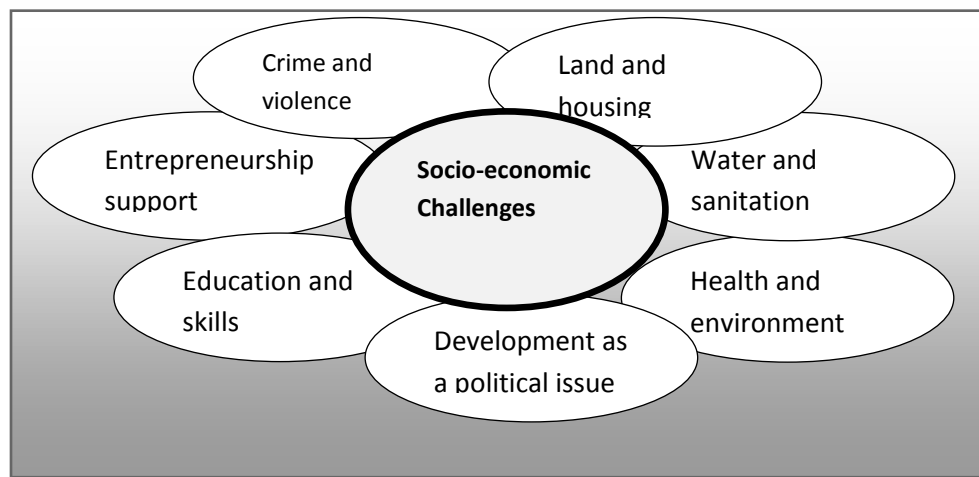
Furthermore, the residents argue that the environmental challenges (mining shaft) cited to justify the relocation are not convincing. It was established that there is only a small portion of land with mining holes specifically located in extension 3. Therefore there is no strong justification to declare the entire settlement unsafe for human habitat. It emerged during the interviews that the residents have managed to mobilise legal and financial support to litigate against the EMM. To demonstrate their determination to fight the proposed forced removals, the residents have taken their case to the Supreme Court.

This situation results in ongoing stresses and pressures that threaten livelihoods in Makause. As argued earlier, a livelihood entails "the capabilities, assets and activities which are all required for a means of a living" (Chambers and Conway, 1992:7; Neefjes, 2000:82). While it was observed that people of Makause have capabilities, assets and activities to secure their livelihoods, these were not realised in a context of uncertainty due to forced removals.

4.5 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES IN THE VULNERABILITY CONTEXT

During the FDGs and the face-to-face interviews, participants were asked to identify socio-economic challenges in Makause, which were ranked by the participants to determine priorities. Using the SLA as a framework of analysis, the researcher analysed and grouped the socio-economic challenges as presented in Figure 5 and discussed below:

Figure 5: Summary of Socio-economic Challenges



Source: Field data

4.5.1 Land and Housing

Access to land and housing was identified as a common challenge by all participants. As noted in the previous sections, Makause is an informal settlement with no proper housing. The residents are squatters with no secure land tenure. It emerged during data collection that government has refused to buy this land for housing development as advocated by the community. Instead, the government plans to relocate the community to alternative land outside the settlement since the residents are squatting on land earmarked for a shopping centre. The erection of a shopping mall in the midst of poverty is a classic example of what Habib (2013) notes as government's failure to push back the frontiers of poverty. The primary interest is building a globally competitive economy while overlooking local realities. As Brown *et al.* (2001) argues, South Africa is not only interested in building its national economy; it also has to compete at a global level as a member of the WTO. The focus on economic growth hides deep

inequalities that exist between poor communities and more affluent areas. Undoubtedly, the government's fiscal policy reproduces inequalities that exist between nations on a global scale within national boundaries (Brown *et al.*, 2001). Hence poor communities have not received any tangible benefits from current economic growth. The evidence suggests a lack of political will by the government to purchase land for housing development. It is for this reason that the residents of Makause are now pursuing their case in the Supreme Court. They are aware there are other benefits directly associated with owning a proper house. The common benefits are clean drinking water and proper sanitation, electricity, roads and development. All the participants are waiting anxiously for housing development in Makause in order to benefit from the jobs that this could create. Hague *et al.* (2011: 193) contend that housing development provides people with employment and a formal address, enables them to contribute to local tax and promotes LED. It is also critical to note that owning one's own house is equivalent to land and provides secure land tenure as noted in chapter two. In the SL framework, land is regarded as a critical natural livelihood asset as it is part of the five different assets (Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002; Carney, 1998).

Despite the lack of housing development and infrastructure in the settlement, none of the participants want to be relocated to an alternative site as they fear that their livelihoods will be severely compromised. They understand that their livelihoods largely depend on staying in Makause, as the settlement is close to most amenities and resources, which are easily accessible across the road in Primrose. This provides them with access to basic resources within close proximity. They do not have to spend money on transport fares, which is a serious challenge confronting most urban poor. Some residents indicated their willingness to build their own houses should the settlement be formalised as a township. These sentiments reiterate Huchzermeyer's (2000) view that informal settlements provide space for the urban poor, as they are affordable and convenient, depending on what attracted people to that specific area.

Participants shared moving testimonies about the possible disruption of their livelihoods should they be moved to an alternative site. One participant had this to say:

Some of us have stayed here for more than 15 years; we want government to build our houses here this is my home (Participant# 12).

The demand that houses be built where people are staying is in line with government policy, particularly chapter 13 of the National Housing Code which sets out rules for the in-situ upgrading of informal settlements. The Code seeks to ensure minimal disruption of the livelihoods of the urban poor by upgrading informal settlements rather than opting for relocation, thus promoting social inclusion (Department of Human Settlements, 2009). However, the evidence suggests that very little has been done by the EMM or the provincial government to provide adequate housing in Makause settlement. A general perception in the community is that owning a proper house will not only provide residents with shelter, but will ensure that the urban poor have sustainable livelihoods that can be transferred from one generation to another. A home was cited as an important socio-economic asset which can be used to host family events and relied on to generate other assets such as financial capital, for example, in the case of home-based enterprises. This suggestion points to the communal nature of community development. Therefore housing presents an economic value as an incremental investment as it allows poor families to improve their asset base over time and can be handed over from one generation to another. Lack of housing is a highly visible dimension of poverty; this is perhaps why it was such an emotive issue amongst participants. A house also restores human dignity; as participant #5 said: “Even if you sleep hungry if you own a house you become a better person”. It is in this context that scholars like de Beer and Swanepoel (2000) recognise that breaking the cycle of poverty is about addressing poverty and vulnerability. This can be achieved when the social, economic and political factors that keep people trapped in deprivation are problematised (Chambers, 1983).

The residents of Makause are crowded into small shacks with no privacy. Most shacks have no private space/bedroom. In some instances there is less than five meters between shacks, making them a fire hazard. There are also no recreational facilities for children as any available space is immediately occupied by shacks. The one sports field is also used as a community meeting space. As much as residents understand the need to leave space between shacks for safety and recreational purposes, this is superseded by the need for more land for housing. This is a stark

reminder of the limited options that poor people have access to. It is in this context that Chambers (1983) regards powerlessness as one of the key elements in the deprivation trap.

Interestingly, as much as people lament the lack of housing development, most residents take pride in their shacks, as the condition of one's shack determines one's social status. It should be emphasised that only a few people can afford to buy second hand building material (bricks, sand and timber) from local entrepreneurs; furthermore, they are not considered a good investment since the area has not been properly demarcated and formalised for housing development. Some members of the community cannot afford to build their own shacks and rent from neighbours. In Makause, renting a shack is more expensive than building one's own shack, as the landlord has not invested any money in buying land which is freely allocated by the local leaders. Therefore owning one's own shack is associated with being well off and one stands a better chance to obtain a house when housing development takes place.

4.5.2 Water and Sanitation

Associated with housing development is the challenge of water and sanitation. When the participants were asked about access to water, they indicated that there were initially only three water taps along the main roads with no designated washing space for women. This exposed women to dangers such as rape and robbery, particularly at night, as they were forced to travel long distances to fetch water. Consistent with the UNDP (2012:37) research, the lack of access to basic services such as water affects girls and women as in most cases they are responsible for food preparation. This underscores the gender dimension of underdevelopment. Through MACODEFO, the community has taken the initiative to install 21 water taps with public washing basins for women and has improved the drainage system as illustrated in Image 2 below:

Image 2: Access to water



This provides the community with 24 water taps in total (see Table 4 below), serving 15,000 to 20,000 people. Each household contributed R10.00 to this project. Indigent/poor households were exempted from payment. MACODEFO received mentoring and technical support from partner organisations during the implementation period.

Table 4: Tap Distribution

Section	Municipal Taps	New Taps	Total
Section:1	1	7	8
Section:2	1	8	9
Section:3	1	6	7
Total	3	21	24

Source: Field data

The installation of the additional water taps is a great achievement for this community, as they not only provide water in close proximity to households, but also reduce the distance travelled by women, thus indirectly improving women's safety, as they bear the primary responsibility to fetch water. This also provides women with an opportunity to fulfil other livelihood activities

(Huchzermeyer, 2004:53). The makeshift drainage system addresses health and associated environmental risks, especially to children as poor drainage can increase their vulnerability to waterborne diseases and mosquitoes. However, although the community has initiated night patrols, safety at night remains a challenge. Initiatives such as the installation of the water taps make this community attractive to outsiders and they are envied by neighbouring informal settlements. The failure by EMM to provide residents with water is a direct contravention of the National Housing Code (Department of Human Settlements, 2009:20) which sets out the basic responsibilities of municipalities, including the provision of water, sanitation, refuse removal and so forth.

Linked to access to water is the absence of sanitation facilities. Proper sanitation is essential for the good health of any community. It is also important in preventing health hazards, such as water-borne diseases like cholera and typhoid; as noted in chapter one, treating such illnesses may be more expensive than providing basic services, e.g. a proper pit latrine (Wilson and Ramphela, 1989).

It emerged that the community has refused to accept portable toilets sponsored by EMM, raising safety concerns as such toilets are usually located along the main roads and not cleaned on a regular basis by contractors as is the case in nearby settlements. Instead the residents have erected homemade pit latrines in their yards. It was evident to the researcher that the participants shared different views with regard to sanitation as some participants would have preferred portable toilets sponsored by EMM; however they were outvoted. It could be inferred that the water and sanitation challenge is directly linked to housing development. This confirms Richards *et al.*'s (2007) assertion that the residents of informal settlements have poor access to basic services, especially water, sanitation and electricity. However the community has taken some initiatives to resolve these challenges using the assets at their disposal.

4.5.3 Health and Environment

As indicated in the preceding section, poor access to water, sanitation, electricity and ventilation exposes people to a variety of health risks such as diarrhoea and respiratory diseases (Richards *et al.*, 2007). Associated with such risks are poor socio-economic conditions that render people to vulnerable to HIV and AIDS as some are involved in transactional sexual activities in order support their families. This is evident in Makause where participants identified TB, HIV and AIDS, diarrhoea and pneumonia as the key health challenges confronting the settlement. Lotter (2011: 63) asserts that these are poverty-related diseases which also exacerbate poverty.

While they could not provide empirical evidence, anecdotal evidence suggests that many people are dying from undisclosed illnesses, leaving behind orphans and vulnerable children. This confirms Lotter's (2011: 63) argument that an epidemic affects poor people more than others and illustrates the correlation between the socio-economic status of a community and high mortality rates. Some participants had observed a slight decline in HIV and AIDS deaths due to the availability of antiretroviral treatment at public health care facilities. Attempts by the community to establish home-based care services failed due to a lack of support from the government. Almost all (97 percent) of the participants shared a personal experience of this pandemic, which has destroyed families and had a destructive impact on the community at large. Furthermore, the participants expressed serious concerns regarding the increasing number of child-headed households; a clear indication of the impact of the pandemic on children. The research findings are consistent with empirical evidence. For instance, research indicates a sharp increase in the number of orphans from 16,423 in 2003 to 21,403 in 2004. It should be noted that EMM has a higher HIV prevalence rate of 34.0 percent in the general population compared to the Gauteng Provincial HIV prevalence rate of 30 percent in the general population. Moreover, it was the district with the second highest number of maternal orphans (25 percent) in Gauteng in 2009. Furthermore, Ekurhuleni has a high rate of infant and child malnutrition (Department of Health, 2011; Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011 and Department of Social Development, 2010). These facts underscore the impact of the AIDS epidemic in EMM.

Linked to health are environmental challenges. As noted in chapter two, environmental hazards in the urban context are often more serious, particularly in low income communities such as

Makause (Moser *et al.*, 1996: 9). Unsafe energy sources such as paraffin, fire wood and coal are likely to cause indoor air pollution especially when they are used on unsafe and/or home-made equipment. They may cause respiratory diseases that are more likely to affect girls and women as they are responsible for food preparation in most households (UNDP, 2012:37). Linked to unsafe sources of energy are the rampant shack fires which are common in Makause, especially in winter. Shack fires are a serious setback to poor households as they destroy assets accumulated over a long period of time with meagre savings. Most households do not have the means to recover, thus making them vulnerable to poverty.

Most participants were concerned about the lack of agricultural land due to overcrowding and the infertile soil caused by mining activities and floods. The researcher observed an open mining dump site near Makause, even though residents did not complain about it. In some communities around Gauteng health risks to humans and adverse effects on plant life have been reported as a result of the environmental challenges linked to mine dumps. The social map revealed that only one section was affected by the mining hole, and that the community was destroying the few remaining trees for fire wood and building material, thus denying them shade in summer when the shacks can be very hot. Trees are necessary for fire wood, however cutting down trees has unintended consequences such as soil erosion and flooding.

Overcrowding also makes it difficult for households to establish family food gardens and there is no designated communal agricultural land. Their inability to produce their own food compels the community to purchase it. This is difficult due to the lack of disposable income. One participant in a FGD observed: “Since I could not plough my own fresh vegetables I am forced to lease to tenants my available space in order to make money to buy food.”

Another participant complained:

These vegetables are expensive and are not even fresh, where do we get money to buy them? (Participant # 8)

Commoditisation is the dominant feature of the urban economy (UNDP/UNCHS and World Bank, 1996:9). In the case of the Makause settlement, the resultant food shortage compromises their livelihoods. The researcher observed a high level of commoditisation in Makause. One

participant summed it up during the FGD: “Money means everything here; you can’t survive here without money.”

Another key environmental concern for the participants was the rats which destroy household gardens. It was reported that they also target and torment young children at night. The local clinic had dealt with many cases of rat bites. Due to the diseases associated with rats, they remain a serious health challenge in most informal settlements in Gauteng, but the situation in Makause is exacerbated by uncollected refuse. Residents dump refuse at all corners of the settlement, particularly near public water taps, since there is no designated dumping site. The participants associated rats with underdevelopment and poverty. Burkey (1993) asserts that the root causes of poverty give rise to other socio-economic problems, in this instance the politicisation of development.

4.5.4 Development as a Political Issue

Interference by political parties in the affairs of the community and the “politicisation” of development was identified as a common challenge by the majority of participants, especially during the FGD. Participants accused political parties of meddling in their affairs and of “politicising” community development. The members of this community are not a politically homogenous group. A participant observed during the FGD that when the community asks for basic services from the government, they are informed that Makause is an illegal settlement: “But every time when there are national or local government elections they come and campaign here promising us everything if we vote for them”. This raises serious concerns about the role of political parties in communities.

Another respondent had this to say:

At the moment this ward is controlled by the DA counsellor who has been re-elected for the second term, the other political parties have labelled us with many names but we do not care as we have not persuaded people to vote for anybody (Participant # 2).

The community is not happy with the lack of support from politicians; they accuse politicians of abusing their situation. There has been some political infighting due to the existence of dual civic organisations with one supported by the ruling party, whereas the other group claims to be non-partisan. The researcher observed that women participants were less interested in the political discussion, unlike in the discussion about poverty. Instead they argued for a speedy resolution of the current political situation so that they can continue with their lives and the pursuit of their livelihoods. It could be inferred that the politicisation of development demonstrates a poor understanding of community development and its principles. Community participation and empowerment are the key components of community development. Drawing from Chambers' (1994) experience, it could be inferred that local politicians are concerned with cosmetic participation and co-option rather than meaningful community participation. Chambers (1994) asserts that the latter concerns itself with community empowerment "which enables local people to do their own analysis, to take command, to gain in confidence, and to make their own decisions."

4.5.5 Education and Skills Development

Since there are no schools within the settlement, the researcher asked participants where children attend school. They provided a range of conflicting views with regard to access to education. Some participants linked poverty with such access, citing the lack of schools within the settlement, as they cannot afford to send their children to schools in Primrose, or use public transport to attend schools in the surrounding areas. It was further revealed that, the fee free schools⁷ are far away and parents cannot afford the high transport costs. In contrast, some participants appreciate sending their children to nearby former Model C schools, citing the good quality of education as the main benefit associated such schools.

While there are obviously benefits associated with sending children to former Model C schools, poor households cannot afford to do so. This demonstrates the ambiguity experienced by the

⁷ These are institutions that receive funding from the state and are consequently not compelled to charge school fees (Berkhout *et al.*, 2010:53).

majority of poor households in Makaase. It is not unusual for learners to drop out of school and stay at home due to poverty. Indeed, some children leave school in order to work to contribute to the household's income.

For instance participant # 9 had this to say: "I do not have money to take my child to school; transport is expensive and I am not working; that's poverty for me."

In sharp contrast, participant # 2 said:

Both of my children attend schools in Primrose. I am taking advantage of the nearby schools.

This contradiction indicates the differences between the improving poor and the declining poor in Makaase.

While government has introduced progressive educational policies and programmes such as compulsory primary education, school nutritional schemes, transport subsidies and fee free schools in order to ensure access to education, for the majority of poor households in Makaase, access to education remains a distant dream. Indeed, education is a luxury, as some parents have to choose between buying food and sending their children to school. It has been noted in the literature (Bauch, 2011:13) that poverty is a social problem that reproduces itself from generation to generation. There is a strong correlation between educational attainment, poverty and standard of living. An individual's level of education largely affects their level of income-capacity and knowledge about promoting education. For instance, Bauch, (2011:14) indicates that, poor parents are likely to have uneducated children, thus entrenching poverty within the household. Therefore, in order to break the cycle of poverty it is imperative for the government to ensure that poor children have access to education. Education provides access to formal employment and is an important asset which cannot be taken away. Access to education will reduce the 40 percent of young children in South Africa reported to be growing up in conditions of abject poverty and neglect (Lemmer and van Wyk, 2010: 120).

The data analysis indicates that the situation is even worse in relation to pre-primary education as preschools are located in established suburbs and are not affordable to the majority of poor households. As a result they opt to enrol their children in preschools owned by local entrepreneurs. The preschools or early childhood education (ECD) centres in Makause are not registered with the EMM as they are located on privately-owned land and do not meet the required health standards. This renders them ineligible for a subsidy from the DSD. A municipal official argued that:

these preschools are located in an informal and 'illegal' location with no physical addresses, no sanitation service and therefore government cannot be seen supporting such initiatives as it is against government regulations and might be interpreted as condoning squatting/illegal occupation of land.

Associated with this challenge is a range of other issues, such as the quality of education provided to children, safety standards as the area is prone to shack fires and the poor standard of nutritional support provided by the preschools. What concerns most parents is that the majority of the teachers operating these preschools are not properly qualified. The Makause education challenge is contrary to government policy (South Africa Schools Act, 1996) which seeks to provide free compulsory basic education in line with the requirements of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). It should be noted that in the South African context, education is an emotive issue due to past discriminatory policies.

However participants understand the importance of education in breaking the cycle of poverty. The fact that the study participants linked education with poverty demonstrates their understanding that education is a necessary tool to overcome poverty as it empowers individuals to improve their livelihoods. Despite the conditions of the crèches, children are kept relatively safe and are provided with basic education and food. The Makause community's experience of poverty confirms the key issues highlighted in the literature review that whilst some aspects of poverty apply mainly at an individual household level, that is low incomes, food shortages, overcrowded homes, and so forth; others are more applicable at the community level, for instance, lack of access to clean water and public facilities such as schools and health care. The

latter not only affect individual households but the entire community and might lead to chronic poverty and perpetuate the deprivation trap, as argued by Chambers (1983).

4.5.6 Entrepreneurship Support

Access to funding is another challenge confronting aspiring entrepreneurs in the community of Makause. As noted in chapter two, the EMM promotes LED as one of the main pillars of poverty alleviation. The community hopes that they will secure temporary jobs and skills during the construction of the mall. However, some members of the community pointed out that services are always outsourced to private providers who do not employ local people. This observation resonates with Brown *et al.*'s (2001) analysis of the political economy of skills and knowledge. The author recognises that the focus is not on local realities within the neo-liberal capitalist-driven economy; instead it is on global competitiveness. Seen in this way, LED as a poverty alleviation strategy is good on paper, but intends to empower the already empowered in its daily practices since the focus is on building global competitiveness (Ibid).

There can be no doubt that the government's definitions of development are in conflict with community perceptions. It is against this backdrop that, as far back as 1975, the World Bank (1980) categorised poverty according to level of disadvantage in order to highlight distinctions between absolute and relative poverty. In their view, absolute poverty means more than having a low income. This claim is validated by the experiences of the community of Makause, as these experiences show that poverty is also about isolation, powerlessness and vulnerability as depicted in Chambers' (1983) deprivation trap.

It was observed that many unemployed people operate their own informal enterprises in Makause. Devey *et al.* (2006) note, that, the informal economy has grown both in size and importance. However, it emerged that insecure land tenure threatens the success of enterprises in Makause due to its direct impact on most of the economic challenges experienced by this community. For instance, participants complained that due to the lack of land tenure, they are unable to access microfinance from private institutions or from government agencies established to support emerging entrepreneurs. This is a serious contradiction, as many government programmes/agencies were established to fight poverty. For instance, a group of youth wanted

to establish an agricultural cooperative farming pigs. However, their application for funding was turned down due to a lack of collateral.

Police raids were also cited as one of the main threats to livelihoods, especially in the operation of shebeens and spaza shops. For example, participant #11 reported:

I have a spaza shop selling mainly cold drinks and beers, but the police have confiscated my beers because they say I am selling liquor illegally...I am not making enough money with the cold drinks...I am struggling to provide for myself. I am supposed to send money to my wife who is in Sterkspruit ...

This is the same participant who was retrenched in 2010 as a panel beater and depends on his spaza shop to sustain his family in the Eastern Cape. There were many other similar cases where participants complained about the police harassment and even accused the police of demanding bribes. This further demonstrates poor people's vulnerabilities. They engage in these kinds of businesses in order to secure livelihoods; however, there are no laws to protect them against eviction. It is in this context that Devey *et al.* (2006) argue that poor people remain socially and economically marginalised because there is no political will to support informal businesses in South Africa as they do not pay taxes. Therefore, the government does not see any benefit in supporting such businesses. However, individuals are able to use such activities to secure livelihoods (Neefjes, 2000).

Other broad challenges identified as a direct barrier to the success of local businesses include the lack of electricity and water, compromised safety standards, inflated prices and shebeens operating for extended hours, resulting in violence and abuse. Most participants were seriously concerned about the availability of illegal drugs to teenagers.

All the participants reiterated their desire to work with government to address these challenges as they reduce interest in entrepreneurship which is an essential asset for most poor households in Makaanse.

4.5.7 Crime and Violence

As noted earlier, crime is another serious challenge facing this community, especially common crimes such as pick pocketing and house breaking. Habib (2013) acknowledges that the South African situation is peculiar because of the huge inequalities between rich and poor people. In Makause, many people are robbed of valuable items such as groceries, cell phones and jewellery, especially on Fridays which is pay day for most local residents. Many of these crimes are committed in order to feed the criminals' families. They are orchestrated by young, unemployed men in their early 20s who should be completing their tertiary education or working. There are also a considerable number of cases of domestic violence, child abuse, alcohol abuse and drug abuse, particularly of "nyaope", a concoction made from antiretrovirals (ARVs) and other substances. The criminals therefore target people who take ARVs. Most disturbingly the crimes are often associated with indiscriminate violence against the victims. As indicated in the Malawian case study cited in Kadzandira *et al.* (2002), the root causes of poverty lead to further problems such as those alluded to above. This requires policies, development practitioners and planners who can break the cycle of poverty. While many of these crimes are reported to the police:

the area is not easily accessible to police due to the lack of street lights, narrow roads and the fact that the houses are not numbered. It is also difficult for ambulances to respond to emergency calls; residents are sometimes forced to take people to the main road in a wheelbarrow to wait for an ambulance.

(Participant #11)

With the support of the South African Police Service (SAPS), the community has established its own crime prevention group which patrols at night; however, some community members accused this group of applying selective justice. The community has also launched other initiatives such as a soccer tournament against crime, a joint initiative with the SAPS before relations were strained by the forced removal/relocation. It was reported by some participants that SAPS supported the EMM during the relocation. This has seriously affected the relationship between the SAPS and the community.

The crime situation in Makause confirms the findings in the literature that poor communities pay a high price for criminal activities in their midst as they are often characterised by higher levels of violence, and alcohol, and drug abuse. Research (Lotter 2011: 78, Sundaram 2011:151; Moser *et al.*, 1996:9) indicates a direct link between gender-based violence and substance abuse. This leads to the vicious cycle of poverty since the root causes of poverty lead to further problems such as school dropout rates, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, debt, etc. (Burkey, 1993).

The challenges presented above demonstrate the lack of service delivery by EMM. This was confirmed by participants, when they were asked to discuss the services they receive from the EMM. They unanimously agreed that the EMM does not provide any services to the Makause community, aside from those located in Primrose or along the main road. These include: solid waste removal, a clinic and a public swimming pool. Also located on the Pretoria main road is the fire department, which residents claim does not respond to emergency situations as was the case in June 2012 when 18 shacks were destroyed by fire and one person died. This reinforces the idea that residents receive nothing from the government: “We receive nothing specific except social grants which are available to all qualifying South Africans, the government does not want to provide us with anything, and we are being blamed for voting for the DA in this ward” (Participant #8). It can be argued that this grants-driven, grants dependent society poses a threat to sustainable development. As the UNDP (2002) asserts, sustainability refers to specific characteristics and values in relation to the way people carry out their activities as well as utilise assets and resources. Households have sustainable livelihoods when they can cope with, and recover from shocks and stresses. This does not seem to be the case in the community of Makause.

In contrast with the experience of community members, the EMM mayor blamed poor service delivery - particularly emergency services - on the shortage of ambulances and staff (Gungubele, 2013). This indicates how disassociated politicians are from their constituencies. It is an unfortunate reality that the Makause residents receive nothing from the Metro, including support directed at LED initiatives. Nonetheless, the participants appreciate staying in Makause. As participant # 9 said:

My children were born here this is their home they have nowhere else to go. If I move out here I will die of poverty.

It could be deduced that this statement refers to the livelihood options available to the Makause community as their settlement is strategically located near most amenities, the town and an industrial site, thus providing them with varied livelihoods options.

The poverty definitions provided by the community confirm the finding of Mtapuri's (2011) study in Zimbabwe that definitions of poverty are socially constructed and largely dependent on people's perceptions. It is clear that the community has a multidimensional experience of poverty. For instance, at the broad level, it was understood that all residents should be defined as poor, by virtue of staying in Makause as there are no services available in the settlement; no housing is provided; there is no electricity or rubbish removal, a limited water supply and no proper roads. Furthermore, there are no clinics, schools, library, or police station. The lack of storm water drains causes flooding, and pit latrines pose health and safety challenges. However, this could not be generalised to the level of individual households as they possess different assets; they are consequently categorised as improving poor or declining poor. The Poverty and Inequality Report (1998:3) defines poverty as the inability to attain a minimum standard of living, measured in terms of basic consumption needs or the income required to satisfy them. Dinitto and Dye (1983) conceptualise poverty in terms of deprivation, that is, an insufficiency of basic human needs such as food, housing, clothing, education, medical care and other items required to maintain a decent standard of living. These are all features of the poverty experienced by the Makause community.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The findings presented in this chapter broadly confirm the findings of the literature on livelihoods strategies. This was demonstrated by presenting the environment in which poor people in Makause live.

CHAPTER FIVE

LOCAL POVERTY INDICES AND ASSET MAPPING

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter examined the Makause community's subjective definitions and the nature of poverty. As a continuation of that discussion, this chapter maps out the assets available in the community of Makause and presents the local poverty indices, which were facilitated using participatory tools that were limited to social mapping and ranking. As noted earlier, the study relies on the SLA for the realisation of development goals. The ABCD approach is embedded in the SLA and aims to shift people from being mere recipients of development to full citizenship in order to ensure sustainable development. In this context, it is recognised that people's assets and strengths could be harnessed to sustain their livelihoods (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003).

5.2 LOCAL POVERTY INDICES

During the FGD, serious concerns were raised with regard to the manner in which people receiving social grants should be categorised. The South African government has introduced social grants as a safety net for poor households; this indicates that they are already categorised as poor households. However it was agreed that households receiving social grants should be categorised as the "improving poor" since they have access to a sustainable (albeit insufficient) and predictable source of income compared with some people who do not have access to such income. For example, it was reported that there were instances where social grant recipients were earning more money than people employed as domestic workers. It was also revealed that most people in Makause use their social grants to initiate other income earning activities, thus diversifying household livelihoods. Participant #3 said: "I used my social grant to buy a wheel barrow, and some other construction materials which I rent out. I have enough money for my family". This suggests that while mainstream development discourse critiques grants as needs-based, they are a critical resource in deprived communities such as Makause as people can utilise them to generate sustainable livelihoods.

It was in this context that participants agreed that when developing local poverty indices operational terms such as ‘improving poor’ (well off) and ‘declining poor’ were appropriate. This was done in order to accommodate the macro and micro poverty contradictions in Makause. The section below provides a detailed discussion on the factors that make up the local indices based on the ranking method:

- i. **Source of income:** Employment, social grants and income earning activities or self employment using available assets at their disposal such as: wheel barrows, bicycles, construction equipment, generators, car batteries which are used to charge cell phones, clippers and so forth. Most of these assets can be leased out to generate income or could be used by the household to earn a living. People regarded as the ‘declining poor’ will not own such assets and as a result they will experience chronic food shortages
- ii. **Shack type:** As noted previously, the majority of the people in Makause live in shacks as there are no formal houses. Interestingly, in this community, wealth (the ‘improving poor’) is associated with a properly built shack using corrugated iron, with a cement floor and its own pit latrine in the yard, whereas poverty (the ‘declining poor’) is associated with people staying in shacks built with mixed and weak building materials such as cardboard, plastic, old or burnt corrugated iron and other weak material. Most of the ‘declining poor’s’ shacks leak when it rains and they are very cold in winter. Such shacks become an easy target for rats and are usually dirty inside. Only a few people can afford to buy second hand building material (bricks, sand and timber) from local entrepreneurs. Some members of the community cannot afford to build their own shacks and rent from neighbours.
- iii. **Source of energy for cooking, lighting and heating:** The Makause settlement does not have electricity; as a result the ‘improving poor’ are regarded as people who own and can afford the following: a gas stove or light, paraffin stove or light, coal stove or a petrol generator for lighting. The ‘declining poor’ rely on firewood and other forms of unsafe energy. In terms of the local poverty indices cooking outside is associated with the ‘declining poor’; however, it was argued that in worst case scenarios, even cooking outside is a sign of improvement as “smoke is sign of cooking” (Participant #3). There are clear contradictions in terms of perceptions and reality.

- iv. **Education of children:** As the figures presented in table 4 illustrate, the declining poor do not have enough money to send their children to school, thus entrenching poverty within households. They cannot afford to pay school fees, buy school uniforms and pay for transport; children consequently drop out of school. The researcher observed that children's education is a priority in this community. As a result it is also used as criterion to identify poor households.
- v. **Transport:** The improving poor make use of public transport, own bicycles and in some cases own a car. Although a wheelbarrow is not regarded as a form of transport per se, it is an essential asset as it can be used to push the sick to the main road to be picked up by an ambulance or leased out to earn a living.
- vi. **Communication/ entertainment:** those who make up the improving poor own cell phones, a radio, and use their generator, batteries or solar energy to access TV including DSTV.

Participants were requested to draw local poverty indices during the FGD based on the assets at their disposal. Table 5 illustrates their analysis.

Table 5: Summary of local poverty indices

Activity	Improving poor	Declining poor
Source of income	Employed, self employed using available assets, social grant	Heavy reliance on social grants with no alternative source of income
Shack type/material	Corrugated iron and hard wood	Weak and mixed building materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor type • Sanitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cement floor • Own pit latrine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mud floor • None
Source of energy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking • Heating • Lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas, paraffin and coal • Gas, paraffin and coal • Generator and solar panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firewood and other • Firewood and other • Candles and homemade lamps
Education-children	Attending school. Can afford: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School uniform • School fees • Lunch box • Transport where necessary 	Attending but likely to drop out of school as they cannot afford school necessities such as transport, school fees and uniform
Transport	Car, public transport, bicycle or a wheel barrow	Public transport and walk
Communication/Entertainment	Cell phone, Radio, TV and DSTV	Radio

Source: Field data**5.3 STRATEGIES FOR LIVELIHOODS SECURITY**

As noted in chapter one, the conceptual framework of this study is based on the sustainable livelihoods framework (SLF). This seeks to explain livelihoods as assets, whether social, human, natural, physical, or financial. Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:10) define assets as both material and non-material resources that one has or can access in order to survive. The importance of assets in sustainable livelihoods is emphasised by Tacoli (1999:5), who

acknowledges that assets are not only resources that people use, but that they also gives people the capability to be and act. Tacoli (1999:9) further points out that a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by different groups in attaining access to and managing their assets is an essential element of survival strategy.

Having reflected on the socio-economic challenges experienced by the poor in Makause, the key question is: how do poor households use available assets to address these challenges, in order sustain their livelihoods?

The responses of the participants (both individual interviews and FGDs) to this question were analysed using five broad categories of productive assets as defined in the SLF.

5.3.1 Human capital

Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:11), Carney (1998:7) and Norton (1998:189) define human capital as individual (or household, community) capabilities such as strength, skills, education, labour power, and physical health. The data analysis indicates that the Makause community employs knowledge, skills and the ability to engage in income-earning activities such as spaza shops, money lending (better known as ‘loan sharks’); vegetable stands; food stands; shebeens; hair salons, motor mechanics; equipment repair and hiring; preschools; stokvels; renting out shacks; recycling, selling second hand clothes and fetching water. Very few people have formal employment. It was evident that community members have low skills levels. This is common in poor communities, making it difficult to secure better paying jobs.

In order to improve the skills base in this community, MACODEFO facilitates various initiatives focusing on health and education as they are crucial to improving the actions and decisions of people. MACODEFO has facilitated the provision of skills training to local residents in order to facilitate their entry into the formal job market or enable them start their own enterprises. MACODEFO has also facilitated the training of fire fighters to fight shack fires. However this has not been as successful as expected due to the lack of capacity and financial support. The community maintains that skills training will enable them to overcome some of their developmental challenges as the majority of the population is young and energetic. Participant

#11 stated: “We have many young people who could be trained to do any job including building houses if the government can provide us with resources”.

At an individual level, community members employ their skills (entrepreneurship, artisan and survival enterprises) and labour to engage in various income earning initiatives without formal training. It is interesting to note that most community members never received any professional training for their income generating activities. Some people acquired basic skills whilst working in local manufacturing industries as artisans or assistant artisans. It is evident that financial support and skills development by government will provide better livelihoods options for local people. It was reported that the community had launched an enumeration exercise in order to establish the population size, skills and education levels, number of indigent households, number of social grant beneficiaries, number of orphans and vulnerable children and so forth.

5.3.2 Social and Political Capital

Tacoli (1999:8-9) and Norton (1998:189) define social capital as resources that can be drawn on by an individual (or household, community) to mobilise claims and to take collective action (Norton, 1998:189). Individuals (or households, communities) use assets to generate income or make claims, for example, from government institutions. These can be mobilised in pursuit of livelihoods or they can be relied on in times of crisis or shock as they can easily be mobilised. The data analysis demonstrates that the community invests in diverse social and political assets in order to manage vulnerability and shocks.

In order to maximise its social and political capital, the community established MACODEFO. This is a non-partisan civic organisation mandated to coordinate and facilitate all development activities in the settlement. It has also been instrumental in mobilising financial resources and professional support to resist the relocation of this community. Although the structure is not formally registered, it plays an important role in enhancing sustainable livelihoods and building social cohesion in the community. MACODEFO plays a leading role in promoting political tolerance and social cohesion.

MACODEFO has also facilitated the establishment of various community forums: a community policing forum, business forum, sports forum, a youth and women's brigade and home-based caregiver's forum and support groups which provide life skills and community education focusing on TB and AIDS. However not all initiatives were successful; for example, the home-based care forum failed. MACODEFO also collaborates with other social movements such as the Anti-Eviction Campaign, Abahlali Basemjondolo and the Landless Peoples' Movement. These organisations provide support to informal settlements through campaigns to improve the plight of the poor.

Another subtheme that is closely related to social and political capital is community resilience. Gurwitch, Pfefferbaum, Montgomery, Klomp, and Reissman (2007: 3) define resilience as the capacity of an individual or community to cope with stress, overcome adversity or adapt positively to change. It is the capacity to 'bounce back'. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2002:2) asserts that "a resilient community is one that takes intentional action to enhance the personal and collective capacity of its citizens and institutions to influence the course of social and economic change".

A resilient community has a vision of its future and a sense of direction. For a community to be resilient, its members must take early and effective action in order to respond to adversity in a healthy manner. Community resilience empowers a community to deal with development challenges in a sustainable manner. Through community resilience, the Makause community utilises its strengths and locally available resources to respond to the socio-economic challenges confronting the community in order to enhance its livelihood.

It was established during the FGDs that the participants belong to a range of religious groups such as Christianity, Islam and African religions. However, Christianity was the dominant religion. Most of the participants revealed their participation in various church activities such as the choir, women's/men's sodalities and/or charity activities. It was further revealed that the charity organisations which provide food parcels and clothing are invited by Makause residents who attend church activities in Primrose. The researcher observed three main church buildings (also constructed with corrugated iron) located in each of the three sections in Makause as well

as various small churches. It was reported that the churches are used as multipurpose centres for community activities such as crèches and small group meetings.

Most participants cited faith and religion as a coping strategy that helped them to conquer difficult situations. Participant # 7 stated that: “Whenever I start feeling like giving up I go to church for a prayer and I feel relieved after that...God is always great and assist me to cope with my situation (poverty)”.

Like participant #7, participant 8 reported that her source of strength was her religion. She actively participated in the activities of her church, which gave her a strong sense of fulfilment and consolation. She acknowledged the support she received from her church whilst she was dealing with the death of her husband and pondering how she would support her family on her own.

The evidence suggests that community members belong to various economic groups such as stokvels and saving clubs. These were reported to be essential as they encourage people to build their savings using the limited cash available at their disposal. Participating members contribute a fixed amount per month. The direct benefits of participating in these initiatives are: access to low interest loans usually at 5 percent compared with the 30-50 percent charged by loan sharks; and the fact that the proceeds are usually shared in December to give members enough money to celebrate Christmas.

Another initiative is the grocery stokvels, where members contribute a fixed amount of money per month. The money is used to buy bulk groceries in December at a discounted price. Savings clubs encourage members to save money to buy an asset of their choice, for instance a generator, solar panel, fridge and so forth. There are also burial societies which assist members during bereavement. Traders' associations provides members with skills training, and assist them to negotiate discounted rates with retailers as well as protect them from police and EMM harassment as they trade without licences. All these initiatives provide good incentives to their members and help them to build their financial assets which could be difficult if one is not part of a group. The high level of interest shown by the community in building stokvels confirms the findings of the literature; May (2012) states that there are 2,724,229 stokvels operating in

Germiston. This is much higher than the number (2,345,908) of stokvels operating in Pretoria. This could be attributed to a range of factors. For instance Ekurhuleni contributes approximately 7 percent to the country's spending power and about 7.4 percent to the nation's production; it has a high concentration of industrial activity and is home to the mining sector (Ekurhuleni Full Term Report, 2011:28). Therefore most people staying in Makaanse came to Germiston in search of work in the mining sector and other industries. Consistent with Moodley (1995) cited in May (2012) various terms such as, *mohodisana*, social clubs, *gooi-goois*, investment clubs, *kuholisana*, *umgalelo*, *umshayelwano*, *ke society* and *makgotlas* are used to describe stokvels in Makaanse. These terms reflect the multicultural nature of Makaanse as it is home to members of various indigenous groups of South Africa.

The researcher observed that Makaanse is highly politicised community with members belonging to diverse political parties such as the African National Congress (ANC), Democratic Alliance (DA), Congress of the People (COPE), and United Democratic Movement (UDM). However, there was no sense that the community is controlled by conventional political structures; community members have created their own alternative political structures like the civic association or residents' committee. These structures have the ultimate political responsibility in this community as they decide on development issues and other governance-related issues. There is also a relatively high degree of political tolerance. Membership of various organisations enhances social cohesion and makes it easy for people to participate in local government processes, as well as providing people with a voice as there is strength in numbers.

Tacoli (1999:8-9) asserts that people draw on social asset resources in pursuit of livelihoods and can rely on these in times of crisis as they can easily be mobilised. As demonstrated in the above discussion, social capital is essential in providing assistance to individual members of economic to accumulate assets.

5.3.3 Natural Capital

Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:11) and Carney (1998:7) define natural capital as inclusive of land and natural resources such as water, firewood, grazing, and building materials.

As indicated in preceding sections, the Makause settlement is located on 63 hectares of privately-owned land and there are ongoing discussions with government to purchase it for housing development (MACODEFO, n.d.). The administration of the land remains entirely in the hands of the community through community leaders, who allocate land to newcomers. However, this remains highly contested terrain, as some community members accuse their leaders of accepting bribes. It was also reported that some residents own more than one stand and are shack farming. Despite these challenges land remains the most available natural asset used by the community to sustain their livelihoods. Many residents rent land to newcomers to erect their own shacks. In some instances, they will build additional shacks in their yard for rental purpose. This is regarded as the basic IGA adopted by most landlords to generate income which could be invested in order to accumulate other assets. The demand for housing outstrips supply in Makause. Some residents collect firewood and building material from the trees around the settlement and sell it. Only a handful of the participants were concerned about the environmental challenges associated with this practice.

5.3.4 Physical Capital

According to Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:11) and Carney (1998:7), physical capital refers to basic infrastructure such as houses, equipment, clinics, schools, roads and electricity. Despite the lack of basic infrastructure in the Makause settlement, it is unlike other informal settlements, which are usually located on the periphery of towns. The livelihoods strategies employed in Makause are distinct due to its proximity to most amenities. For instance, children from this community attend former Model C schools in the surrounding suburbs. They have unlimited access to the free public swimming pool, a modern clinic and other services across the road in Primrose.

The unemployed can easily walk to the nearby industrial area to look for work. Others stand at the busy traffic lights hoping to be offered casual jobs by passing motorists. Women also walk to the nearby residential areas seeking employment as domestic workers. Those who collect recyclable items walk to the scrap yard to sell them. Such benefits hold this community together like ‘glue’, a distinct feature of the Makause settlement.

In the context of Makause, owning one's own shack is equal to owning one's own house. It is a valuable asset which can provide a source of income. A shack can be rented out or used to operate home-based enterprises such as spaza shop and/or hair salon. Interestingly it was reported that letting out property to foreign nationals provides a better return on property as they are prepared to pay more than local people. This could have contributed to the outbreak of xenophobic attacks. Tacoli (1999:5) notes, that, in the urban context, housing is equated to land for rural people. It is an asset that can be rented to support livelihoods.

Other assets that can be used to generate household income include renting out construction equipment, particularly wheelbarrows and big drums which are used as scaffolding during construction.

5.3.5 Financial Capital

Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:11) and Carney (1998:7) assert that financial capital means access to money, including wages, savings, pensions, credit and items that can be sold such as cattle, cars, furniture and recyclable materials, providing households with livelihood options. In the South African context this includes access to social grants such as the Child Support grant and Old Age Pension.

The researcher observed that almost all participants have access to financial capital through employment, income earning activities, support from friends or relatives and social grants. However, social grants provide the most common source of income for many households, particularly the Child Support grant, followed by the Disability and Old Age grants. This is due to the fact that the majority of people are unemployed; while those who are employed earn low wages that are not adequate to cover living expenses. Interestingly, all the women who participated in the study said that they were accessing the Child Support grant. Social grants are a major source of income in poor communities and provide regular income in most grant-receiving households. Households receiving social grants have access to cash which can be used to generate further income. It is in this context that social grants are used by individual households to diversify their livelihoods. For example, one participant in the FGD reported that she used the Child Support grant to start her spaza shop, while another participant in the same

FGD used her social grant to establish a money lending business (better known as a ‘loan shark’). As noted in chapter two, social grants are fundamentally linked to the government’s macroeconomic policy and constitute 3.4 percent of GDP (Development Indicators Report, 2013). The DSD (1997) asserts that social grants create an enabling environment for poor households to provide adequate care for their members, especially children and those who are vulnerable.

Once residents have secured some start-up capital, through letting out land or a shack they will invest in more advanced enterprises such as a spaza shop, vegetable stand or shebeen. Those with skills will set up their own enterprises such as a hair salon or car repair business. There seems to be great demand for such services, as there is a business on each and every corner in Makause. Other IGAs include preschools. Most of these enterprises are located at the main entrance to the settlement, near the taxi rank. They are busy in the afternoons and on weekends. For most people operating these enterprises, their day starts very early in the morning and finishes late in the evening. It is a sacrifice they are willing to make in order to earn a living.

The unemployed depend on income earning activities rather than formal employment. Although some of these activities cannot be classified as enterprises in the traditional business sense, as they are mainly ‘survival’ in nature, they provide a sustainable source of income and ensure that households live a normal life. Unlike people whose job is a source of livelihood, poor people’s livelihoods in the informal sector are diverse and often complex (Chambers, 1997:162-174). Very few Makause residents work in the formal sector. Some women work as domestic workers in the nearby suburbs. In many cases they walk up to two kilometres each way. This stems from the low salaries earned by domestic workers. Walking to save money is a common practice in this community. For instance participant #2 said: “I walk to work every day and I have been doing that for the past five years, this saves me a lot of money which I am using to pay for my child’s school transport.” Some walk to work in the morning and catch a taxi home in the afternoon. This is a common survival strategy adopted by most participants.

Some households survive by collecting recyclable materials. This refers to almost anything that can immediately be converted to cash.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This study has provided a subjective analysis of poverty based on people's experience using the SLA. It should be emphasised that this approach is based on the premise of strengthening available assets within the community as a response to the socio-economic challenges confronting the community. The Makause scenario provides a new approach to the phenomenon of poverty, as in most cases, the urban poor are located on the periphery of urban areas. It is therefore interesting to discuss poverty within a settlement located inside an urban area. Although the Makause residents lament the absence of services in the settlement they are still in a better position to sustain their livelihoods due to their proximity to Primrose compared with the majority of poor urban communities who are usually located on the outskirts of urban areas.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed and analysed the findings of this research study. This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations.

6.2 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

It is apparent that apartheid policies fundamentally distorted and damaged the spatial, social and economic environments in which people live, work, raise families, and seek to fulfil their aspirations. The apartheid system favoured the white population, providing them with opportunities and access to resources, while the majority of the African and other population groups lived in poverty (Daniels, 2012: 81 citing Mogale, 2005). The legacy of separate development based on racial segregation is evident in Makause long after the apartheid system was abolished. Informal settlements are a direct consequence of the apartheid system that did not allow black people to settle in urban centres. As noted in earlier chapters, there are elements of disadvantage that keep people in a deprivation trap. According to Chambers (1983), physical weakness, powerlessness, poverty, isolation and vulnerability keep people trapped in a cycle of deprivation. Breaking the cycle of poverty therefore requires that these factors be addressed.

Whilst government has made efforts to address the root causes of poverty, it has been very slow in dismantling apartheid urban development. This prompted the urban poor to build their own settlements to sustain their livelihoods and led to rapid urbanisation and massive urban poverty. This study has argued that in order to understand poverty in a particular community, it is essential to be aware of the livelihoods in that community. Livelihoods are determined by people's capabilities (abilities such as skills, knowledge, attitude and health status); activities (the things that people do); and the assets or resources people enjoy or can access (Chambers, 1995:191-193; Tacoli, 1999:3).

The objective of this study was to explore the survival strategies employed by poor households in the Makaase community. The study used participatory research approaches to create a space for local people to explore their own views in relation to the conceptualisation of poverty and its impact, and examine the survival strategies employed by the community based on their daily experiences.

The researcher hopes that the findings of this study will contribute to ongoing research on poverty, and the survival strategies employed by poor urban households in order to escape from poverty. The sustainable livelihoods and assets-based frameworks employed in this study provided a comprehensive strategy to analyse the survival strategies of the poor in Makaase.

This section of the study provides concluding comments based on the study's objectives:

Objective One: Gain a better understanding of the definitions and nature of poverty in the Makaase community.

The study established that a subjective conceptualisation of poverty is influenced by contextual issues. In the case of Makaase, poverty is intertwined with underdevelopment which manifests itself in socio-economic challenges such as land, housing, water and sanitation, health and the environment, the politicisation of development, education and skills development, entrepreneurship support, crime and violence. In Makaase, poverty is exacerbated by the high unemployment rate and low skills levels. This confirms the multidimensional nature of poverty. As a result of unemployment some community members are unable to afford basic necessities such as food schools fees, thus compromising their livelihoods.

The location of the settlement near the affluent suburb of Primrose offers both advantages and disadvantages to the residents of Makaase. As a result the community lives with sharp contradictions. For example, there are benefits associated with sending children to former model C schools such as access to resources and individual attention due to smaller class sizes. Learners receive quality education and have a better outlook on life. However, poor households cannot afford the school fees and other associated costs; as a result they are compelled to send their children to "township" schools far from Makaase. Given the history of education in South Africa,

most township schools do not have sufficient resources and are often overcrowded. It is therefore not unusual for children to drop out of school. In worst-case, scenarios children look for jobs or engage in income earning activities in order to augment household income. This illustrates the relationship between underdevelopment, poverty and education. It also confirms that education is a social problem.

Other contradictions highlighted by this study include access by the Makause community to a free municipal swimming pool in Primrose as there are no playgrounds for children within the settlement; access to facilities such as the library, police station, post office, clinic, transport, amenities and workplaces within close proximity. Most people are able to walk to work in order to save money. The money saved can be used for other household necessities. These contradictions demonstrate the ambiguity experienced by the majority of poor households in Makause.

The study revealed that there is a high rate of TB, HIV and AIDS in the area. While there was no empirical evidence, anecdotal evidence suggests a high mortality rate, which has increased the number of orphans, vulnerable children and child-headed households. As noted in the literature there is a correlation between poverty and high HIV prevalence in South Africa with communities in informal, poor settlements being most vulnerable. These communities are often the most underserved in terms of basic social services including housing; clean drinking water; sanitation; HIV and AIDS prevention, and treatment and care programmes as well as nutrition. All these factors highlight the correlation between poverty, health and development.

The lack of funding from government institutions has contributed to the failure of community initiatives to rollout the HIV prevention programme and provide basic care and support to vulnerable community members. Furthermore, the high level of commoditisation discourages people from participating in voluntary activities without immediate cash benefits. However, the mortality rate has decreased recently with increased access to free antiretroviral treatment available in public health facilities.

Environmental challenges such as infertile soil due to mining activities, floods and rats prevent residents from growing their own food. There are also serious concerns about the impact of the mining dust on the health of the community. The study also revealed several inherent contradictions. For instance, whilst trees are necessary for fire wood, cutting all the trees down

has unintended environmental consequences such as soil erosion and flooding, especially when there is no control by local government. It also denies people shade and the shacks can be very hot in summer.

The study confirms the multidimensional nature of poverty; particularly the link between macroeconomic development, infrastructure development and social development in South Africa. It is evident that the government needs to speed up the implementation of integrated urban development in order to build houses near livelihoods centres; that is, near work opportunities and public services.

Objective Two: Investigate the survival strategies employed by poor urban households in the Makause community.

The study also revealed that although poor households may be confronted by an array of socio-economic challenges, they invest in multiple assets whether human, social, natural or financial to sustain their livelihoods. They undertake diverse activities in order to survive. It is common in Makause for the poor to employ a continuum of livelihoods strategies; for example, an individual might be employed as a domestic worker while accessing the Child Support grant.

The study also established that while the poor may share similar challenges at macro level; for example, a lack of infrastructure and underdevelopment due to their geographic location, their micro-individual experience and understanding of poverty may be different. This is mainly influenced by the assets at their disposal and their capacity and capability to make use of such assets. This became evident when the participants were asked to develop local poverty indices. Some participants defined themselves as well off by making reference to assets that are taken for granted by the community such as wheelbarrows and land. They have managed to convert these to income earning assets in order to sustain their livelihoods. Hence it was agreed that it was more appropriate to adopt terms such as improving poor and declining poor. This demonstrates that owning an asset per se does not necessarily make one well off; one must have the capacity and capability to take advantage of the asset to sustain one's livelihood. This confirms that the poor are not necessarily a homogenous group.

Contrary to the popular view of community development, the subjective analysis of poverty employed in this study demonstrates the complexity of the livelihoods of the urban poor. In some instances the poor embrace messiness in order to sustain their livelihoods; the Makause community's refusal to be relocated to a safe and habitable environment demonstrates this difference sharply. This demonstrates that at times, what is prescribed by policy makers or development practitioners as development is not necessarily what the poor need. It suggests that the poor do not necessarily view development to be about relocating to better-off neighbourhoods. Rather, it is about developing the poor in the spaces where they find themselves. This observation is consistent with subjective definitions of poverty, which are not limited to monetary deprivation.

Linked to this, the study highlighted the fallacy of the top-down development approach, which involves developing the community rather than undertaking development with the community. The lack of consultation by EMM before relocating the community reveals this fallacy. This underscores the need for people-centred development and meaningful community consultation. Therefore government intervention that seeks to uplift the poor out of the deprivation trap should take contextual issues into consideration, including the livelihoods of the poor.

The study has revealed how the sustainable livelihoods approach can be utilised to analyse the socio-economic challenges confronting the Makause community. It should be emphasised that the sustainable livelihoods approach is based on the premise of strengthening available assets within the community as well as those that can be mobilised outside the community, in order to address socio-economic challenges. Although the Makause residents do not have access to basic services, they have mobilised resources in Primrose in order to sustain their livelihoods, providing them with diverse livelihoods options. This puts them in a better position than the majority of poor urban communities who are usually located on the urban outskirts. However it should be emphasised that the living conditions in Makause are extremely poor due to underdevelopment.

Linked to underdevelopment, is the lack of political leadership by the EMM, Gauteng provincial government and national government to undertake development where people are located. It would seem that the political powers that be are not willing to listen to the views of local people in the context of housing development in Makause. For instance, some of the challenges identified in chapter four could easily be addressed through decisive political leadership in consultation with

community leaders. It could be inferred that there is a lack of political willingness to assist the Makause community. This is despite South Africa's progressive legislative framework which compels politicians to engage in people-centred development.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Need to Agree on Interim Intervention

As much as the Makause community wants government to rehabilitate the informal settlement and build proper housing due to its proximity to most of the amenities critical to sustaining their livelihoods, there is an urgent need for leadership in the informal settlement and the EMM to agree on the interim provision of basic services whilst they work on a long term solution. This could include the provision of basic services such as reliable supply of clean water within a reasonable distance, the installation of electricity, the provision of portable sanitation and refuse removal and the construction of roads. Additional water taps and electricity will improve women's safety. The availability of these services within the Makause community will increase their livelihoods options and also ensure that their socio-economic rights are protected by government as enshrined in South Africa's Constitution.

The EMM and the Makause community should conduct a community profile in order to verify the size of the population, the number of people affected by the mine hole and the number of households that require emergency assistance.

Makause Community

The community should lobby the government to set up an interdepartmental team to assist the community to address some of the immediate challenges such as ensuring that all children have access to school, including ECD within the community and are provided with funding, scholar transport, nutritional support, and so forth.

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

The EMM should work with government departments such as the DSD, Department of Human Settlements and the Department of Economic Development (DED) to assist the community. For example the DSD could assist the community to set up an after care centre (drop in centre) for children. This will ensure that the children are safe, have access to recreation facilities and receive assistance with their homework as well as nutritional support. The DSD should also fund crèches, assist with technical support focusing on capacity building and facilitate the registration of local crèches. Moreover the DSD should ensure that the community has access to a package of government poverty alleviation programmes (capacity building, skills development and cooperative funding) like people in similar situations.

The community should engage the Department of Human Settlements to speedily resolve the land tenure issue as it blocks housing development and the provision of other services. The lack of housing development was identified as a fundamental problem experienced by all Makause residents and has adverse effects on all survival initiatives. Housing development would provide residents with decent housing, electricity, clean drinking water, proper sanitation and roads. It should also be noted that housing development provides people with employment and a formal address and enables them to contribute to municipal tax. Housing development will also stimulate local economic development. Local entrepreneurs will be able to access funding from financial institutions and government agencies.

The DED should provide support and ensure that trading licenses are provided to local entrepreneurs. Also critical are providing financial support, training aspirant entrepreneurs and the formation of cooperatives. Cooperatives would create jobs for local people and empower them to set up their own businesses rather than being job seekers.

In conclusion, while South Africa is reported to be progressing very well in terms of quantitative indicators such as the MDGs, the people's understanding of poverty in Makause contradict these reports. This is due to the limited nature of quantitative indicators that do not adequately reflect the realities of inequality and poverty.

The researcher understands that government functions within the parameters of the law and that there is a need to develop certain indicators in order to measure progress. However government has the responsibility to protect vulnerable members of society by implementing programmes and policies that harness their livelihoods based on their experience. Based on the findings of this study, it would seem that there is a disjuncture between how government perceives poverty and the subjective experience of the poor.

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Appendix 1: Individual Interview Guide

Introduction

Obtain informed consent

Demographics (age, gender, level of education, location, source of household income)

1. How long have you been staying in Makause? Can you explain the reasons for choosing to stay here?
2. What is your experience of living in Makause?
3. What are the challenges facing your community in terms of...
 - Social
 - Political
 - Economic
 - Environmental issues?
4. Discuss available resources and strategies used to cope with challenges outlined above.
5. Do you personally know anyone who has died due to AIDS-related illnesses in this community? If so, can you share the impact that HIV and AIDS has on the community?
6. How long does it take to reach the nearest supply of drinking water, food market, public transport, school, community health centre or hospital, police station?
7. What are the main events that have shaped/changed this community since its establishment?
8. What is the Municipality's role in service delivery in this community?
9. Would you encourage your friends or relatives to stay in this settlement?
10. Considering everything you have said, what is your understanding of poverty?
11. Overall, what have you learnt and/or observed about this community?
12. Is there anything that you would like to add

Appendix 2: FGDs Guide

1. Can you explain the reasons for choosing to stay in Makause?
2. What is your experience of living in Makause?
3. What are the challenges facing your community in terms of...
 - Social
 - Political
 - Economic
 - Environmental issues?
4. Discuss available resources and strategies used to cope with challenges outlined above.
5. Do you personally know anyone who has died due to AIDS-related illnesses in this community? If so, can you share the impact that HIV and AIDS has on the community?
6. How long does it take to reach the nearest supply of drinking water, food market, public transport, school, community health centre or hospital, police station?
7. What are the main events that have shaped this community's history since its establishment?
8. What is the municipality's role in service delivery?
9. Would you encourage your friends or relatives to stay in this settlement?
10. Considering everything you have said, what is your understanding of poverty?
11. Overall, what have you learnt and/or observed about this community?
12. Is there anything that you would like to add
13. In small groups, draw a social map of your community illustrating the following:
 - Geographical features;
 - Different households;
 - Clinic or hospital;
 - Schools;
 - Police station;
 - Stores,
 - Churches.

14. How do you identify/define poor households in this community? Who are the most poor, the less poor, and the least poor?

(Develop local poverty indices)

Appendix 3: Informed Consent Form

Introduction

Good day, I am Luyanda Ngonyama. I am studying for a Master of Arts (Community Development) at the Department of Built Environment and Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As part of my studies I am required by the University to conduct a research project. The objectives seek to analyse people's survival strategies and further investigate livelihood strategies in the situation of poverty in this community. This will require me to interview members of the community or stakeholders in this settlement. I have been informed that you are living in this settlement and that is why I would like you to participate in this interview.

Confidentiality and Consent

I am going to ask you some personal questions that some people may find difficult to answer. If you are not comfortable with any question, or find it difficult to answer some of the questions please say so and I will stop the interview. Please note that the researcher may have to share your answers, especially when writing up the research findings as they will be based on your answers. I would greatly appreciate your willingness to participate in this interview. Please also note that you might be requested to participate in a follow up interview but this will depend on your availability and willingness. Would you be willing to participate?

If you want to contact the researcher or the researcher's supervisor during office hours, please call:

Researcher: Luyanda Ngonyama: 012 395 909

Research Supervisor: Ms Nompumelelo Thabethe: 031 260 7854

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT.....DATE.....