

**A Critical Analysis of Sustainable Human Settlement in Housing –  
The Case of Hlalani, South Africa**

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## **Abstract**

As a result of apartheid's history, the current South African government was initially faced with two major challenges in the development of sustainable human settlement in urban areas: delivering the quantity of houses needed to reduce the massive housing backlog (notably in black townships) and overcoming the problem of racially-based spatial separation inherited from the apartheid era. To rectify the legacies of apartheid, the state has sought to pursue a massive housing programme in urban areas for poor urban blacks. In doing so, though, it has worked within the confines of the racially-segregated South African city and has adopted a macro-economic policy with a pronounced neo-liberal thrust.

This thesis examines the South African state's housing programme with reference to questions about social sustainability and specifically sustainable human settlements. It does so by highlighting social capital and the different forms it takes, notably bonding, binding and linking capitals. This is pursued through a case study of a small area of a black township in Grahamstown called Hlalani. The case focuses on the lived experiences of Hlalani residents and their intra-household and inter-household relations as well as their linkages with local state structures. It is concluded that social capital is weak and incipient in Hlalani and that Hlalani could not, by any definition or measurement of the term, be labeled as a sustainable human settlement.

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**I dedicate this thesis to my mother and sister (Mrs Maggie Nkambule and Gelane Nkambule). This is for you Mama, with Great Love. This marks a new beginning in our lives. Love you Mama!!!**

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
BNG	Breaking New Ground
COHRE	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
DoH	Department of Housing
ESKOM	Electricity Supply Commission
GEAR	Growth Employment and Redistribution
GRACA	Grahamstown Civic Association
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDP	Integrated Development Plans
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NDHS	National Department of Human Settlements
NHBRC	National Home Builders Registration Council
NHF	National Housing Forum
NHFC	National Housing Finance Corporation
NURCHA	National Reconstruction and Housing Agency
PIE	Prevention of Illegal Eviction
RDP	Reconstruction Development Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SANCO	South African National Civic Organization
SDI	Spatial Development Initiative
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
TB	Tuberculosis
TLC	Transitional Local Council
UN	United Nations
WACOSS	Western Australia Council of Social Services
WCED	World Commission for Environment and Development

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# **Chapter 1:**

## **Introduction and Methodology**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Despite the promotion of sustainable human settlement in urban housing policies and programmes, the post-apartheid South African government has failed to adopt and implement in practice an approach to settlement sustainability which addresses the legacies of apartheid, notably the pronounced socio-spatial segregation and socio-economic divide of South African towns and cities along racial lines (Tissington 2011: 8). Like elsewhere in the world, poor urban residents in South Africa continue to live in conditions of abject poverty and this is normally associated with limited access to formal employment, insecure forms of housing tenure and shelter and inadequate access to sanitation and water (Gray 2010; Moore et al. 2003). Combined, these factors lead to what Davies (2004) labels as ‘the planet of slums’ – and not only are urban slums and slum-like conditions pervasive globally (and in South Africa) but in many instances there has been a marked deterioration in urban livelihoods and living conditions (Choguill 2007: 144). The seriousness of these issues has been noted for sometime even amongst mainstream international bodies such as the United Nations which called 1987 the ‘International Year of Shelter for the Homeless’ (Aribigbola 2004: 3).

The thesis is a contemporary case study of a particular urban black township area called Hlalani, in Grahamstown, South Africa. It examines the housing programmes implemented by the South African state in Hlalani since the end of apartheid and the lived experiences of residents of Hlalani in relation to housing and associated services. The particular focus is on the social relationships which exist within Hlalani (both within households and between households) as well as the interface between the state and Hlalani community members. The study is framed within the notions of sustainable human settlements, social sustainability and social capital.

This introductory chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section discusses houses and human settlements in South Africa, The second section sets out the research methodology underlying the thesis as well as the research objectives. And the third section outlines the chapters to follow.

## **1.2 South African Human Settlements in Housing**

As a result of apartheid's history, the current South African government was initially faced with two major challenges in the development of sustainable human settlements in urban areas: delivering the quantity of houses needed to reduce the massive housing backlog (notably in black townships) and overcoming the problem of racially-based spatial separation inherited from the apartheid era (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 1). The South African city and town under apartheid was characterized by socio-spatial separation of different legally-defined races. Urban settlement patterns inherited by the post-apartheid state are a direct result of former legislation such as the 1913 Native Land Act, the 1923 Urban Areas Act, the 1950 Group Areas Act and the 1959 Promotion of Self-Government Act (Soussan 1984: 202). In addition, the black population was regularly considered as temporary sojourners in urban white South Africa and the quantity (and quality) of housing delivery took place accordingly. Hence, apartheid South African cities and towns were distorted spatially, and were marked by inequality, fragmentation and vastly separated places of work and residences for urban blacks (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 3).

After the 1994 democratic elections, the African National Congress (ANC) government adopted the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to try to address the aspirations of the black population, which was both politically marginalized and economically exploited (Kallis and Nthite 2007; Cross 2006). Central to the RDP mandate was the articulation of housing as a human right, which was formulated in the 1994 White Paper (entitled "A New Housing Policy and Strategy for South Africa") and in the 1996 Constitution (Bond and Khosa 1999: 10). The ANC government introduced a number of policies, laws and programmes such as the Housing Act 107 of 1997 and the more recent Breaking New Ground (BNG) subtitled 'A Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements' (Tissington 2011; DoH 2004). The housing policy and programmes highlighted government commitments to delivering houses, including its financial obligation as outlined in annual budgets (Liebenberg and Stewart 1997; Hopkins 2004) and the provision of subsidized housing for lower-income urban blacks (Pottie 2003; Ndinda 2003; Adler and Oelofse 1996).

Despite the constitution's claims about housing as a right, and the seemingly progressive housing policies and programmes of the ANC government (including the large-scale provision of subsidized housing), urban spaces continue to be racialized. For instance, poor urban black

populations still live far from employment opportunities and major facilities, and they experience extreme difficulties in sustaining a decent and dignified quality of life. In addition, lengthy housing waiting lists still exist in black townships. In fact, the urban housing backlog has increased from approximately 1.5 million in 1994 to over 2.1 million in 2010 (Tissington 2011: 33). There are many reasons for these failures, including state incapacity. But one startling reason is likely the substitution of RDP by the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) programme in 1996, with the latter marked by a pronounced neo-liberal macro-economic orientation (Goodlad 1996: 78). GEAR, as adopted by the ANC government, has had a negative impact on housing service delivery because it required the government to spend less on public services and it emphasized cost-recovery measures (Khanya College 2001: 47-48).

The major government department responsible for the development of sustainable human settlements is the Department of Housing (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 33), now called the Department of Human Settlement. At the local level, municipalities (as development agencies) have been delegated and assigned the responsibility of ensuring that residents receive proper housing. And Section 153 (a) of the Constitution clearly indicates that local government must give priority to the basic needs of the community (Pottie 2004: 78). However, in part because of lack of resources, municipalities have regularly overlooked (or even ignored) the issue of sustainable settlements and the quality of the houses they provide in urban centres (Mafukidze and Hoosen 2009; Du Plessis and Landman 2002).

For many reasons, then, from macro-economic neo-liberal policies, to state incapacity and inadequate budgetary resources, the formation of sustainable urban human settlements in South Africa remains in question. This thesis on Hlalani seeks to explore this more fully through a detailed and nuanced case study. In doing so, the focus is not simply on the sheer quantity of houses provided. Rather, I examine critical questions about housing design and settlement design to consider the ways in which these condition the lived experiences of Hlalani residents from the perspective of social sustainability and social capital formation.

### **1.3 Research Methodology**

In this section, I outline my research objectives and research methods, along with indicating the significance of my thesis for knowledge production about human settlements in contemporary South Africa.

#### **1.3.1 Research Significance**

In large part, the urban housing literature in South Africa is not located in relation to notions of sustainable human settlements, social sustainability and social capital, although it does often raise questions pertinent to these notions such as the dearth of community participation in housing projects (Mafukidze and Hoosen 2009; Mathekga and Buccus 2006; Williams 2006). This thesis seeks to fill this conceptual gap by theoretically framing the study in terms of sustainable human settlements.

In this respect, housing is the central constituent of the urban built environment (Chui 2004: 1) and plays a pivotal role in different dimensions of sustainable human settlements. These dimensions are social, economic and environmental (Tibajjuka 2008: 1). Crucially, the social dimension of sustainability is the least researched and indeed is often overlooked completely (Littig and Griebler 2005; Partridge 2005; Koning 2001; Mckenzie 2004) including, as mentioned, in the case of South Africa. Social sustainability in housing indicators would include the forms and levels of social interaction between residents; community stability; pride or sense of place; norms, values, lifestyles; participation in activities and collective groups in the community; harmonious social relations; and quality of life and satisfaction of basic needs (Littig and Griebler 2005; WACOSS 2002; Ancell and Thompson-Fawcett 2008; Barron and Gauntlett 2002; Chui 2004; Colantonio 2007; Omann and Spangenberg 2002; Turcotte and Geiser 2010). Sociologically, it is imperative that the social aspects of sustainability in housing (or social capital) be identified and comprehended in an integrated and comprehensive manner. This thesis seeks it do so by focusing specifically on Hlalani in Grahamstown.

### **1.3.2 Research Objectives**

The *key objective* of the thesis is to *investigate, examine and critically analyse housing in Hlalani in terms of the notion of sustainable human settlements*. The secondary objectives include:

1. To detail the socio-economic conditions and livelihood strategies of Hlalani residents;
2. To identify and discuss the experiences and attitudes of Hlalani residents in relation to housing provision in the light of social sustainability housing indicators; and
3. To map out the forms of social interaction, community activities and state-citizen relationships which exist in Hlalani.

### **1.3.2 Research Design**

This section focuses on the research design which provided the basis for the thesis. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methods (known as the mixed-methods approach) was adopted in the study (Neuman 2003). In terms of quantitative research, a survey was undertaken based on a fixed questionnaire (Bryman 2004; Dick 2006) and a selected sample of Hlalani residents (see Appendix 1). The survey was particularly important with respect to the first secondary objective which sought to provide an overview of socio-economic conditions in Hlalani, including the status and character of the houses occupied by residents (though it also addressed in part the other two secondary objectives). Qualitatively, the research entailed informal in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (see Appendix 2). This qualitative research work was specifically aimed at addressing the second and third secondary objectives, therefore providing a basis for capturing the day-to-day experiences of Hlalani residents and the forms of social and community interaction which exist. The fieldwork was conducted from March 2012 to May 2012. Before data collection of any kind was undertaken, all necessary ethical protocol considerations were taken into account and promises were made that the information gathered was to be solely used by the researcher for academic purposes.

### **1.3.3 The Survey**

Prior to sampling for the survey, I first conducted a pre-test of a draft survey questionnaire. Pre-testing is designed to test the questionnaire on a small sample of respondents with the objective of improving the questionnaire by identifying and eliminating potential problems. After

discussing this with my thesis supervisor, I tested the questionnaire with three Hlalani residents, after which necessary changes to the questionnaire were made.

There were fifty questionnaires administered and the sample selected was based on purposeful sampling. The aim was to identify households which occupy subsidized low-income housing and not self-constructed shacks. Also, I was not able to obtain a complete list of all residents in Hlalani who occupied state-subsidized housing and hence a simple random sample of a clearly-identified universe was not possible. The questionnaires took approximately 45 minutes to complete and were administered by me face-to-face with the respondent. Normally, the questionnaire was answered by the head of the household but, when not available, an adult member of the household was involved. By administering the questionnaire, rather than allowing for a self-administered questionnaire, I ensured consistency across questionnaires in that each respondent answered the questions in the same order. Because of the low levels of education amongst Hlalani residents, a self-administered questionnaire would also be problematic. By administering the questionnaire, I was also able to clarify responses if need be and to probe for further information particularly with regard to the open-ended questions. The questionnaires, though in English, were administered mainly in Xhosa (the language of Hlalani residents) and I am a Xhosa-speaker.

#### **1.3.4 Interviews and Focus Group Discussions**

The in-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face and guided by an interview schedule. They each took no longer than one hour to complete. The interviews (mainly conducted in Xhosa) were audio-taped and then transcribed *verbatim* to provide an accurate account of each interview (Minichiello *et al.* 1996: 75). I translated into English the quotations from the interviews which appear in the thesis. Forty-two interviews were conducted, mainly with the same people who were respondents to the questionnaire.

I held two focus group discussions. One group consisted of ten participants and the other had fifteen participants. The participants were selected from the questionnaire respondents and interviewees. The discussions, like the interviews, were recorded on audiotape for accuracy (Puchta and Potter 2004: 97) but I also took notes with regard to the interaction taking place between the participants. Each focus group discussion lasted about 45 minutes.

### **1.3.5 Data Analysis**

Consistent with approved methods of handling qualitative and qualitative data (Ashton-Shaeffer 2001; Rubin and Rubin 1995), transcripts from the interviews and focus groups, along with the responses to the questionnaires, were analyzed and coded with key themes identified. The data was analyzed under eight themes. They are socio-economic status, housing satisfaction, settlement satisfaction, local government, intra-household relations, inter-household relations, community participation and social deviance, and positive and negative social networks.

### **1.3.6 Challenges Faced in the Field**

At first I thought the field work was going to be easy since I was familiar with the study area but I soon realized that knowing an area and researching about it are two different things. The failure of the local municipality and previous researchers to keep their promises resulted in the community's reluctance in accepting the presence of researchers. As a result, it became quite clear that feelings of mistrust, bitterness and sometimes even aggression towards researchers and other outsiders were prevalent in the study area. I had to employ a female assistant to assist me (she is a resident of Hlalani) in order to gain access to the field when I was doing the survey. Not only access was difficult; the area was also unsafe as there are gangsters who rob people in broad day light. I had to wear dirty and very old clothes so that I could more easily blend into the social environment without attracting the attention of any residents prone to robbing activities. Several times though I was nearly robbed of the tape recorder but I managed to convince them not to take it. The one gangster said to me: "leave the place before you see the snake breasts" (meaning to see the unseen) and "you are just a 'Cheese Boy' who doesn't know about township struggle". At some points I had to stop collecting data because I was feeling unsafe. When undertaking in-depth interviews and focus group discussions I had to employ a new assistant who was a member of the gangster group called the 'twenty-sixes'. One day I was doing casual ethnographic observation of the area – I went to one of the local taverns and one gangster recognized me and threw an empty plastic bottle at my face. I pretended as if I was not scared and later I went to the owner of the tavern outside and I started a conversation and I later disappeared. For the above reason I had to stop collecting data using the ethnographic observation method.

## **1.4 Chapter Outline**

The following chapter (Chapter 2) provides the conceptual framing for the thesis by discussing social sustainability and social capital within the context of sustainable human settlement development. It is now generally accepted in the academic literature, though still under-researched, that housing and settlement designs have significant repercussions on social capital as they can influence the way people interact and bond with each other and the sense of community among individuals.

Chapter 3 focuses on the social sustainability of urban human settlements in post-apartheid South Africa, with an emphasis on social capital and related notions. The discussion provides a broad overview of housing policies and programmes since 1994 (in the context of broader macro-economic restructuring), as well as outlining the massive housing challenges remaining despite seemingly progressive housing legislation and significant state interventions across urban South Africa.

Chapters 4 and 5 involve discussions of the research site (Hlalani) and are based in large part on my original field research. These two chapters, in their own way, provide evidence on whether human settlement sustainability is being pursued in the provision of housing in Hlalani.

Chapter 4 looks at the socio-economic status and livelihoods of occupants of state-subsidised low-cost housing in Hlalani and the experiences and attitudes of occupants in the light of social sustainability housing indicators. In doing so, it focuses on housing design viewpoints and experiences, settlement design experiences and attitudes, and the local government/community resident interface.

Chapter 5 provides a more detailed understanding of housing and settlement designs in Hlalani in relation to sustainable human settlements and social capital by examining forms of social interaction and community cohesion (or in-cohesion). The emphasis more specifically is on intra-household relations, inter-household relations, positive and negative social networks, community participation and social deviance.

The final chapter (Chapter 6) draws together the conceptual framing and the empirical evidence from Hlalani in a way which hopefully makes a contribution to the existing sociological literature on housing and sustainable human settlements in South Africa and beyond.

## **Chapter 2:**

### **Human Settlement Sustainability and Social Capital**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The analytical framework within which this specific study is located is social sustainability and social capital within the context of sustainable human settlement development. This chapter provides a conceptual understanding of social sustainability and social capital in human settlements with particular emphasis on urban development. Even though housing is an essential component of human settlement which satisfies basic needs, and has a huge impact on welfare, quality of life, health and human development, a significant number of people around the world (particularly in underdeveloped countries) have no access to decent housing and live in abject poverty. In fact, no country can claim that it has overcome the housing problem. Sustainable housing has been pursued in underdeveloped nations over the past few decades, but producing policies and projects that integrate all the dimensions of human and social sustainability is still a huge challenge (Abu Baker et al. 2010: 67; Choguill 2007: 144). Both developed and underdeveloped countries alike have experienced the housing problem at different levels and in different forms. It is estimated that by the year 2030 about five billion poor people around the world will be living in urban areas. Given the current status of housing for the poor globally, this invariably correlates with limited access to formal employment, insecure forms of housing tenure and shelter, and inadequate access to sanitation and water (Gray 2010; Moore et al. 2003). Combined, these conditions involve the ongoing deterioration of urban housing and living conditions, leading to what Davies (2004) labels as ‘the planet of slums’.

Housing is the central constituent of the built urban environment (Chui 2004) and plays a pivotal role in all dimensions of sustainable human settlements. These dimensions are social, economic and environmental (Tibaijuka 2008: 1). Crucially, the social dimension of sustainability (often encompassed under the notion of ‘social capital’) is the least researched and indeed is often overlooked completely (Littig and Griebl 2005; Partridge 2005; Koning 2001; McKenzie 2004). To understand the relationships between human settlement and housing, sociologists need

to examine how the two mutually affect each other and how, in short, they contribute to the collective life of human communities. It has been accepted in the realm of urban development that the design and form of cities, neighbourhoods and individual dwellings have significant repercussions on social capital as they can influence the way people interact and bond with each other and the sense of community among individuals. The idea behind this argument is that some urban designs promote social ties and informal contact among residents while others do not (Moobela et al. 2007: 2).

The seriousness of housing challenges in the face of sustainable human settlements has led to a number of international initiatives (such as the UN-designated International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987) and of course national development initiatives. This chapter discusses the notion of human settlement – origins and development; human settlement sustainability and capitalism; housing, human settlements and sustainability; social capital as a fertile ground for the social sustainability of human settlements; and social capital and social sustainability indicators.

## **2.2 The Notion of Human Settlement – Origins and Development**

The concept of human settlements has evolved over the years. It has become a strategy for socio-economic development in the framework of formulating global shelter strategies. There is a consensus that human settlements are not only about spatial aspects but also about the physical manifestation of economic and social activity. Settlements are a critical basis for socio-economic development in that “places where people can live, learn and work in conditions of safety, comfort and efficiency are a fundamental and elementary need” (UN-Habitat I 1976: 8).

The first international human settlement programme was launched by the United Nations and Rehabilitation Administration after the Second World War in 1944. The aim of the programme was to provide emergency aid for reconstruction, shelter, and community service and facilities (Weissmann 1978: 228-229). The United Nations Economic and Social Council established the first international programme in town and country planning, and its mandate was to integrate community development, housing and economic activities in general. Human settlement in housing became linked to economic growth and development. At the time, a number of countries (especially the less-developed countries) were facing serious challenges with their national housing programmes despite the huge resources they were investing. In light of this, the United

Nations (UN) recommended that states should form housing ministries or housing agencies where they did not exist, and set clear objectives for national housing and urban development (Weissmann 1978: 229-230).

Rapid urbanization especially in underdeveloped countries caused a number of problems which needed a more comprehensive approach to addressing housing and settlement problems. These problems effectively raised the need for a holistic development approach, whereby social, environment and economic dimensions of development would be integrated. In 1955, the UN programme on environmental planning was extended to include strategies for regional development and urbanization, as well as general planning for national social and economic development. Since the social aspects of housing and community planning, and mobilization of self-help initiatives, were seen as crucial for underdeveloped countries, they were given first priority. In 1964, the formation of the UN Centre for Housing, Building and Planning was officially approved (Weissmann 1978: 231).

This was the beginning of institutional re-structuring which eventually led to the United Nations (UN) Habitat I Conference in Vancouver in 1976. At the Vancouver Conference it was recommended that the UN Commission on Human Settlements and the Centre for Human Settlements in Nairobi be established. At this conference the concept of 'human settlement' was coined in a way which sought to incorporate various elements which were previously considered not linked to one another. In this regard, human settlement was defined as the "totality of the human community whether city, town or village with all the social, material, organizational, spiritual and cultural elements that sustain it" (UN-Habitat I 1976: 8). The fabric of human settlements consists of physical elements, social services and infrastructure. The physical components consist of shelter which are man-made and vary in size, composition and types. These structures are built for privacy, security and for protection against adverse weather within a community. Services are required by the community as a social whole such as education, health, welfare, nutrition and recreation. Lastly, infrastructure is "the complex network designed to deliver or remove from the shelter people, goods, energy or information" (Sarkar 2010: 2). In the Vancouver declaration it was stated that "adequate shelter and services are a basic human right", that usages of land should be subject to strident public control, and that "governments should assist local authorities to participate to a greater extent in national development" (UN-

Habitat I 1976: 28). The Vancouver Declaration ends with a call on the international community to support national endeavours (Biau 2011: 2).

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

### **2.3 Human Settlement Sustainability and Capitalism**

In the light of these two key conferences, the international community is said to have a duty to respect and promote housing rights, although quite often these are “less clearly defined” (Leckie 1992: 32). The international community includes multinational corporations and international finance organizations (such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank), along with the UN and specifically UN-Habitat. Despite the commitment to address the issue of poverty and its manifestations, documents emanating from international conferences and commitments provide unrealistic means for achieving sustainable human settlements. Certainly there are few international monitoring mechanisms to evaluate the performance of countries with regard to national commitments made (Satterthwaite 1997: 3). Most importantly, although a programme for sustainable human settlements is laudable, other key questions remain. For instance, are the sustainable human settlement policies advocated by the UN coherent and consistent? In this regard, there seems to be some tension between relying primarily on the market for housing provision on the one hand, and seeking to provide decent and affordable for all on the other. A second question emerges because of this: Is sustainability in its fullest sense possible in the

current global economic system of neo-liberalism? Again, there is tension between conceptualizing housing as social expenditure and as productive investment (Takahashi 2009: 67).

The international agenda on housing and sustainable human settlements has been subject to criticism because it is seen to be underpinned by notions of economic and social equity reflecting and driven by ‘Western’ liberal democratic value systems. Scepticism from underdeveloped nations stems from the fact that it is unrealistic to think that advanced capitalist nations can provide lasting solutions to problems existing in underdeveloped nations which were produced by the West’s development model in the first place. At the Global Urban 21 Conference in Berlin in July 2000, President of Habitat International Coalition (Kirtee Shah) argued therefore that it is highly questionable that sustainable human settlement will be successful under the development model advocated by the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank. He believes that “promoting a development model derived from Western values and based on consumerist growth increases inequity, causes cultural alienation, loss of cultural wisdom and environmental degradation” (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 12).

The overall objective to be pursued (housing for all) and the means proposed for its implementation are inconsistent in that markets are viewed as the main housing delivery mechanism. Governments are tasked to play a major role in strengthening regulatory and legal frameworks to enable markets to work, overcome market failure and facilitate independent initiative and creativity. As well, they are to promote socially and environmentally responsible corporate investment and reinvestment in, and in partnership with, local communities and to encourage a wide range of other partnerships to finance shelter and human settlements development (UN-Habitat II 1996: 19).

The main contradictions contained in housing delivery emanate from the existence of housing as a commodity under capitalism (as a profit-driven system), and even more so under neo-liberal restructuring which has led to re-commodification of public goods (Isaacs 1997; Dechavez 2011; Marcuse 1998). Capitalism as a political and economy system is a dubious basis for ensuring sustainability, particularly when people are labeled as passive consumers rather than as active citizens. Though appropriate for sustaining forms of domination and inequalities (as these are built into capitalism’s logic), capitalism and particularly its current neo-liberal form undermines

equitable social relations, human population sustainability and natural environments. The state's involvement in public housing programmes, if the South African case is anything to go by, does not seem to contribute significantly to the social reproduction of marginalised communities. The significance of social capital to these communities, in the face of limited housing provision by the state and grand claims about human settlement sustainability, becomes critical.

## **2.4 Housing, Human Settlements and Sustainability**

Claims about human settlements and sustainability are important to this thesis, because the South African state is claiming to pursue sustainable urban settlements. Human settlements are of course a fundamental aspect of human life. Patterns of settlement around the world vary greatly from time to time, region to region and place to place (Sarkar 2010: 1). The functional typology of human settlements, as socio-spatial zones, is often formed in part by political and administrative governance (Sageatta 2011: 80). For example, the South African city and town under apartheid (i.e. racial capitalism) was characterized by the socio-spatial separation of different legally-defined races under different systems of central and local state administration. Poor urban black working class populations, living far from employment opportunities and major facilities, experienced extreme difficulties in sustaining a decent and dignified quality of life. Apartheid urban spaces were marked by vast socio-economic inequalities which undercut the prospects for sustainability for the vast majority of the black population.

What though is 'sustainability', as understood in at least the mainstream literature? The most widely quoted definition is that offered by the Brundtland Commission. The UN-funded World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), headed by Gro Harlem Brundtland, issued a brave call to realign institutional instruments at global, national and local levels to stimulate economic development which would ensure "the security, wellbeing, and very survival of the planet" (WCED 1987: 23). This commission became to be known as the Brundtland Commission. The commission defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987: 8). Similarly, the UN-Habitat defines sustainable human settlement as development "able to meet many needs arising from current and mounting challenges of rapid urbanization without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs" (Tibaijuka 2008: 1). There are however are a number of conceptual challenges that such

definitions raise. These include alternative perceptions of the concept of sustainable development and the multidimensionality of the concept.

The notion of sustainable development has been identified as a relatively indefinable concept with more than seventy definitions having been put forward and used by different entities since the World Commission for Environment and Development (WCED) report (1987) (Moobela et al. 2007: 2). The notion of sustainable human settlements is invariably seen though as integral to the achievement of sustainable development. In this regard, as noted, housing is the central constituent of the built environment (Chui 2004) and plays a pivotal role in all dimensions of sustainable human settlements. These dimensions are normally highlighted: economic, environmental and social (Tibajjuka 2008). These dimensions of sustainability are labeled as the “three pillar model”, and the model posits the equal significance of the three dimensions (Partridge 2005: 5). The UN-Habitat II declaration, arising from the Istanbul conference, states therefore that “sustainable development of human settlements combines economic development, social development and environmental protection, with full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms” (UN-Habitat II 1996: 1). The declaration is said to have “marked a turning point in international efforts to promote socially and environmentally sustainable cities” (UN Habitat 2001: 25).

Economic sustainability focuses on an economic system that promotes equitable access to resources and opportunities and fair sharing of limited resources for all, and capitalism broadly speaking does not allow for this. Secondly, environmental sustainability deals with balancing the use of resources and conserving the physical environment in order to allow the planet earth to continue “supporting an acceptable quality of life for human beings” (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 10). Again, in the context of capitalism (even under the most ‘protectionist’ of state-systems) goes contrary to this. Lastly, social sustainability deals with the development of just and fair societies in order to promote positive human development and empower people so that they can be champions of their lives and improve their quality of life. While social and environmental sustainability are privileged in discourse, there is no doubt that economic rationalities (which regularly sacrifice nature and society) are privileged in practice (Littig and Griebler 2005: 67). Indeed, the global capitalism system and nation-state macroeconomics based on neo-classical economics inhibit all forms of sustainability.

Nevertheless, a number of social-sustainability indicators have been put forward in the literature. WACOSS (2002) for example provides five social-sustainable community indicators. These are equity (when a community offers equitable opportunities and results for all specifically vulnerable groups); diversity (when a community supports and encourages diversity of social groups and cultures); interconnectedness (when a community offers structures, systems and processes which encourage connectedness outside and within the community at the institutional, formal and informal levels); quality of life (when a community makes sure that basic needs are fulfilled and promotes a good quality of life for all its citizens at the individual, group and community level); and democracy and governance (when a community promotes democracy and open and accountable governance). Littig and Griebler (2005) offer three core social sustainability indicators. The first set of indicators deals with quality of life and satisfaction of basic needs. This includes the subjective satisfaction of housing quality, health, environment, income and education. The second set of indicators deals with equal access to opportunities in relation to similar issues. The third group of indicators deals with social coherence, and this suggests measurements for instance of solidarity, social networks, community interaction, participation in activities and tolerant attitudes (for example towards the unemployed and migrants).

These (and other) attempts to define social sustainability relate to the social life of human settlements and raise questions around social capital (as understood in terms of ‘social coherence’ and ‘interconnectedness’). The claim is often made that social sustainability in human settlements depends quite fundamentally on the positive qualities generated in and through social capital.

## **2.5 Social Capital as a Fertile Ground for Social Sustainability of Human Settlements?**

Du Plessis and Landman (2002), like others, speak about a range of factors pertinent to sustainable human settlements. Of significance to this thesis is one of these factors, namely, social patterns. Social patterns are determined by how community members work and live, and how they relate to their settlement and the “opportunities provided by the settlement for meeting these social needs” (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 13). Clearly, the quality of life contained within human settlements, or the satisfaction of social needs through housing, is not reducible to hard infrastructure and services. At the same time, though, the physical environment, “as a

material setting in which people live, is both a condition for and a consequence of a set of social relations”(Moobela et al. 2007: 8).

Social capital, involving a diversity of social patterning, is sometimes portrayed as a panacea to sustainability, often based on broad claims such as the following: “The existence of adequate levels of [social] capital within a particular collective group enables people within that group to coordinate their activities for mutual benefits” (Killerby 2001: 6). Current work by the World Bank and other multilateral financial institutions highlights the supposed significance of social capital in poverty alleviation strategies and in the promotion of sustainability, as manifested in a range of institutions, social arrangements and networks (Moobela et al. 2007: 5). As Briggs (1998: 178) says similarly:

By influencing where and how people live, as well as the services, institutions, and significant social ties that people access, housing policy, more than ever in an era of welfare reform, should help those on the bottom of the opportunity structure to gain more social leverage without losing vital stores of support.

Nevertheless, the social needs of marginalized communities are often never ever met under conditions of capitalism, leading Al-Asad (2011) for instance to conclude that socially-sustainable human settlements are a pipe-dream.

Putnam (1993: 3) defines social capital in terms of

Community cohesion associated with: the existence of co-operative and accessible community networks/organizations; high levels of participation in these; a strong sense of local identities; and high levels of trust, mutual help and support amongst community members.

There are said to be three significant outcomes of social capital. Firstly, it enables citizens to resolve common problems more easily through increased cooperation. Secondly, it facilitates the processes that allow communities to develop through increased levels of solidarity and trust. Thirdly, it works as a mechanism to distribute information that facilitates the achievements of collective and individuals goals (Putnam 2000: 290).

Three basic forms of social capital are normally identified in the literature, namely: bonding, bridging, and linkages. Bonding social capital focuses on strengthening already-existing social

relationships such as religious associations, regional-based groups, gender-based groups and ethnic or racial organizations and associations. Bonding social capital therefore reinforces solidarity and norms of reciprocity among people who have an existing high level of trust between and among themselves. However, this kind of social capital can undermine integrative objectives linked with broader society because it is exclusive. Bridging social capital allows social interaction and relationships between diverse groups of people, and often between groups and people across the usual social divides. Therefore, “if bonding social capital provides a type of superglue between highly trusted individuals and groups, then, bridging social capital reduces friction and increases movement between unrelated and often, unknown groups of people” (Tatli et al. 2011: 14). Both types of social capital are important to the success of societies in a number of ways. However, each type has its own weakness. Finally, linking social capital involves relationships between;

Different social strata in a hierarchy where power, social status and wealth are accessed by different groups. Positive examples of linking social capital include shared habits of participation in civic affairs, and open and accountable relationships between citizens and their representatives (Moobela et al. 2007: 6).

Portes (1998) also notes that social capital can have negative and positive results. For instance, a person might have to conform and restrain his actions to gain approval from an important social network in which solidarity is of great significance. This could have negative implications for the surrounding society (Werner 2007: 4). For instance a member of a gangster group which is involved in criminal activities such as robbery may rob a resident just to gain approval from the gangster group and that in turn negatively affects both binding and bridging social capital in the community. Social capital hence is not invariably beneficial, at least not for everyone, and “this has a bearing on the problems of segregation and exclusion that are encountered in problematic housing areas” (Werner 2007: 4). For example, South African service delivery in the urban periphery (black townships) is appalling as people have limited water and sanitation, and this has led to many protests throughout the country; it has negatively affected linking social capital because the citizens do not trust the government. South African service delivery is still characterized by apartheid-style policies of urban segregation whereby middle-class citizens have superior service delivery compared to poor urban blacks. However, social capital is believed to have many positive benefits in the functioning of the community in a number of areas

such as “the prevention of juvenile delinquency and crime, the promotion of successful youth development, ... the enhancement of schooling and education, ... the encouragement of political participation” and poverty reduction (Kawachi 2006: 121).

Social capital, as a concept, is used to determine the number and strength of social relationships which exist in practice, and these can be examined on three levels: the micro-level, the meso-level and the macro-level. The micro-level is defined by very close relationships and strong emotional ties, for example partnerships, close friendships or mother-child relationships. Generally, relationships at this level last for a lifetime. These relationships are reciprocal and independent from hierarchies and social ranks, and are also not interchangeable. The meso-level is characterized by acquaintances and friends. The relationships at the meso-level are interchangeable and do not last as long as relationships on the micro-level. Relationships found on the meso-level include clubs, organizations, associations and extended families. The macro-level can be designated as the “level of major communities and values” (Grunberger and Omann 2011: 4). Individual persons on this level do not know each other, but they may share certain attitudes such as cultural ideologies, social orientation and spiritual convictions (Grunberger and Omann 2011: 4).

Irrespective of the level being considered, relationships between individuals and groups are at the centre of social capital. The formation of these relationships occurs in a number of ways. The formation may be intentional, such as when a university builds social capital by ensuring that students do assignments in groups. This will in turn lead to interaction, networking and exchange of knowledge. Or the building of social capital may be unintentional by arising in and through unanticipated consequences, as it may through inter-exchanges between people in relation to their belief systems, experiences, values or concerns. It is through these repeated interactions that the “seeds of social capital grow and the design of the physical urban environment can act as the fertile grounds to facilitate that growth” (Moobela et al. 2007: 9). This though is a mere potential which does invariably take place unhindered. Nevertheless, it is commonly argued that any possibilities for social sustainability in human settlements mean facilitating the positive qualities of social capital.

The specificity of what constitutes social sustainability in urban settlements is often addressed in the literature and – in so doing – the question of social capital is raised either explicitly or

implicitly. For example, Yiftachel and Hedgecock (1993: 140) describe urban social sustainability as “the continuing ability of a city to function as a long term viable setting for human interaction, communication and cultural development ... [it is] about the long-term survival of a viable social unit”. They emphasize three vital social issues, namely equity, urbanity and sense of community. These social issues are important in any urban area as they are at the centre of the “debate surrounding planning interventions in the development of cities” (Ancell and Thompson-Fawcett 2008: 425). An equitable society is defined as a society that has no discriminatory or exclusionary practices hampering individuals from partaking politically, socially and economically in society (Pierson 2002; Ratcliffe 2000). The quest for a more equitable society was the founding philosophy of urban planning practice. Numerous authors in urban planning believe that social sustainability, in highlighting social equity and justice, may contribute to the evolution of cities in becoming ‘good’ places by enabling a reasonable distribution of resources and a long-term vision (Ancell and Thomposon-Fawcett 2008; Yiftachel and Hedgecock 1993). The belief is that individuals in a community will prosper and partake fully in their community if they have opportunities for personal development and improvement and if there is a reasonable distribution of resources within communities to enable full participation and cooperation. Inequities can be reduced by acknowledging that groups and individuals need different “levels of support in order to flourish, and that some individuals and groups are capable of contributing more than others to address disparities and promote fairness of distribution” (Buller 2005: 2). The disparities that exist between the rich and poor should be averted and social sustainability in housing can assist to achieve this.

Yiftachel and Hedgecock (1993) describe urbanity as the formation of well-designed urban spaces. The important element for achieving urbanity is to produce sufficient diversity involving the combination of different activities to be self-sustaining. This diversity must be complex to encourage public contact and street life. For this to happen, a city district must have an adequately dense concentration of people using it for different reasons, including residence. In turn concentration generates convenience and urbanity. Reasonably high densities are important but should not be mistaken with overcrowding (Montgomery 1998: 103). Good urban places for example are determined by their street life. Streets are multipurpose spaces where the elements of “city life are combined: contact, public social life, people-watching, promenading, transacting, natural surveillance and culture” (Montgomery 1998: 109). This, along with sufficient avenues

for community participation and engagement with local authorities, will generate a sense of community.

These characteristics speak to fundamental components of social capital, and unpacking social capital and measuring its components provides a conceptual and empirical basis for understanding the presence or absence of social sustainability in specific urban settlements. In brief, for the purposes of this thesis, social capital will be used to ‘test’ or measure the existence of human settlement social sustainability.

There is no universal definition of social sustainability, but there is a range of overlapping themes under the notion of social capital which allows for ‘capturing’ social sustainability in a reasonably nuanced manner. These themes entail forms and levels of social interaction between residents; community stability; pride or sense of place; norms, values and lifestyles; participation in activities and collective groups in the community; harmonious social relations; and quality of life and satisfaction of basic needs (Littig and Griebler 2005; WACOSS 2002; Ancell and Thompson-Fawcett 2008; Barron and Gauntlett 2002; Chui 2004; Colantonio 2007; Omann and Spangenberg 2002; Turcotte and Geiser 2010). These patterns of social life embody how residents experience and relate to their settlement, as well as the “opportunities provided by the settlement for meeting their social needs” (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 13).

## **2.6 Social Capital and Social Sustainability Indicators**

It is generally accepted that the design and form of cities, communities, neighbourhoods and individual dwellings have significant repercussions on social capital as they influence the way in which people interact and bond with each other and the sense of community between households and among individuals. The idea behind this claim is that some urban designs promote social ties and informal bonding and bridging contacts among residents while others do not. Urban design in housing therefore is not simply about meeting basic physical needs, “but should also improve liveability” (Chui 1999: 140). The rest of this chapter considers the range of indicators which are used in this study to understand social capital and social sustainability with reference to the particular case-study in Grahamstown.

The satisfaction of basic human needs, including the eradication of poverty, is vital for sustainable human settlements. These needs include the full ambit of health care, food, clothing

and education and, of course, housing and shelter (Fung 2008: 13). This effectively deals with the objective dimension of quality of life, but it ignores the more subjective side. The phrase “quality of life” regularly focuses on the qualitative “human” dimension of social sustainability, and with particular reference to marginalized groups (Partridge 2005: 9). In fact, quality of life is at the centre of sustainable human settlement in housing (UN-Habitat II 1996: 10; UN-Habitat I 1976: 4). In sociology, quality of life is often viewed in terms of subjective meanings of well-being (Susniene and Jurkauskas 2009: 58). However, there is no common definition of quality of life. There are instead various factors which are said to influence one’s quality of life. UN-Habitat II (1996: 8) notes that “the quality of life of all people depends, among other economic, social, environmental and cultural factors, on the physical conditions and spatial characteristics of our villages, towns and cities.”

Chan and Lee (2008) note that there is a strong relationship between physical structures and social relations within urban settlements. The ways in which urban settlements are formed may lead to social alienation, segregation, exclusion and disharmony (Davidson and Wilson 2009; Fung 2008). Or they may lead to security, inclusion, belonging and harmony. Participation in collective projects within human settlements, as a key component of social capital, is in large part contingent on inclusion and belonging. It involves social networking and a sense of community, and it may lead to social integration and coherence (Littig and Griebler 2005: 75). Participation is potentially animated by the built environment; for instance, “mixing land use and increasing density may provide residents with a greater variety of activities in which to participate” (Dempsey et al. 2009: 7). This is also related to the level of community facilities and centres which may enhance participation in certain activities (Dempsey et al. 2009: 8). The overall argument is that if people participate in local activities they will have stronger ties to and within the community (Bremley et al. 2010: 109). In this sense, involvement in organized activities generally has a positive impact on community and social sustainability (Dempsey et al. 2009: 7).

Social networks and social interaction are often described as part and parcel of social capital. In this regard (as stated above), social capital is defined as “social networks and the associated norms of reciprocity” (Putnam 2000: 21). This implies elements of social organization such as expectations and obligations, different forms and densities of relationships, and levels of trust

(Dempsey et al. 2009: 6). Social networks are effectively “social support systems”, meaning that people who know and trust each other influence other spheres and emotions of life such as feelings of safety and a sense of well-being (Fischer 1982: 3).

Again, urban form has some significance in terms of social networking and interaction. For example, higher densities may imply that people are more likely to meet each other on the street than in lower density neighborhoods. In comparison, lower densities decrease the potential of unplanned interaction (Bramley et al. 2010: 110). Evidence from previous researches by Glynn (1981) and Nasar and Julian (1995) found that that networking is considerably higher in places which, at least unintentionally, encouraged face-to-face interaction. However, there are other arguments that people may withdraw from social contact in higher density areas. Urban form then should not be seen as determining in any strict sense the forms of social interaction; rather, it conditions interactions in spatially- and historically-contingent ways (Colantonio 2007: 7).

Clearly, though, there are complex linkages between urban forms, social relations and social practices (Yiftachel and Hedgcock 1993: 140). The layout and design of urban forms may inhibit or facilitate community solidarity and stability. Relph (1976: 49) points out that “to be inside a place is to belong to it and identify with it”, but being inside (or residing in) a human settlement may lead to a range of meanings and identities – both of belonging and un-belonging. In this respect, any sense of place may involve a dislocation emotionally and an undercutting of social capital and social sustainability. A human settlement then may not be an inclusive community in terms of subjective meanings and inter-subjective understandings of the residents concerned (Talen 1999: 1370). Forrest and Kearns (2001) argue though that urban form remains very important to one’s sense of belonging and identity. The built environment and the sense of attachment to a place and space, if commonly shared, create its “own order, its special ensemble, which distinguishes it from the next place” (Relph 1976: 2).

## **2.7 Conclusion**

The Habitat declarations recognize that the problem of poverty and inadequate shelter negatively affects a massive number of people around the world. That is why “the eradication of poverty is essential for sustainable human settlements” in housing (UN-Habitat II 1996: 4). The Brundtland report (WCED, 1987) demanded that environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainability should be treated equally. However, the social dimension of sustainability is the

least researched and indeed is often ignored in the existing academic literature (Littig and Griebler 2005; Partridge 2005; Koning 2001; McKenzie 2004). The promotion of social sustainability and the formation of sustainable human settlements more specifically are linked to the role of social capital. Importantly, the role of social capital in promoting sustainability has been increasingly recognized and there are major efforts in practice to develop built environments which facilitate the emergence and development of social capital. It has been accepted, in the realm of urban development, that the design and form of cities, neighbourhoods and individual dwellings have significant repercussions on social capital as they condition and influence the way people interact and bond with each other and the sense of community among individuals. But the building of sustainable human settlements, and along with it social capital, does not take place in a spatial and historical vacuum. Currently it is being pursued under capitalism and a specifically aggressive form of capitalism, namely, neo-liberalism. The global pervasiveness of neo-liberalism is a major stumbling block (though not the only) to the formation of sustainable human settlements and this problem of course occurs at nation-state level. In this context, in the next chapter, I examine the post-apartheid state's pursuit of sustainable human settlements – on the one hand, a large-scale state-driven public housing programmes exists but, on the other hand, neo-liberalism has become entrenched in South Africa since the end of apartheid.

## **Chapter 3:**

### **The Roads to Sustainable Human Settlements in South Africa**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Under the apartheid regime, housing was used as a tool for segregation. The majority of mostly black South Africans lived in the rural areas and in homelands with insufficient services. In the urban areas, black people resided in townships characterized by high densities and insufficient services. Others resided in hostels. In short, black South Africans were systematically inadequately housed and apartheid human settlement policies negatively affected social capital in South Africa. The urgent task of the new government was to adopt a policy framework for all citizens, hence the slogan “Housing the Nation” (Kithakye n.d: 1). The current South African government was initially faced with two major challenges in the development of sustainable human settlement in urban areas: delivering the quantity of houses needed to reduce the massive housing backlog (notably in black townships) and overcoming the problem of racially-based spatial separation inherited from the apartheid era (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 1). The new African National Congress (ANC) government, elected in 1994, introduced a number of policies, laws and programmes in seeking to overcome these problems.

This chapter seeks to provide a broad overview of housing problems and housing initiatives in contemporary post-apartheid South Africa, within which to locate my specific study of Grahamstown. It does so by first briefly outlining the apartheid legacy. It then goes on, in the context of broader macro-economic programmes since 1994, to examine the vast array of post - 1994 policies, legislation, programmes and institutional arrangements pertinent to urban housing delivery and which have sought not only to provide housing but (more recently) to build sustainable human settlements in urban South Africa. It ends by discussing available literature specifically on social capital and housing provision in South Africa.

#### **3.2 Housing History in South Africa**

The key question pertaining to human settlements in housing in South Africa today is “whether or not development in the field of sustainable human settlements since 1994 has served to further the course of sustainable development, with respect to the inter-linked pillars of environmental,

social and economic sustainability” (Department of Housing 2004: 2). The current housing situation in South Africa was inherited from apartheid planning and social engineering, and this project of racial domination bequeathed a legacy of high levels of unemployment, deplorable housing conditions in urban spaces, poverty among urban communities and social instability (Turok 1994: 243). The introduction of apartheid in 1948 however did not mark the commencement of social, institutional and geographic separation. Separate development policy was already in place under the period of segregation from 1910. Both segregation and apartheid led to marked class and racial distinctions in terms of human settlements in South Africa. As a result, the urban black population was excluded from social, environmental and economic opportunities in relation to vibrant, integrated, and sustainable urban development.

Smith (1995) shows how the political strategy of apartheid included public administration and regional planning which saw racially-based spatial engineering as a valid element of urban planning. As Turok (1994: 243) observes:

Planning was an instrument of crude social engineering, causing great hardship and imposing an unnecessary burden on the economy. The imposition of racial segregation dislocated communities and entrenched inequality in the built environment, marginalizing much of the population. The imposition of racial segregation dislocated communities and entrenched inequality in the built environment, marginalizing much of the population.

In this way, racial categories interlinked with technicist and political considerations in creating urban settlements (Pottie 2003: 125). This is exemplified in the criteria for area plans stipulated in the Group Areas Act of 1950. These include: every race group should have its own residential area; every racially-based residential group area should be segregated by a strong physical buffer or a large open space was to be left in-between areas; and in going to and from work, no racial group should have to pass through the area of a different race group. It was also added that “[e]ach area should become self-governing as soon as possible and move toward equality in as many aspects as possible” (Smit 1989: 3). This last clause of course obfuscated the pronounced political inequalities between racial groups under apartheid.

This formed part of a broader process of racial separation nationally. For instance, in the 1970s the Surplus People’s Project reported that, up until then, approximately three million black people had been removed from their place of residence under apartheid actions like ‘black spot

removals', the Group Areas Act and the forced removal of labour tenants from farms. The racial character of urban settlement patterns were consistent with a range of legislation dating back to 1910 including, besides the Group Areas Act, the 1913 Native Land Act, the 1923 Urban Areas Act and the 1959 Promotion of Self-Government Act (Soussan 1984: 202). As a consequence, the black population was regularly considered as temporary sojourners in urban white South Africa and the quantity (and quality) of housing delivery took place accordingly (De Beer 2001: 2).

This had negative implications for South African cities and towns, including deep-rooted and entrenched inequalities, poverty and forms of social exclusion. It also had complex consequences for a sense of belonging and connectedness for black residents in white South Africa. Apartheid human settlement policies and programmes inhibited the formation and maintenance of social capital in these urban spaces, and the current effects are explored later in this chapter.

### **3.3 Housing Backlog and Informal Settlements**

From 1994, the democratic government has been faced with massive challenges around urban housing. This is taking place in the face of an increasing national population and significant immigration from rural areas. South Africa's population was approximately 42.8 million in 1995 with an estimated annual growth rate of 2.27 per cent. There were approximately 8.3 million households in South Africa with an average household of 4.97 persons. Given the population growth rate, the national department of housing projected that 200,000 new households would be built per year between 1995 and 2000. There were 3.4 million formal housing and 1.5 million informal housing units in the early 1990s (Department of Housing 1994: 27). Another 5.2 percent of households stayed in hostels and 13.5 percent stayed in squatter housing. The total housing backlog in 1995 was approximately 1.5 million units. A further 720,000 serviced sites were in need of improvement (Pottie 2003: 124; Rust and Rubenstein 1996: ix). The new government sought immediately to downplay the possibilities of tackling these housing backlogs noting, that "while high expectation exist, it should be recognized that fundamental changes to government bureaucracies are a slow process and conditions on the ground will show little change in the short term" (Department of Housing 1994: 1).

The government established a delivery target whereby one million houses were estimated to be built between 1994 and 1999. However, issues such as financial constraints, and the huge

housing backlog slowed down the goal of universal housing access. According to a report from the Department of Housing in 1998, only 596,059 of the promised one million low-income houses had been completed (Bond and Khosa 1999: 10). By early 2006, 1,877,958 housing units had been constructed or were under construction (Goebel 2007: 294). Approximately, 2.4 million houses were built from 1994 to 2010 (Parliament 2010: 1). Yet the urban housing backlog increased from approximately 1.5 million in 1994 to over 2.1 million in 2010 (Tissington 2011: 33). The Department of Housing (DoH 2009) reported that the housing backlog is approximately 2.2 million units and it states that is escalating. This is in spite of the enormous low-cost housing delivery of 2.7 million houses (Rust 2008: 61) in 17 years. Table 1 shows the annual number of houses built since 1994.

The housing challenge has been exacerbated by mushrooming informal settlements and squatter camps in urban South Africa (Saff 1993: 235–255). The vast majority of informal settlement residents live in abject poverty. In 1994, about 1.06 million households consisting of 7.7 million people lived in such settlements (Department of Housing 1994: 9). Despite the extensive government-subsidized housing delivery since 1994, informal settlements have become pervasive at a shocking rate (Huchzermeyer 2008: 41). As Misselhorn (2008: 14) notes:

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

In 2007, Stats South Africa estimated that there were approximately 1.2 million households (9.7% of South Africa's estimated 12.5 million households) residing within informal settlements (Misselhorn 2008: 14).

**TABLE 1: ANNUAL NUMBER OF HOUSES BUILT: 1 APRIL 1994 TO 31 MARCH 2010**

YEAR	NUMBER OF HOUSES BUILT
1994/95	60,820
1995/96	74,409
1996/97	129,193
1997/98	209,000
<i>1998/99</i>	235,635
1999/2000	161,572
2000/01	170,932
2001/02	143,281
2002/03	131,784
2003/04	150,773
2004/05	148,253
2005/06	134,023
2006/07	153,374
2007/08	146,465
2008/09	160,403
2009/10	166,758
TOTAL	2,376,675

(Parliament 2010: 1).

### **3.4 Structural Quality of Low Cost Housing**

It has become quite clear that the quality of low cost housing in South Africa falls far below acceptable quality and standards. Not only are the houses small (which minimizes privacy within households) but also the housing structures are of poor quality and unlikely to withstand adverse weather conditions; in fact, a significant number did not survive the first few years of their existence. The housing structures are collapsing at an alarming rate due to poor workmanship

with cracks, and leaking roofs and walls. This alone has had negative impacts on the social sustainability of settlements in urban areas. The quality of low cost houses in South Africa has become news headlines in local media and the media abroad.

In 2005 the Department of Housing reported that the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) identified a number of quality problems in the low income housing sector. These problems include inappropriate use of brick force; inappropriate or no brick bonding; poor sand and cement mix; poor workmanship; structural weaknesses; use of low quality building material; no on-site monitoring of housing projects; poor quality bricks, poor plaster use to exterior walls and structural failure as a result of poor foundations (Emuze *et al.* 2012: 1394-1395). New emerging contractors contribute to the problem of poor quality of houses. Contractors normally work out their profit margins in terms of scale which means that, the more houses they build, the more profit they generate. However, due to emerging contractors' lack of experience, they only construct a small number of houses at any one time and they cut costs by building houses which are of poor structural quality. In addition, experienced contractors have withdrawn from the low cost housing sector because they are not generating any profit, thereby compelling the government to continue using emerging contractors (Nobrego 2007: 26).

Officially, housing accounting officers at provincial level are responsible for controlling, supervising and administering the housing subsidy which is available for low cost housing. This includes the provision of reports by contractors to provincial housing departments and their development managers, specifically when contractors claim payment for work they have completed. The departments' inspectors should examine each unit to guarantee that the work has been done according to the minimum requirements. These reports are then used by the department to decide if payment should be processed or not. This process however is not closely followed such that contractors have often been paid for work below minimum standards. Overall, monitoring of public housing projects has been inadequate leading to serious gaps in the quality control process and in some instances building quality was "sacrificed for quantity with those responsible for quality control turning a blind eye to defects in the rush to finalize projects or in the rush to enrich themselves and others" (*City Press* 22 November, 2009). Hence, though in the following section I discuss the implications of neo-liberal restructuring for the post-

apartheid state's problematic housing programme, the problems cannot in any sense be reduced to neo-liberalism as state incapacity and inefficiencies are also responsible.

### **3.5 RDP and GEAR and the Implication for Human Settlements**

In light of the housing challenges in South Africa, the post-apartheid government adopted macro-economic policies which have sought to address housing problems inherited from the apartheid regime. There are two early significant policy documents which have had significant impacts on national housing programmes, namely the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) programme.

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

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

Six basic principles underlay RDP's aim of meeting the basic needs of the people of post-apartheid society. These are: democratization; promoting peace and security; people-centered development; nation-building; integration and sustainability. These principles, some more than others, embody the concept of sustainability as featured in government policy in 1994 (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 63). The RDP understood sustainability in relation to human settlements at all levels of social housing delivery, and it promoted community participation and equitable opportunities specifically for the poor and other vulnerable groups. The aim was to create socially sustainable communities by satisfying basic needs and promoting a reasonable quality of life for all citizens.

Although policies such as RDP clearly promote social sustainability, there are crucial problems in processes of implementation of sustainable human settlements. These problems often emanate from privileging national economic growth over-and-against a critical mass of public spending on housing and other basic infrastructure for the poor. Even under the RDP, the South African state tended to prioritize economic goals and, in this way, social sustainability became sacrificed at the altar of economic sustainability. This was further reinforced by the shift from RDP to GEAR in 1996.

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

GEAR is driven by neo-liberal orthodoxy which promotes cutting social expenditure, privatization, free trade, public/private partnership and the commodification of social services. The GEAR document emphasizes integrating the South African national economy more fully into the global economy, attracting foreign investors, increasing the role of the private sector, and downsizing state regulations. Under neo-liberalism, housing became subject to

commodification. As a result, GEAR had a negative impact on housing service delivery, in part because it required the government to spend less on public services while emphasizing cost-recovery measures (Khanya College 2001: 47-48). In other words, a market-oriented housing programme was put in place. This macroeconomic policy views markets as the main housing delivery mechanism and has required the state to cut its social expenditure because the latter is seen as an expense and not an investment. Limited government involvement places the burden of housing provision on poor families themselves.

GEAR economic policy has impacted on human settlements in many other ways, of which I mention only three. First of all, any privatization of housing and service delivery favours richer people because they can afford market-driven prices. Such discriminatory actions against the poor “raises serious concerns in terms of upgrading of marginalized areas, and economic viability when large proportions of the populations cannot afford to pay for services” (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 65). Secondly, privatization of urban space has taken place. Government policies facilitating the involvement of private development companies and the finance industry in human settlements leads to the commodification of the management of built urban environments. This became reflected for instance in the formation of City Improvement Districts, which were to be responsible for security and maintenance of urban spaces. Thirdly, the spatial distribution of investments has taken on a particular form. The Spatial Development Initiative programme sought to identify urban spaces with potential for economic investment and growth, and this has entailed the utilization of public resources for enhancing private sector investment.

Both RDP and GEAR are premised on the view that housing contributes positively to the economy. As the government seeks to provide housing to its less-privileged citizens, the demand for materials required in building of houses would increase. Consequently, employment opportunities in industries supplying cement, bricks and other commodities would increase. In addition, as the construction of public housing takes off, there would be greater employment in specifically the construction industry. Housing delivery, on this basis, has been seen by the ANC government as a catalyst for the alleviation of poverty. The link between housing delivery and the alleviation of poverty stems from the belief that investing in infrastructure such as education, housing and health – though often seen as unproductive investment – is critical for purposes of

social and economic redistribution. Consequently, this became the basis for large-scale expenditure in social infrastructure (Charlton and Kihato 2006: 262).

However, economic redistribution in large part has been played second fiddle to economic growth in post-apartheid South Africa. In this regard, although claims are often made about major differences and contradictions between RDP and GEAR, neither programme fully articulated and pursued housing delivery as a basic human right. In other words, the difference may be one of degree or emphasis rather than of kind. The principles in both, to a greater or lesser extent, continue to plot the direction of current South African housing policy. But certainly GEAR in particular may be questioned in terms of its repercussions for long-term housing settlement sustainability (Landman 2004: 6-7). Although economic viability and sustainability is an essential requirement for sustainable human settlements, social sustainability has regularly taken a back-seat vis-à-vis economic growth. The drawbacks of both RDP and GEAR are particularly troublesome given the mammoth human settlement tasks faced by the new democratic government in 1994.

### **3.6 The Emergence of South Africa's Social Housing Policy and Programmes**

The post-apartheid government's housing policy began to emerge in the early 1990s, and in the context of RDP and GEAR. Even though recognition of the right to housing (as will be shown) completely depends on availability of funds, South Africa's housing policy (described as a social housing policy) is based on the understanding that housing is a basic need. According to the National Department of Housing (2000: 7), the National Housing Policy is founded on seven main strategies, namely "stabilizing the housing environment, mobilizing housing credit, providing subsidy assistance, supporting the People's Housing Process, rationalizing institutional capacity, facilitating speedy release and servicing of land and coordinating government investment in development". The policy also implies that housing provision is not only about the final (material) product but is also vital for poverty alleviation and sustainability (Tomlinson 2007: 6-10). Although the government is not expected to directly build housing for each and every citizen, its duty is to make sure that all of its citizens enjoy the right to housing by creating an enabling environment which facilitates institutional arrangements for housing provision; in this sense, the policy should in no way "hinder access to housing rights" (Ismail 2005: 28). The South African housing policy lays out, amongst other things, the government's commitment to

delivering houses, its financial obligation as articulated in the annual national budget, and clear indicators of the objectives to be accomplished and the resources and the time-frames for delivery (Liebenberg and Stewart 1997: 150).

Proper housing is a socio-economic right contained in the South African Constitution. Section 26 of the Constitution states that:

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

Effectively, the right to housing is a qualified right in South Africa. The government must ensure the progressive realization of this right, but this realisation is made contingent on the availability of resources. The statistics provided earlier clearly show that, despite the constitution's claim about housing as a right, and the seemingly progressive housing policies and programmes of the ANC government (as shown more fully later), poor urban blacks as a whole continue to experience extreme difficulties in sustaining a decent and dignified quality of life. Certainly, lengthy housing waiting lists still exist in black townships.

The new constitution, and the clauses on housing, was formulated and drafted during the transitional phase from 1990 to 1994. In this regard, the National Housing Forum (NHF) was created before the first democratic elections in 1994 to formulate South Africa's housing policy. NHF was a non-governmental negotiating body, a representative forum consisting of nineteen members from the community, government, business and development organizations (National Department of Housing 2000: 3). Various possible institutional arrangements and legal interventions were investigated and developed, which were then considered by the government of national unity in 1994 as the basis for moving forward. A number of stakeholders representing the government, civil society, the homeless and communities, the emerging contractors, employers, developers, financial sector, the established construction industry, international community and building material suppliers signed the National Housing accord. This National Housing Accord formed the fundamental basis of South Africa's post-apartheid housing policy (National Department of Housing 2000: 3).

The National Housing Accord was shortly followed by the White Paper on Housing, which was officially announced in December 1994. The White Paper specifies the framework for the national housing policy, and it clearly articulates that the “Government is under duty to take steps and create conditions which leads to an effective right to housing for all” (Liebenberg and Stewart 1997: 150). All housing guidelines, policies and programmes to follow were supposed to fall within the framework stipulated in the White Paper. The Housing Act 1997 (Act No. 107 of 1997) was subsequently enacted and this extended and broadened the provisions stipulated in the housing White Paper. The Housing Act assured that there was some degree of alignment between the national housing policy and the Constitution of South Africa (in terms of the state’s broad housing commitments), and it explained the roles and responsibilities of the three spheres of government, namely, national, provincial and municipal. Moreover, the Housing Act set out the administrative procedures for the development of the national housing policy (Hopkins 2004: 4). The aim of the White Paper on Housing was to:

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

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

The White Paper therefore covers aspects such as infrastructure, housing finance, housing delivery strategies and necessary institutional arrangements for housing provision.

The White Paper on Housing demonstrates the ways in which the government’s entire programmatic approach to the housing problem is designed to harness and organize the joint resources, efforts and initiatives of communities, the state, and the private and commercial sectors (Tissington 2011: 59). In this regard, a key objective of the housing policy was to maximize the allocation of national budget allocations to housing (up to five percent) and to facilitate housing delivery on a sustainable basis, including the provision of 338,000 units per year in line with government’s target of one million houses in five years (National Department of Housing 1994: section 4.3). Such targets were to be pursued until the housing backlog was overcome (National Department of Housing 2000: 5). The government’s housing policy though

had no plans to upgrade the informal settlements that were the legacy of colonial and apartheid policies. It was anticipated that informal settlements were to be substituted by standardized housing units with freehold title (Mamba 2008: 62).

The government sought to activate the provision of low cost housing by extending housing credit to beneficiaries and builders through two processes. The first mechanism was the National Housing Finance Corporation (NHFC), which offered inclusive capital to intermediaries such as private companies or municipal entities established by municipalities to execute their housing mandate which in turn lent funds to the target group. The second was the National Reconstruction and Housing Agency (NURCHA), which provided funding for established contractors and estate developers to build low cost housing for the poor South Africans. Traditionally banks in South Africa (as elsewhere around the globe) have been unwilling to provide loans for low cost housing projects because the profit was very low on low cost development. (Department of Housing 2004: 3). Furthermore (as noted earlier), in order not to compromise the quality of low cost housing, the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) managed an assurance scheme which formulates norms and standards for the building of low cost housing. All low cost houses constructed were to meet the standards set by the assurance scheme as part of the housing construction programme (Department of Housing 2004: 3).

The housing policy aimed to provide the low income groups with subsidy assistance in order to be home owners thereby improving their quality of life. As income of beneficiaries was a key foundation for the government's approach to low cost housing, project-linked housing schemes were initially categorized into three income bands. In February 1995, a fourth income band was adopted. Four months later, in June 1995, the individual subsidy scheme was adopted to add to the project-linked approach (Pottie 2004: 126). Project-linked housing permits beneficiaries to purchase houses in community- or municipality-driven projects approved by the Housing Department. Communities form a development group and then approach their municipality or the relevant regional office to formulate and package the project for them (Kithakye n.d: 2). Individual subsidies allowed beneficiaries to purchase existing houses individually from Provincial Housing Boards. Beneficiaries may access this kind of subsidy via the bank or a reputable organization for which they work. In order to qualify for approval in either of the

schemes, subsidy applicants had to meet certain stipulated requirements: they had to be South African residents, be married or cohabit continually, and be lawfully eligible to enter into a contract. The income bands were categorized in terms of monthly household income, but the subsidy was not payable if the house price was above R65,000 (Pottie 2004: 126-7; Ndinda 2003: 29; Adler and Oelofse 1996: 116). Though the claim is often made that subsidized public housing leads to dependency amongst poor amongst South African citizens, it is designed to implement housing as a social right and to redress the racial inequalities of the apartheid past.

The major government department responsible for the development of sustainable human settlements is the Department of Housing (Du Plessis and Landman 2002), now called the Department of Human Settlement. The Housing Act of 1997 states that the national Department of Housing must fulfil its legislative mandate as stipulated in the Act. Other governmental institutions are also involved, such as the Department of Health, Department of Basic Education and Department of Public Works, which work in collaboration with the Department of Human Settlement. The Act (section 2(1) (a)) stipulates that all three levels of government (central, provincial and local) must give priority to the needs of the poor with regard to housing development (Department of Housing 2006: 11). Combined, though, they have failed to provide sufficient housing and supporting infrastructure such as roads, clinics and schools.

These joint responsibilities on housing would necessitate good communication and cooperation between the levels of government (McCarthy and di Lollo 2010: 1). The role of municipalities is seen as critical to the inclusive housing programme, and to local social and economic development more generally. Overall, in terms of Section 152 (1) of the Constitution, municipalities are required to carry out such functions as: (a) to promote democratic and accountable government vis-à-vis local communities, (b) to guarantee the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, (c) to encourage a safe and healthy environment, and (d) to promote the involvement of communities and community organizations in local government matters (RSA 1996). The constitution (Section 153 (a)) clearly indicates that local governments must give priority to the basic needs of communities (Pottie 2004: 6); and Section 9(1) of the National Housing Act stipulates the responsibilities of local government with regard to housing service delivery.

In performing their roles, municipalities are entitled to an equitable share of revenues accumulated at a national level, as well as grants received from the revenues allocated to national government (Mamba 2008: 66). Both central revenue shares and grants are add-ons to municipal sources of revenues intended for the provision of basic services and the accomplishment of functions assigned to the local government sphere. Financing local housing provision is processed mainly through government's housing subsidy scheme and the Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programme (Department of Housing 2003: 172). Besides this national level support, provincial governments also offer support for housing development to municipalities. They approve housing projects and subsidies, assess municipalities' applications for accreditation to oversee national housing programmes, and monitor the performance of municipalities (Kallis and Nthite 2007: 7-8).

Municipalities therefore are considered as the country's key developmental agents. They are supposed to accelerate housing delivery by providing bulk infrastructure as well as land and services for low-cost housing units. In addition, they are said to play a primary role in upgrading formal settlements, relocating informal settlements, managing rental stock, redeveloping hostels and providing high density housing units falling under their area of jurisdiction. Through the Integrated Development Plans which municipalities are expected to produce, municipalities are supposed to ensure that – within the framework of national and provincial legislation – there is access to adequate housing (Mamba 2008: 67). These issues include the delivery of many basic services without which it is not possible to deliver housing, such as infrastructure and water.

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

There are a number of ways through which municipal officials could engage with communities and community organizations in a way which facilitates social capital formation. For example, if

religious organizations and civic organizations could participate in housing development, they may be able to meaningfully influence decision-making at municipal level about issues of service delivery. Through practices of democratic participation, communities and community organizations become more able to organize themselves independently from the state and to interact with local authorities in a more vigorous manner, thereby facilitating in particular the development of bridging and linking social capital.

### **3.7 Breaking New Ground on Sustainable Settlements**

There was a flurry of policy documentation, legislation and programmes, as well as state institutional restructuring, pertaining to housing and human settlement in the 1990s, as the post-apartheid government sought to grapple with the apartheid legacy and bring about a more democratic and just society. Subsequent to these initiatives, the most important (more contemporary) programmatic intervention was in the form of the Comprehensive Plan for Sustainable Human Settlements known as “Breaking New Ground” (BNG).

The Breaking New Ground (BNG) document was published by the Department of Human Settlements (the then Department of Housing) in 2004 and it recognises the limitations of the housing policy and existing housing programmes, notably providing houses only (without focusing on human settlements broadly) and the emphasis on quantity of houses delivered instead of quality (Mthembi-Mahanyele 2002: 8). According to the Department of Local Government and Housing (2005), housing programmes did not offer choices in meeting all housing needs; for example, there were no plans for the managing of informal settlements. Although progress can be seen in the delivery of low-cost housing since 1994, South Africa has failed – as statistics presented earlier show – to overcome the past race-based differences in housing provision as well as associated municipality service delivery failures (Rust 2008: 32).

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

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

The concept of sustainable human settlement is significant in the BNG document. Although the notion of sustainability is mentioned many times in the housing policy document in 1994, the notion of sustainable human settlement is not mentioned. This is a clear reflection of the Department of Human Settlements' relationship with the United Nations (UN) Habitat and its commitment to the goals, principles and commitments of the Habitat Agenda (signed at the UN conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul in 1996) in relation to urban sustainability, As a result: "The new human settlements plan reinforces the vision of the department of human settlements, to promote the achievement of non-racial, integrated society through the development of sustainable settlements and quality housing" (Department of Housing 2004: 1).

The key concepts found in the BNG document regarding the formation of sustainable human settlements are:

- Social and economic infrastructure: The vision is to develop sustainable human settlements, and BNG seeks to move towards the development of social and economic infrastructure as an essential component of settlements instead of the "housing only approach" (Department of Housing 2004: 9).
- Spatial restructuring: BNG identifies the vital role played by housing in spatial restructuring by for instance supporting integration and densification (making more efficient use of limited urban space or finding place for more people to live and work) of urban residential areas and eradication of informal settlements.
- Demand-responsive differentiated housing delivery: The BNG suggests shifting from a "commoditized focus of housing delivery toward more responsive mechanisms which addressed

the multi-dimensional needs of sustainable human settlements” (Department of Housing 2004: 11).

- Holistic view of housing market: The BNG intended to increase the scope of the state’s housing mandate, and it highlights the role of the state in promoting the whole residential property market, for instance support the housing subsidies (Goss et al., 2010: 3).

Another alternative available to people in need of housing under BNG is social housing. Social housing refers to housing available for “low-to-medium income persons that is provided by housing institutions, and that excludes immediate individual ownership” (Ramashamole n.d: 40). This kind of housing option is not for the very poor. Beneficiaries accessing accommodation from housing institutions under this scheme would have to earn a guaranteed income or salary, formally or informally, and be able to pay for the rental or other forms of payment for accommodation (Ramashamole n.d: 40). Social housing could take on different forms, and it is seen as important that social housing technologies be conceptualised and implemented broadly to guarantee the inclusion of all relevant income groups.

The BNG found it essential to develop proper settlement designs and housing products and to ensure appropriate housing quality. Social housing would include various types of housing product designs (for instance, hostels, room accommodation and multi-level apartments) and of tenure options (for instance, rent-to-buy, rental and co-operative housing) to meet different spatial and affordability requirements. Settlement design would be enhanced by including design professionals at planning and project design phases, and it would be necessary to design procedures to accomplish sustainable and environmentally efficient settlements: “Each project will in future be designed and costed around the actual needs and each project will be costed separately” (Breaking New Ground 2004: 19). A number of innovative house designs for subsidised houses would be promoted through incentives (RSA 2004: 11) and a new funding instrument was to be established. The building of institutional capacity within the social housing sector and the promotion of private sector investment in social housing are said though to need greater attention in order to support the delivery of social housing (Hopkins 2004: 10).

The BNG’s perspective on the upgrading of informal settlements is that of community participation and integration. This is intended to result in the incorporation of these areas into the broader urban structure, leading to stabilisation of housing stock. In this regard, the BNG seeks

to provide housing in secure and healthy living environments, with communities having access to all necessary goods and services. The overall approach entails phased *in-situ* upgrading where possible, coupled with the relocation of households where human settlement development is impossible or undesirable. It is seen as essential that well-situated public land or land held by a parastatal organisation be accessed through an acquisition grant and provided to municipalities at no cost. At times, though, financing (for informal settlement upgrading) will be made available for the purchase of private land for housing purposes (Hopkins 2004: 9).

BNG provides a clear policy direction towards a more all-inclusive approach to the role-out of housing in the context of sustainable human settlement, including a forceful spatial component (Goss et al., 2010: 3). However, it still supports, or at least works within, a framework which presupposes unequal access to housing and amenities by maintaining the segregated pattern of the apartheid town. Furthermore, there are new forms of urban segregation emerging in post-apartheid South Africa, such as gated communities, which strengthen apartheid's spatial and social divisions (Du Plessis and Landman 2002: 55). Therefore, although the BNG plan is build sustainable communities in close proximity to (or even inclusive of) areas of social and economic amenities (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2009: 1), it is highly questionable whether this would be possible considering the ongoing segregated pattern of South African towns and cities.

In this respect, the potential to utilize housing policy to develop access to place, and to decrease present spatial inefficiencies, has not been adequately explored by the South African government. The placement (and displacement) of urban poor in the urban peripheries continues to haunt South Africa and reproduces apartheid-style problems:

Bringing people close to the city is widely recognized as a positive move, not only on account of its ability to open up opportunities for the poor, but also because of the potential to utilize already existing infrastructure, and to use costly land optimally (Adebayo and Adebayo 2000: 9).

Existing challenges clearly hinder the realization of sustainable human settlements (Goss et al. 2010: 2). Some of the challenges, which represent ongoing racially-based spatial dynamics, are as follows: houses in urban townships (known colloquially as RDP houses) are far from the urban centres where important economic activities take place; owners of low-cost houses often

sell or rent out their houses and return to informal settlements which are closer to economic opportunities; and the cost of transport from newly-built townships to places of work are exceedingly high (Goss et al. 2010: 2). Insofar as BNG is an advance, it would entail providing adequate housing in existing segregated communities (notably racially-segregated living spaces) in a way which might bring about more thriving and cohesive communities (Nobrega 2007: 6). However, the fact that social relationships matter (in the BNG framework) is at least an important starting point in thinking about new ways of providing housing in a deeply segregated and contested society like South Africa.

Crucially, the Breaking New Ground approach to sustainable human settlements argues that it is critical for communities and the beneficiaries of government housing programmes to be organized to partner with government in the implementation and execution of new human settlements. This suggests that government institutions should promote social cohesion in such a way that citizens work towards common goals. Importantly, the *Letsema* campaign was to be introduced to encourage communities and households to work together to improve the lives of all (Department of Housing 2004: 29). The *Letsema* campaign is an initiative by the Department of Human Settlements to encourage citizens to work together and assist the department to achieve its effort of building sustainable human settlements. This, and the objectives noted above, suggests that the Department of Human Settlements recognizes that there is a link (at least potentially) between social capital and human settlements. In this sense, the BNG policy is aimed at producing and maintaining bridging and linking social capital to achieve a 'better life for all'. Of course, the formation of real trust, networks and norms of reciprocity would be a long process, subject to recurrent false starts and failures. There are no quick fixes or immediate answers.

### **3.8 Informal Settlements and BNG**

Massive problems continue with respect to housing for urban poor blacks, despite the significant restructuring of housing policies and programmes in the first decade after the end of apartheid and the existence of Breaking New Ground. In this respect, the formation of sustainable urban human settlements in South Africa remains in serious doubt. These problems (or challenges) exist for a variety of reasons, but prominent are ongoing macro-economic neo-liberal policies, along with state incapacity and inadequate budgetary resources for housing.

The consequences for housing delivery arising from these systemic issues are very pronounced. For instance, state incapacity is marked by serious problems of intra-state coordination between levels of government and within the same level. While, broadly speaking, state policy aims for integrated development and sustainable settlements, the absence for instance of integrated funding mechanisms for human settlement development leads to housing developments without sufficient supporting social infrastructure such as clinics, schools and police stations. Also noticeable are the inadequacies of the national housing subsidy scheme; the questionable asset value of RDP housing; the differing locational needs of the poor in South African cities; and the overall unfamiliarity with the concept of an integrated urban form in South Africa (Adebayo 2010: 4-5). Housing problems in the form of informal settlements, as faced and addressed by BNG, will be used to illustrate and highlight the overwhelming odds against successfully engaging with the urban housing question in South Africa.

Reliable statistics on informal settlements in South Africa is difficult to come by. As noted earlier, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA 2007a) reported that, in 2007, there were about 1.2 million people living within these settlements in South Africa. Stats SA (2007b) also argues that the number of families living in informal settlements declined from 16,4% families in 2001 to 14,4% families in 2007. Three out of the nine South African provinces have higher percentages of households living in informal settlements compared to formal housing. For instance, Free State has 18,4% households, Gauteng 22,7% households and North West 23,8% households, while Limpopo has 5,6% of households, Eastern Cape 8% of households and KwaZulu-Natal (with 8,6% of families) living in informal dwellings (Stats SA 2007b).

Stats SA (2007a) estimated that there were 65,113 families in informal settlements in Cape Town in 2004 but the City of Cape Town claims that there were approximately 94,972 families (Misselhorn 2008: 15). Stats SA also does not take into consideration the high rates of illegal migration into South Africa from neighbouring countries like Zimbabwe and Mozambique. It is clearly difficult to count foreign nationals accurately as they are afraid of being identified and subsequently deported (Stats SA 2007a). These considerations nevertheless could lead to a total national estimate of four million families in informal settlements. And there is no clear evidence of any significant decrease in numbers of households living within these settlements in recent years.

Like other governments, the South African government has failed to ensure that significant urban growth is matched by enhanced public investments in housing and associated services, mainly amongst the urban poor (which in the case of South Africa are blacks) (Cairncross et al. 1990: 62). Informal settlements in this context arise. They are often built, but not always, at the periphery of the cities where land is cheap and abandoned (Mahanga 2002: 28). The urban poor in informal settlements, in constructing their houses, normally use salvaged materials like wood, tin and corrugated iron. Generally, these crude dwellings lack appropriate water supply, sanitation, drainage, waste disposal and proper road access; and such conditions compromise residents' health and safety (Cairncross et al. 1990: 67; Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1990: 121). Informal settlements are sometimes better located than the housing developments to which the government tries to relocate the urban poor, at times because employment opportunities may exist nearby. For this reason, and despite the harsh living conditions in informal settlements, "the urban poor prefer to live in tactical and in low-to-zero serviced areas with reproductive opportunities for survival" (Marx 2003: 75).

The existence of informal settlements in South Africa is aggravated by the constraints of costs for land deemed appropriate for housing the urban poor and low-income groups (Khan 2003: 53). Self-provisioning of housing in informal settlements is an attempt by the urban poor to solve the current housing challenges by themselves (Yuen 2007: 5; Schlyter 1995: 123). These settlements, as an expression of extreme poverty, provide cheap housing for the urban poor. In short, "they are economically useful, sometimes extremely useful, because they offer low cost housing options for the poor" (Biau 2011: 8). This in turn though entails cheap labour for urban businesses because the costs of reproduction of workers and their families are significantly reduced. The crux of the matter is that informal settlements are likely "here to stay" (Moshia 1995: 353).

Eradication of these settlements through relocation creates a host of problems for government authorities and relocated households, including municipal site development charges which are unaffordable for households (Aldrich and Sandhu 1995: 86). But it also disrupts existing, sometimes cohesive, living communities. In this respect, Lalloo (1999) cautions that the eradication of informal settlements by governments is problematic because relocated people often hold special attachments to the places they were compelled to leave, particularly because

self-provisioning involves households in developing their physical and social environment and hence attaining a sense of ownership and identity. New formal public housing sites are “often planned and produced by state bureaucracy; hence, they do not have meanings and no sense of belonging to the beneficiaries” (Victor 2009: 57). In particular, relocation entails the loss of valuable social networks which were created (with considerable time and energy) in the previous settlement and this has negative impacts on social capital.

The response of the post-apartheid government to informal settlements over the years has been informed by a number of national and provincial housing policies and programmes. Initially, the post-apartheid government’s housing policy did not offer sufficient and realistic options to meet all housing needs; most notably, there were no strategies for the upgrading of informal settlements or for the promotion of affordable rental housing (Department of Local Government and Housing 2005: 8). In addition, COHRE (2005) noted that the ANC-led South African government has enacted a number of laws with respect to evictions. Such legislation includes the Extension of Security of Tenure Act (No. 62 of 1962), and the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act (No. 19 of 1998), known as the PIE Act. The PIE Act has been critical, because “informal settlers or squatters are usually evicted” (COHRE 2005: 35) under this piece of legislation. Section 4 (10), (11) and (12) of the PIE Act speaks about the tearing down of informal structures which were occupied illegally and indicates that this duty needs to be done by the sheriff of court on condition that the sheriff must “be present during the demolition or removal of building structures” (RSA 1998: 3). Any eviction order of an illegal occupier or removal of informal settlements must be subjected to “the conditions deemed reasonable by the court, and the court may, on good cause shown, vary any condition for an eviction order” (RSA 1998: 3).

Policies such as the Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (Chapter 13 of the National Housing Code) (2004)) and Breaking New Ground (2004) indicate in certain ways a significant policy shift in respect of government strategy to informal settlements, with specific reference to their upgrading. In short, these policies promote approaches which are more integrated, flexible, and participative. Crucially, the space for incremental approaches to settlement upgrading and alternative tenure forms is also apparent. This new approach is based on the principle of community participation and it entails a

Paradigm shift from one of conflict and neglect to one of co-operation and integration; flexible tenure arrangements which protect residents against arbitrary eviction whilst minimizing the land administration costs; and a phased approach which visualizes basic services and social amenities provision as the first phase (Misselhorn 2008: 16).

However, the above policy shifts have been insufficiently put in practice and translated into changed delivery on the ground. They have not been supplemented by the required changes in systems, regulations and mechanisms, “nor has there been the requisite political will to enable real take-up on the alternative approaches at the provincial and local levels” (Misselhorn 2008: 16).

The approach in practice has therefore remained one which is focused primarily on the provision of conventional housing (notably, a house, related services and title as a fixed package). The adaptability and flexibility emanating formally from BNG and other policies have therefore not been pursued at the implementation stage. Instead municipalities have typically employed the BNG funding opportunity to facilitate conventional projects with insufficient or no real exploration of innovative and new approaches (Huchzermeyer 2008: 46).

The situation has been aggravated by confusing and conflicting messages, including wide use by government of the terms ‘slums clearance’ and ‘slums eradication’. They create the impression of clear intentions by government to rapidly eradicate informal settlements by whatever means required or available. An example of this is the KwaZulu Natal Elimination and Prevention of Reemergence of Slums Bill (2006), a type of legislation which makes no reference to the cooperative and participatory approach to informal settlements found in *Breaking New Ground*.

This bill speaks of ‘control and elimination of slums’, language used in the 1951 Prevention of Squatting Act of the apartheid government. This was replaced by the Prevention of Illegal Eviction and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act of 1998, which instead focuses on establishing rights for informal occupiers, and protecting them from forceful and undignified eviction (Huchzermeyer 2008: 46). A further example is the Cape Town Municipality which has a land eviction unit which patrols the city and dismantles any illegal structures which are in the process of being constructed. The city claims that any structures destroyed in the process of being built is not tantamount to an eviction and hence is perfectly legal.

### **3.9 Social Capital and Housing in South Africa**

The focus of this thesis is on the social sustainability of urban human settlements in post-apartheid South Africa, with an emphasis on social capital and related notions. The discussion so far has sought to provide a broad overview of housing policies and programmes since 1994 (in the context of broader macro-economic restructuring), as well as to outline the massive challenges remaining despite seemingly progressive housing legislation and significant state interventions across urban South Africa. This chapter ends with a more specific focus on questions about social capital and housing.

The classic definition by Putnam (1993) of social capital highlights community cohesion, accessible community networks, mutual assistance and high levels of trust; in this sense, social capital – it is claimed – facilitates social sustainability. The apartheid system of racial domination, as indicated previously, bequeathed a racially-based spatial legacy in urban South Africa which regularly undercut the emergence of social capital. When a city is so systematically divided through acts of authoritarian social engineering (like the South African city), the end result is often social alienation and segregation (Davidson and Wilson 2009: 9). At the same time, there were many localized forms of social cohesion (notably in urban black townships) which arose organically over time, and these were critical during times of economic and emotional shocks and stresses. Even this local cohesiveness was subject though to strain under apartheid, because of for instance pass laws and urban evictions – “resulting in loss of networks and family” (Cross 2010: 7).

The post-apartheid South African government has recently sought to establish sustainable human settlements based on cohesion, assistance and trust; this however may also be seen as a centralized social engineering project. Indeed, it may be that the current government’s housing provision, despite intentions to the contrary under BNG, only serves to inhibit social capital formation if it is not based on authentic community participation and democratic accountability of the state. Regrettably, insufficient attention has been made in the current South African literature to questions about housing, community cohesion and social capital. Some literature does exist though.

In a study conducted by Cross (2006) in Johannesburg, questions were raised about the possible linkages between the breakdown of South African black households and government provision

of low-cost housing. The study revealed that young single women living in subsidised housing with their families in Johannesburg rejected strategies to study further in the hope of formal employment. Instead they believed in living on their own resources through transactional sex and other income sources. These formally unemployed young women would delay marriage and forego the establishment of their own households without having a guaranteed source of income (Cross 2006: 19). This was undermining the formation of marriage-based nuclear-family households. Further, if they were to leave their household, they would decide not to pursue the acquiring of subsidized housing even if they qualified for such housing. They would instead prefer to move to a shack community. In doing so, they would be leaving behind their household's support system and social networks focusing on their household of origin. The study concludes therefore that, at least in the case of young single women, social networking (even where it exists) may not be the preferred option (Cross 2010: 5-6).

A study conducted by Mukorombindo (2012) focuses on social networks and recently developed human settlements in black Grahamstown. It attempts to provide an indication of the importance of social networks as part of building sustainable communities and social cohesion. In doing so, it explored the opportunities and challenges of 'deploying' social capital and social networks amongst low income urban communities in alleviating poverty and developing sustainable human settlements. Significant social security networks amongst neighbours existed. Hence, local residents "expressed strong family like connections with fellow members and neighbours and acknowledged receiving some assistance from these local networks when in need" (Mukorombindo 2012: 143). Also present were community networks in the form of *stokvels* (or savings-clubs), burial societies and churches which could be said to facilitate the building of social capital. Social networks in Grahamstown made positive contributions to poor households; however, the burdens of rising unemployment and poverty over-shadowed and dented the effects of social networks. The study concluded that "linking capital, networks between residents and decision makers as well as other actors in these study areas are inadequate to create a sustainable and interdependent community" (Mukorombindo 2012: 150-151).

In another study conducted by Nkambule (2012), also on Grahamstown, housing is clearly shown to be marked by overcrowding, in which seven people on average are staying in one house which is approximately forty square metres. Overcrowding sometimes leads to

experiences of invasion of privacy and heightened anxiety, though the notion of crowding may be locally and culturally specific (Graydon, 2010). Residents, in specifically Extension 9 (in Grahamstown), though with big families in small houses, felt in fact that the shortage of physical space within the RDP houses facilitated interaction and connectivity. The cramped space enhanced collective participation in conversation and entertainment activities. One of the female participants noted that “it is not good for the house to be small but its advantage is that it makes us very close”. In this sense the size of houses creates and maintains bonding social capital between RDP beneficiaries (internal to households), but the implications of this for cohesion between households is unclear.

In large part, though, the urban housing literature in South Africa does not incorporate in-depth discussions about sustainable human settlements and social capital formation, although it does often raise questions about the dearth of community participation in housing projects (Mafukidze and Hoosen 2009; Mathekga and Buccus 2006; Williams 2006).

Crucially, then, the social dimension of housing sustainability is the least researched in South Africa and is normally over-looked. This thesis therefore seeks to fill an empirical gap (and conceptual gap) by theoretically framing the empirical study in terms of sustainable human settlement and specifically social capital.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

Despite the recent promotion of sustainable human settlement in housing policy, the South African government has failed to adopt in practice a holistic approach to settlement sustainability which addresses the issues of spatial and socio-economic divides in South African towns and cities (Tissington, 2011: 8), and with respect to the intertwined pillars of environmental, social and economic sustainability. The government is a far cry from not only providing dignified housing for all but from building urban settlements which are socially sustainable.

In this regard, the social dimension to sustainable human settlement is often ignored in South Africa because of the over-riding macro-economic programme in which economic growth is pursued seemingly for its own sake without a significant redistributive thrust. This is not to deny that the South African government has made important strides since 1994 in constructing

significant numbers of houses; indeed, housing provision has taken place on a massive scale if understood in purely quantitative terms.

Also there is no doubt that, in terms of realizing processes of socio-economic redistribution, South African housing policies and programmes are marked by significant progressive tendencies. However, the main focus of the thesis is social sustainability and the yard-stick for measuring this are not formal policies and programmes but lived realities on the ground. In this context, the next two chapters focus on housing in Hlalani (in Grahamstown) and they highlight the experiences of Hlalani residents with regard to housing and human settlement.

## **Chapter 4:**

### **Hlalani – Socio-Economic Livelihoods and Housing Delivery**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This and the following chapter discuss more specifically my research findings about sustainable human settlements in the case of Hlalani in Grahamstown East (also known as *Rini* in isiXhosa). This first chapter details the socio-economic status of Hlalani RDP housing occupants and discusses service delivery (and specifically housing provision) from the perspective of the occupants themselves. The next chapter focuses on social capital or the social networks which exist in Hlalani settlement. In many ways, Hlalani represents a microcosm of the status and experiences of poor urban black South Africa. Hence, many of the problems enumerated in the previous chapter with regard to housing in urban South Africa find local expression in my study of Hlalani. The chapter first provides a brief historical overview of Hlalani and then goes on to discuss the socio-economic status of the households surveyed, and their experiences of housing delivery, settlement design and service provision by the local municipality.

#### **4.2 Spatial, Historical and Contemporary Contexts**

This chapter provides a broad overview of the case study of Hlalani (meaning “Stay There”), which is one of the townships in Grahamstown East. Hlalani is found immediately below Rini’s unique landmark, Mount Zion, as the hill is sometimes referred to locally (in isiXhosa, it is called *Intaba Yezono*). Hlalani was one of the first sections of Grahamstown East to receive RDP houses in the 1990s.

Grahamstown is located in the second largest province in South Africa (the Eastern Cape Province) and is the heart of the local Makana Municipality (which exists within the larger Cacadu District Municipality). It is situated 120 km from Port Elizabeth to the southwest and 180 km from East London to the southeast. The province has a population of 6.4 million people, with fourteen per cent of the population of South Africa living in the Eastern Cape (Census in Brief 2003: 6). The Eastern Cape is well-known as one of South Africa’s poorest provinces (Province of the Eastern Cape 2003: 7). It is located in the south-eastern part of South Africa and stretches along the Indian Ocean. It was formed in the post-apartheid period by consolidating the previous

Cape Province of 'white' South Africa and the former black Bantustans of Ciskei and Transkei. The province is divided into six district municipalities which comprise of forty-five local municipalities. The Makana Municipality area occupies approximately 4,376 km<sup>2</sup> (Makana Municipality Housing Sector Plan 2008: 21).

Like other urban centres in South Africa, Grahamstown bears the scars of the apartheid past in terms of urban spatial segregation and inequalities. After the 1994 democratic elections (as discussed in the previous chapter), new housing policies and programmes sought to redress these spatial inequalities; without necessarily undoing their pronounced racialized basis. The Housing White Paper, for instance, called for the provision of secure tenure, for permanent residential structures which would ensure privacy, and for access to basic services for the urban poor and homeless. It also specified however that the state could not meet all the housing needs of all the homeless (RSA 1994: 19). The housing challenges for the post-apartheid state and the problems encountered in seeking to meet housing targets are clearly exemplified in the case of the Eastern Cape Province and in Grahamstown specifically. These challenges form part of the broader poverty challenges facing the country.

Though apartheid was abolished as a result of the democratic transition, only limited tangible progress has been made pertaining to the poverty profile of the Eastern Cape. Hence, approximately half of the provincial population was estimated to be illiterate in 1999. In the same year, approximately 55% of the population of the province was unemployed. Access to basic social services remained limited, in spite of the significant investments in service provision in the province. It also seems that the number of households in the Eastern Cape Province with access to basic services such as sanitation, water and electricity is lessening; for instance, there was a significant drop from 1995 to 2001. All socio-economic indicators show a worsening of poverty from the west of the province to the east (in which are located the former Bantustans). Poverty in the Alfred NZO and OR Tambo municipalities, where most of the province's population resides, is particularly severe (Province of the Eastern Cape 2003: 13).

Generally the Eastern Cape's housing plans have failed the urban poor. Furthermore, in some parts of the province, residents have left the formal housing settlements because of the poorly-constructed quality of their houses; in fact, the number of houses that need to be fixed in the

province is nearly the same as the total number of houses constructed in the 2006/2007 financial year. The overall Eastern Cape housing backlog is estimated at 800,000 (Sapa 2009: 1).

According to O'Meara and Greaves (1995), Grahamstown historically is among the most segregated cities in South Africa in terms of the racial structuring of living spaces and human settlements. And even a cursory examination of present-day Grahamstown indicates that this racialized space continues nearly two decades after the end of apartheid. Like any other former black township in South Africa, the living conditions in Grahamstown East (the local non-racialised term for black Grahamstown) are appalling in purely physical terms. Poor black Grahamstownians are without adequate shelter, and places of economic activities (and these are very limited in Grahamstown) are comparatively far from their residential areas.

The past therefore weighs very heavily on the present. Certainly, Grahamstown continues to bear, and quite fundamentally, the imprint of separate development policies. In terms of urban forms and spaces, a significant spatial imperative of separate development under apartheid was the Group Areas Act, which required the provision of separate residential areas for different, legally-defined, racial groups. This social engineering, which carried out segregated planning to its logical conclusion, produced spatially-separate human settlements and this caused deep social and political rifts within urban spaces; and continues to do so. A view from a hill, on which the 1820s Settler Monument stands (honoring white settlers) and which overlooks nearly the whole expanse of Grahamstown, entails not only a spatial gaze but is also a stark historical reminder of the ongoing significance of group areas for divided cities in contemporary South Africa.

In this context, it is necessary to give (at least a schematic) historical overview of housing developments in Grahamstown to 1994 and beyond. Grahamstown was established in 1812 by Lieutenant-Colonel John Graham in an effort to retain the Eastern Cape (the then 'frontier' of colonialism in the region) under British colonial power (O'Meara and Greaves 1995: 45). Grahamstown was a war zone at the beginning of the 19th century and during this time Xhosa-speaking African people and Khoi people moved into the town and a number of informal settlements arose and increased in size (particularly from the 1840s onwards) (Hunt 1958: 137-138). Most of these people were called Mfengu (also referred to as Fingos) and were refugees from Shaka's wars. Governor D'urban in nearby Peddie also relocated about 17,000 Mfengus as a strategy of boosting the labour supply for the white colonists. Ayliff and Whiteside (1962)

noted that due to the unproductiveness of the district, Mfengus also migrated into the district of Grahamstown for greener pastures.

In the year 1848, the Municipal Commissioner of Grahamstown appointed an administrator for the Khoi (only) location and chose a land area for occupation by blacks including Xhosa-speaking people. Seven years later, this area was surveyed with the aim of granting title deeds or freehold title (Hunt 1958: 141-143). The granting of title deeds led to blacks purchasing the plots like 'hot cakes' for only one British pound per site. However, those who could not afford the plots squatted on open spaces. By the end of 1857, 320 free plots were issued to the occupants of a number of surveyed plots; this served as a token of appreciation for supporting the colonists during the 'war of Mlanjeni' which was fought between 1850 and 1853 (Maxwell 1965: 87). Like every other town in South Africa during the 1800s, the living conditions of blacks in Grahamstown were horrendous.

Further housing for blacks in Grahamstown was provided sporadically from the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 (and on into the apartheid era from 1948), and at a rate below the rate of population increase. This was despite the fact that permanent residence of blacks in the urban areas was prohibited (or severely restricted) by the governments of that time. Broadly speaking, Grahamstown stands out from other South African cities in that its black population was not subjected to massive relocations during apartheid. However, despite the fact that freehold rights for blacks existed in Fingo Village, these did come under intense pressure at times by the government. In the 1950s a plan was devised by the national government which would classify black areas as primarily for settlement by Coloureds and Indians, and this shook the black landowners. The local municipality welcomed the plan, and also hoped that Grahamstown (as part of the master grand apartheid design) would be recognised by being placed along the borders of a nearby bantustan and hence be given "border area status and be able to attract industry" (Manona 1987: 573).

In terms of actual housing provision, 26 sub-economic houses were constructed in 1926 and (in 1938) 50 more houses were constructed, at Tanti location (Moller 2001: 14). Black African locations were becoming increasingly overcrowded and unmanageable such that, in 1969, the local authorities released an old cemetery for housing provision purposes. The Municipality also issued sixty-five plots for 50 cents each; residents were told though that the sites were temporary

and, once other parts of the location had been surveyed properly, they would be moved. A study about the extent of the local shortages of houses in the late 1960s revealed that residents in 81% of households lived in one or two rooms and that the “room occupancy rate was two and half adults per room” (Roux and St Ledger 1971: 301). About 200 houses were constructed in Makanaskop in 1974, and black housing started to receive more consideration from the local administration at the beginning of the 1980s. In 1981, a self-help housing project with 218 plots was initiated at Tanty and a few houses were developed in Thatha (Manona 1987: 57).

Grahamstown was managed by the local (white) City Council until the formation of administration boards in early 1970s. These were administered by white officials in the main and reported to central government. They had the mandate to bring orderly development to black urban townships and this included, amongst other repressive practices, the demolition of unapproved dwellings. At the beginning of the 1980s, plans were set afoot for the formation of a local City Council for black townships and hence the Rini Council was formed in 1983. In the very same year, in the context of the heightened urban mobilization nation-wide, Grahamstown black residents established a civic body known as the Grahamstown Civic Association (GRACA) (Moller 1990: 39).

Residents engaged in a series of rent and service strike protests during the 1980s. In a survey conducted during one of the strike activities, housing was identified as the main community grievance (Moller 1990: 39). By the end of December 1993, Rini Council was in debt amounting to R767,338 for unpaid charges for water, electricity and rates. This led to negotiations between Rini Council and the Grahamstown branch of the South African National Civic Organization (SANCO) and to the signing of an agreement whereby residents would pay a constant rate of R25 per month for rent and services. However, the charge of R25 was exorbitant for most people and they failed to pay it. Only 40% of householders were paying the service charge in 1994 (Manona 1997: 39).

Given the political explosiveness of racial segregation in urban spaces, the notion of one overarching administration in Grahamstown (rather than different administrations based on group areas) started in September 1988 at a conference under the banner of the Grahamstown Initiative, initiated by the black population residing in Grahamstown. This sought to build trust between local communities, to create an inclusive society and to form a “united city with non-

racial democratic local government” (Moller 2001: 4). This was followed in 1990 by the Grahamstown Joint Negotiating Forum; interestingly, one of the forum’s main objectives was to consider ways of controlling land intrusions and the challenges of urban in-migration. A year later, the Grahamstown City Council convened a meeting with various parties (including Rini Council and GRACA) to develop (and presumably implement) the notion of a single city. Rini Councilors pulled out of the talks in 1993 (Moller 2001: 4) leaving GRACA and other parties at the table without anyone with which to negotiate. After the national democratic elections in 1994, measures were taken locally to re-unite the urban areas of Grahamstown under a single Transitional Local Council which would take over the resources and responsibilities of its predecessors (Moller 2001: 4).

Since 1994, under the post-apartheid housing policy, the South African state has sought to provide homeownership in black urban areas. Hence, unlike under apartheid, the democratic government has initiated freehold security of tenure schemes in relation to all formal housing areas of Grahamstown East. In this regard, during the period of the Mbeki national administration from 1999 to 2008, service delivery in urban centres gained considerable momentum. Approximately 4,900 RDP houses were constructed in Grahamstown East between 1996 and 2007. A total of 1,075 RDP houses were constructed in Vukani I and II which were informal settlements areas between 2003 and 2007 (Moller 2008: 7). In the financial year 1998/99, 550 houses were built in Hlalani (known as Lower Makanaskop) at a cost of R4,542,500. As well, in 2001, 1,000 new houses were built in Extension 9 (Moller 2001: 5). In the year 2003/04, 90 houses were built in Newtown and the municipality spent R2,424,330 on this project. In the same year, the municipality built 250 houses in Tanti and this cost R6,734,250 (Makana Housing n.d: 1). Besides these formal housing developments, improvements in service delivery occurred in various informal housing areas. Overall, a number of housing projects in Grahamstown have “occurred under the auspices of the new government’s Reconstruction and Development Programme (Moller 2001: 5). Yet, only a few years after being built, many of the new ‘RDP’ housing structures are collapsing at an alarming rate due to poor workmanship.

### **4.3 Hlalani Overview**

Hlalani area was an open land and, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the land was invaded and people erected informal structures. After the democratic elections in 1994, Hlalani was earmarked for a RDP housing development. Although RDP houses have been built in Hlalani, backyard shacks are still a visible feature. This section provides a broad overview of Hlalani in Grahamstown East based primarily on my fieldwork, after which housing in Hlalani will be focused on more specifically. Fifty households, consisting of 287 people, were surveyed (with the number of people per household ranging between two and nine persons). The survey participants have been staying in the study area generally for more than eight years.

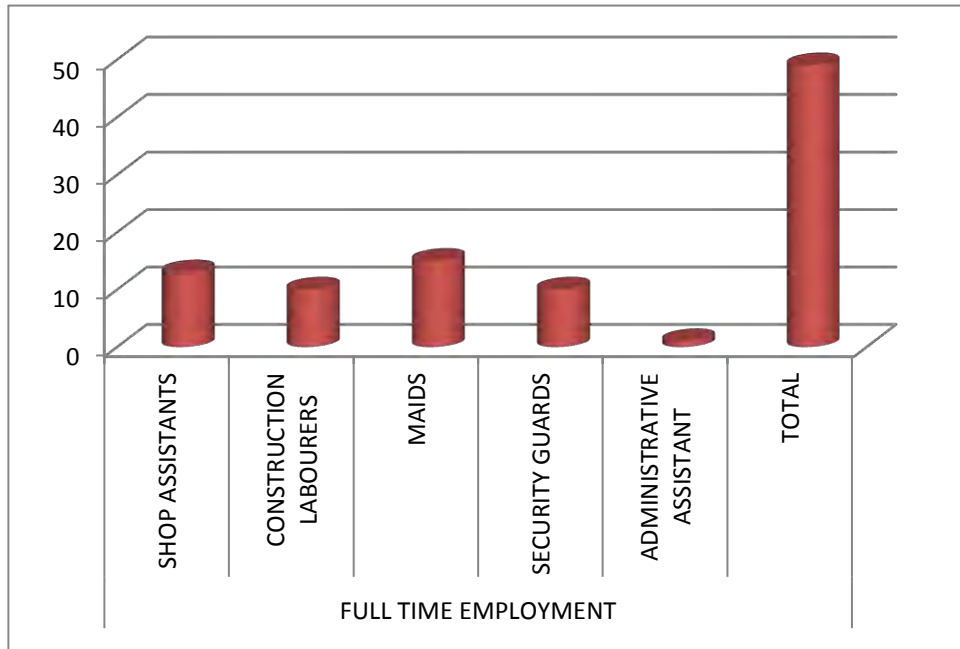
With regard to the actual participants in the survey, 42% of the participants were male and 58% of the participants were female. In fact, most of the households who participated in the survey are female-headed households. The age breakdown of the participants is as follows: between the ages of 30 and 40 (44%), between 41 and 50 (34%) and over fifty – including pensioners – (22%). In relation to marital status, 46% of the participants were single (and had never married), 34% were married, 6% divorced, 8% widowed and 6% were cohabitating.

Many residents in Hlalani have moved from informal settlements into RDP housing in recent years and the municipality has built approximately 560 RDP houses. Though this has led to some sort of fixed property ownership on their part, poverty remains very pervasive in the township because of unemployment, low wages and limited alternative livelihood strategies. Of the fifty households, all but one household had a member who worked in the formal economy on a full-time basis. But, given the low monthly wages (see below), households are struggling to sustain themselves on the available income with significant debt existing for many households.

In the survey (see Table 4.1 below), Hlalani residents with full-time formal employment consisted primarily of females, and they included the following low-skilled employees: shop assistants, construction labourers, domestic maids, security guards and one administrative assistant. Domestic work, which is notorious as a low-paid sector of employment, is the predominant full-time employment. The salaries range from R1,300 to R3,000 per month, with the breakdown of salaries (from highest to lowest) as follows: the administrative assistant (R3,000), maids and security guards (between R1,800 and R2,000), and construction labourers

and shop assistants (between R1,300 to R1,500). The female-headed households with children rely quite heavily on the child support grant as a source of income.

**TABLE 4.1: FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT**



On average, each household spent approximately R800 on groceries per month. All households focused on basic food commodities like sugar, samp and beans, rice, mealie meal, cooking oil, flour and meat. Normally the groceries do not last the entire month and households buy on credit from ‘the Pakistanis’ who operate tuck-shops in the township. Besides basic groceries, households spent on average R80 per month on electricity and between R140 to R300 on furniture. Some households have taken out cash loans and purchase clothing on credit; heavy debts exist for some households and these have been garnished. Females, more so than males, are involved in ensuring the social reproduction of household and family life. They are for instance responsible for paying rates and for buying groceries, electricity, paraffin and furniture.

Residents in Hlalani are not only victims of unemployment and marginalization, as they are agents in their own right through ingenuity and creativity. They do this for instance through informal economic activities as a source of income and survival. The economic activities include selling fire wood, providing transport to carry goods from town and around the township using a

donkey cart, selling homemade beer (called *umshovalale*) and selling meat such as tripe; there are also money lenders, hair dressers and robbers who rob people for survival. Income generated from these activities is for basic and immediate household expenses. Those who sell or provide services often provide their customers with credit and sometimes this is not paid or is not paid in good time; this of course negatively affects their business and cash flow. Furthermore, they operate their businesses with limited or no assets, such as hair driers. Alcohol sellers and hairdressers complain that the municipality encourages people to start small businesses but they do not receive any form of assistance from the municipality. One male participant who is an owner of a tavern said that:

*I once went to the municipality to ask for funding to develop my business but I was turned down, in fact not once but many times. Surprisingly, the municipality encourages people to be entrepreneurs [known as Vukuzenzele] but we do not get any assistance, we are rejected (May 12, 2012).*

Another female participant who is a hairdresser noted that:

*Although I sometimes get piece jobs to do hair for people in the township but I do not have all the necessary tools to do hair for example hair driers. Sometimes I end up losing customers because they are not satisfied since I do not have all the necessary equipment and another thing is that I do not have a place to do my hair dressing work. I always have to go where my customers live. When I ask for assistance from the municipality they tell me that they will contact me and when you do a follow up they say be patient. It has been almost six years now since I applied for assistance from the municipality (May 12, 2012).*

The donkey cart is used as a mode of transport. It is hired to carry goods from around the township and in town at a fee (currently R30 per load). One participant (donkey cart owner) commented on how customers who do not pay affect them:

*Some of our customers are crooks they don't pay us they keep on lying to us. This affects me because I budget the money for my family and all of a sudden somebody decides not to pay me. Sometimes I end up fighting because my family is hungry and need that money to buy groceries (May 12, 2012).*

The donkey cart business booms during the months of June and December because many boys go to the bush for circumcision. "Going to the bush" for circumcision acts as an instrument for

the transition from boyhood (*ubukhwenkwe*) to manhood (*ubudoda*) and cultural instruction concerning their social responsibilities and their behavior in society. This act is largely practiced by the *amaXhosa* who are largely found in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa (Hall 2011: 28). During these periods they get hired to carry fire wood and alcohol and items that will be needed in the bush.

Firewood is also sold to supplement household income. A bundle of firewood costs R20 and a load placed on a donkey cart costs R80. The firewood is mostly sold to people who will use it to cook African traditional beer (called *umqombothi*) and cook meat during traditional ceremonies. Others use it to braai meat. The business is also booming during the months of June and December because there are many traditional ceremonies going on during these periods. One male seller said that:

*During the month of June and December we get a lot of orders because many boys go to the bush for circumcision. These periods are happy times for us since we will get money and be able to buy things like electricity and food (May 12, 2012).*

Other residents sell alcohol. The most commonly sold alcohol was beers, spirits and wines. They also sold cigarettes. The key challenge in selling alcohol is the severe competition in the market for alcohol. One participant noted that:

*Some of us buy alcohol from the bottle store as we increase the price in order to get profit. For example I sell Hansa pilsner beer (750 ml) for R12 and those who buy it from South African Breweries sell it for R10. You then find that a lot of people go for the R10 beer since it is cheap and I lose customers like that (May 12, 2012).*

Selling of homemade beer (called *umshovalale*) is another economic activity which takes place in Hlalani. One litre of this beer ranges in price from R2.50 to R3.00. Alcohol is also sold on credit and on payment an interest fee is added. Meat mostly sold is tripe. People usually sell it on credit to pension and child grant beneficiaries. A packet of about 1 kilogram is R50 and on credit it is R60. Money lenders (known as *izikopara*) also generate income by offering loans to people at an interest rate. Borrowed money is returned with a 50% interest fee.

Robbing is rampant in Hlalani, though this crime deteriorates the value of social life by increasing fear, distrust and suspicion and is unacceptable to most community members. The robbers in the study area claim that robbing people is a way of generating income for survival

because they are unemployed and poor. One male participant from one the gangster groups which exist in the study area asserted that:

*This crime also stems from the fact that some of us are from poor families. Our families are poor and we are struggling. Let's say I am in need of money to buy something and I know that at home they don't have money, definitely I will go and steal. But those who are better off wouldn't steal because his family is financially stable and they will assist him. This thing of stealing starts back from home because we are struggling (March 13, 2012).*

Another male participant from the gangster group added that:

*I sleep without something to eat; my grandparents need to take medication and the next morning I will also need something to eat. This negatively affects me and I will end up stealing in one of the foreigner's shops and this is how I will get money to live (March 13, 2012).*

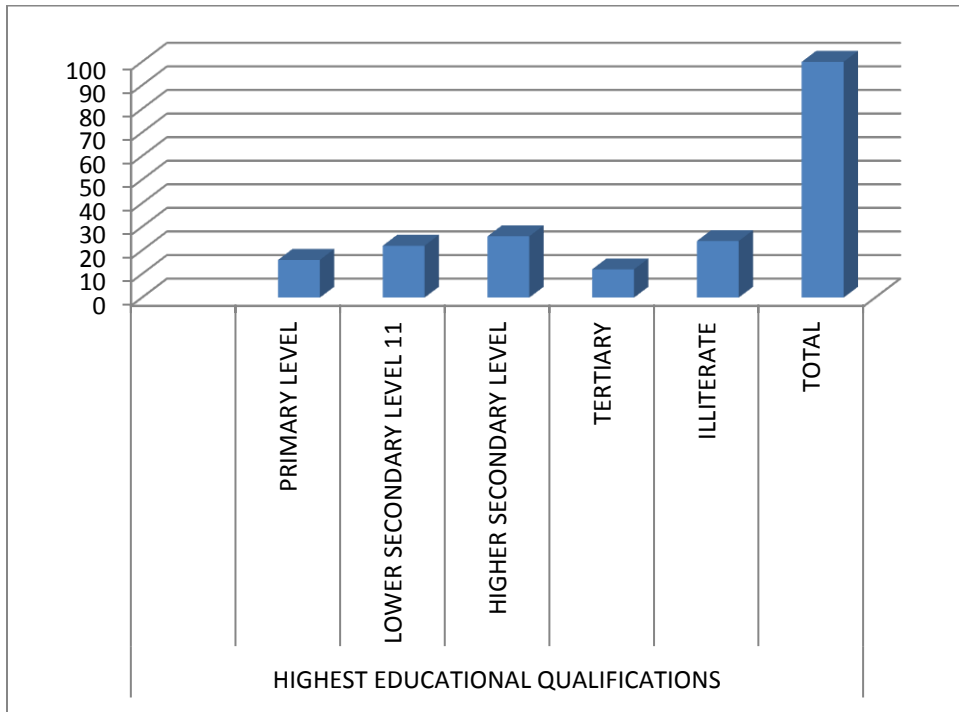
The level of poverty in Hlalani is reflected in the education of residents. My fieldwork reveals that there is a very high dropout rate from school in Hlalani and that there is a negative view of the role of education in facilitating any improvement in socio-economic status. In this respect, one female participant noted that

*Many people are educated and some of them are graduates from colleges like Midlands but they are unemployed. So it is a waste of time to be educated in our days" (March 10, 2012).*

Most participants in the survey argued that dropping out of school arises because of household inability to pay for school uniforms and other education-related expenses. Learners wearing old uniforms to school are subjected to ridicule. Table 4.2 below shows survey participants' level of education.

As the table indicates, 16% of the participants have a primary level education, 22% have a lower secondary level education, 26% a higher secondary level education, 12% some kind of tertiary education, while 24% of the participants are illiterate.

**TABLE 4.2: LEVEL OF EDUCATION**



Though the length of stay in Hlalani for survey participants has been reasonably long, the poverty context has led to a situation where relationships between households do not seem to be based on high levels of trust. This is consistent with the argument by Richards and Roberts (1998: 8) that “poverty and economic crisis lead to an unstable situation, where individuals do not have much to lose by breaking trust”. For learners in school, though, there is evidence of significant social networking based on participation and reciprocity. Learners who stay in the same vicinity often interact after school to discuss assignments or are given group assignments to undertake. Besides discussing school work, they also discuss television soapies and movies and generally engage in gossip. At the same time, there is only limited intergenerational interaction. Young people label older people as boring and refuse to mingle with them, while older people claim that they lose dignity through interaction with younger people. In this context, one female pensioner said:

*If you spend a lot of time cracking jokes with the youth they will end up disrespecting you*  
(March 10, 2012).

These points, which relate to questions about social capital, are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter. The next section discusses housing in Hlalani and residents' views on housing conditions in terms of social sustainability indicators.

#### **4.4 Housing and Settlement Satisfaction**

As argued previously, housing is “more than a dwelling unit and its objective characteristics, since it also provides security, privacy, neighborhood and social relations, status, [and] community facilities and services” (Toscano and Amestoy 2007: 2). The everyday meanings that residents give to their local conditions of existence raise questions about housing satisfaction and differences between households' actual and preferred housing and community conditions. In considering this, I first focus on local housing design.

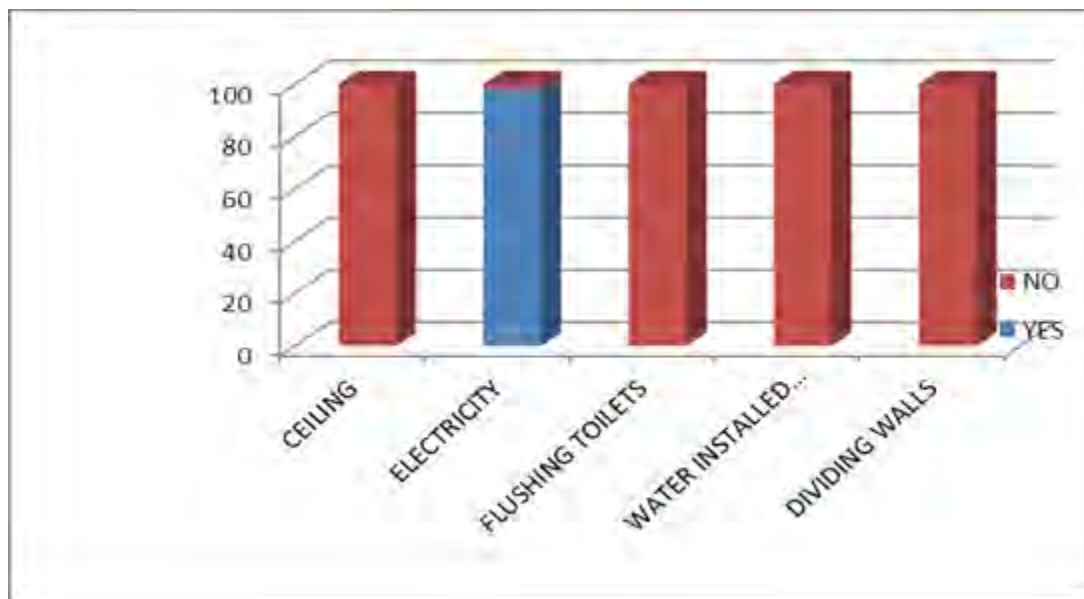
##### **4.4.1 House Design and Satisfaction**

One of the challenges in creating socially sustainable housing in Hlalani (as elsewhere) is to construct building units which are of sound and durable quality. It is quite clear though that, in actuality, the quality of the RDP housing units in Hlalani falls far below acceptable standards. Not only are the houses small in size (with few rooms) but also the housing structures are sub-standard and unlikely (and in fact unable) to neither withstand adverse weather conditions nor survive the first few years of their existence. Many housing structures have fundamental construction faults because of poor workmanship and poor-quality building materials, such that some are in a serious state of disrepair. Table 4.3 below shows the quality of occupied houses as identified by respondents in the survey. They were asked if their houses have a proper ceiling, electricity, flushing toilets, water installed inside the house and dividing walls.

Overall, for the households which participated in the study, their RDP houses in Hlalani have no ceiling, no water installed inside the house, no dividing walls and no flushing toilets. In this regard, it may seem questionable whether formal RDP houses are any better than informal structures and shacks in terms of their impact on daily living. The residents use pit toilets which constantly omit a foul smell, and they consider using these toilets (during the day and night) as a humiliating public experience. When these toilets invariably become full, they call the municipality to come and pump and drain the waste matter; but the municipality's response time is very slow. Sometimes residents feel compelled to use objects to push down the waste matter so that they are able to use the toilet again. Some toilets, according to respondents, have never

been drained since 1994. As a result, some people are forced to walk to ‘Mount Zion’ and use the grounds there as a toilet. Draining toilets is supposed to be a free service from the municipality, but residents at times are forced to bribe municipal workers at a fee (of currently R20). This is paid to the municipal workers involved in the service, in order for the household’s pit latrine to be prioritized by the municipal workers. However, the municipality is not seemingly aware of this.

**TABLE 4.3: DOES YOUR RDP HOUSE HAVE THE FOLLOWING?**



Some RDP houses in Hlalani have no water tap at all and occupants have to go to their neighbours to ask for and fetch water. Sometimes water tap owners do not provide others with access to water because the owners are the ones responsible for paying the monthly water bills (with the cost per litre rising with water consumption levels). Even for those with taps, the dirtiness of the water is an intermittent problem. In relation to rooms in the RDP houses, there are no dividing walls such that households improvise by using curtains to divide the house. Given the small sizes of the houses, there are serious limitations to subdivision. There are no ceilings which has serious implications in terms of comfort. For example, when the sun is very hot, the houses become very warm inside. In sharp contrast to toilets, ceilings, walls and water, 98% of the surveyed households have electricity. However, occupants need to pay for electricity up-front via meters (a prepaid electricity system) and, because electricity is expensive, this

makes it unaffordable or minimizes usage. As a substitute, residents turn to paraffin appliances. The 2% of households without electricity make use of paraffin and candles for lighting and cooking.

RDP occupants also expressed deep concerns about the exterior of their houses. For example, 66% of the surveyed households have cracking external walls. They believe that this emanates from the use of low quality building material and they link this to claims that the officials responsible for RDP construction defrauded the building funds (presumably through tendering malpractices). Some occupants believe that, when mixing the concrete for the houses, insufficient cement was used and this explains the cracking of the houses. When it rains in downpours, some of the houses have been known to partially collapse. For the 34% of the households which have no cracking walls, there is nevertheless minimal trust in the durability of the houses. Some of the households have no choice but to fix the cracks at their own expense. Nearly two-thirds of the households also had problems with cracks or gaps between outdoor doors and the door frames.

Leaking roofs are a serious problem for 52% of the households. Some roofs leak even during light rains while others leak only during heavy rains. The interior of some of the houses become a dam during heavy rains due to the leaking, and this causes damage to furniture and to other household items. Most leaking roofs now appear old and rusty. For the 48% of the households with no leaking roofs, this often arose due to the fact that the occupants had fixed their roofs. Leaking roofs and other concerns of occupants are outlined in Table 4.4 below.

The concerns raised by occupants pose serious health risks. In fact, some people living in the RDP houses in Hlalani suffer from ailments which may be directly linked to the conditions of the housing, including flu, asthma and pneumonia. Rainwater, as noted, often comes in through the cracks in the exterior walls making the houses very wet and damp. One married female participant also noted that the cracks

*Allow cold to come through; my son is suffering from asthma so he is strongly affected by the cold weather* (March 1, 2012).

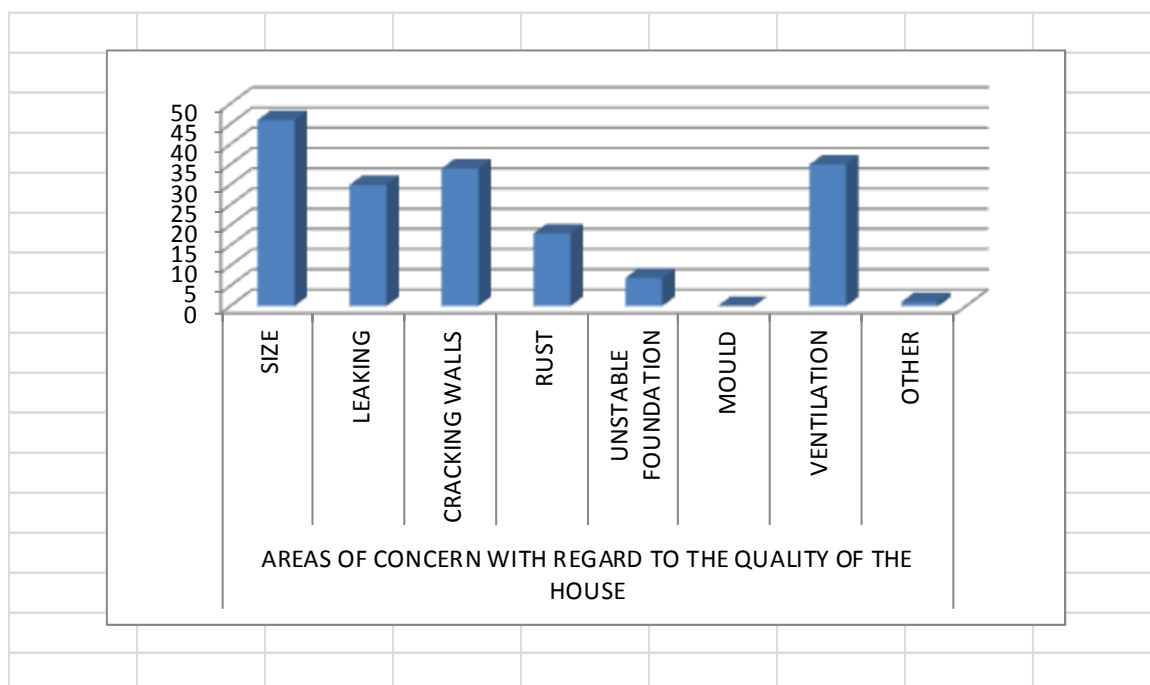
These RDP houses in many ways then are no better than informal structures and shacks in terms of their impact on living conditions; in winter, for instance, it is not unusual for Hlalani residents in RDP housing to sleep wearing their clothes. When it is raining, occupants have to move

around from spot to spot because the roofs are leaking. One female occupant aged 40 asserted that

*The houses are a total disaster when it rains; it is like a waterfall inside the house because of the cracks and the leaks (March 1, 2012).*

It is because of cases such as these that the Minister of Human Settlements (Tokyo Sexwale) referred to the current housing stock as “a national shame”.

**TABLE 4.4: AREAS OF CONCERN WITH REGARD TO THE QUALITY OF THE HOUSE**

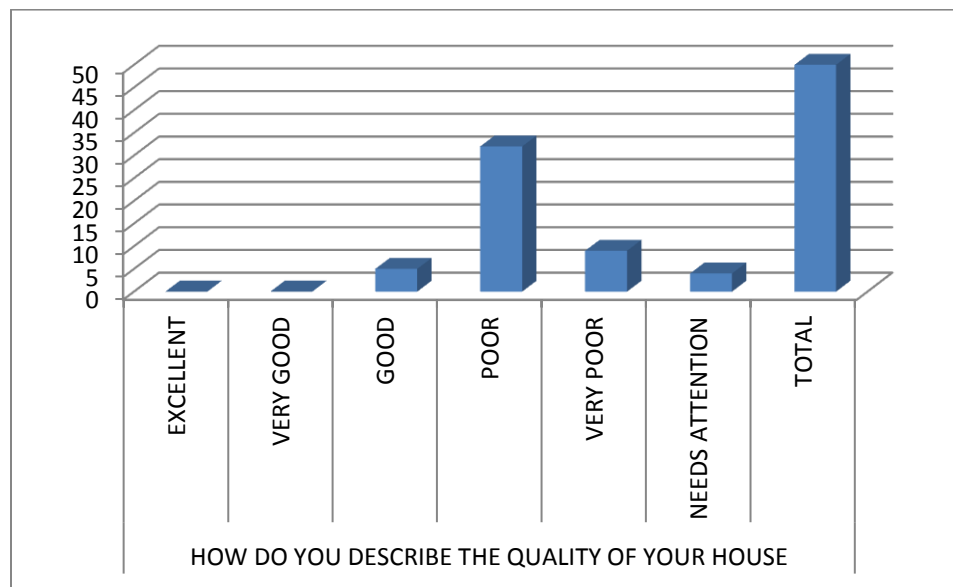


Because of the many and ongoing problems, more than 50% of the surveyed occupants in Hlalani have made, at their own expense, improvements to their RDP houses. They have installed new outside doors (since the original doors were not strong); and repaired walls, roofs, water taps, window frames and toilets. Some have also extended their RDP house since the original one was very small. Those residents who have not undertaken any structural repair work or improvements recognized the need to do so, but many of them cited lack of funds for this. Others believed that it was government’s responsibility to fix their houses because government had promised to provide decent houses for all. In this regard, they claim that (prior to housing

delivery) government never consulted them in terms of housing design and necessary standards of quality.

Overall, none of the surveyed participants believe that their RDP houses are of an ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’ quality. Rather, 10% claim that the houses are of ‘good’ structural quality, another 64% claim that their houses are of a ‘poor’ structural quality and a further 18% say that their houses are ‘very poor’; another 8% insist that their houses need urgent structural attention. As another overall view, 86% of the occupants do not like their RDP houses. The reasons cited for this are as follows: the houses are very small; they are not meant for human beings; the houses are of very poor quality; and they are not safe. In addition, many believe that the RDP house is more like a typical township rental flat than a proper house. For the small number of occupants (14%) who like their RDP house, this in large part arises because the houses are for free and therefore there is no need to complain; and, even if and when they complain to government, no action is pursued to deal with their housing concerns and complaints. Table 4.5 below describes the overall quality of houses as identified by occupants.

**TABLE 4:5: HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE THE QUALITY OF YOUR HOUSE?**



#### 4.4.2 Backyard Shacks

Although the government has built RDP houses in Hlalani, there are backyard shacks at some houses. The shacks are normally made of corrugated iron but others are made of stick and mud,

and plastic. Some residents build them to add more living space since the RDP houses are small and some residents have big families. One married male participant aged 55 noted that:

*A shack is cheap for me to build. I just use stick and mud, corrugated iron and plastic and other stuff. I built it because we are a big family so others use shacks; one is three rooms and the other one is a one room which is an extension from the RDP house (May 21, 2012).*

Some build the backyard shacks to rent them out to generate a source of income. However, some RDP owners rent out their RDP houses and use the backyard shack as their living space. The rent for the RDP house ranges from R300 to R500. The rent for shacks ranges from R100 to R200. Some tenants are from Grahamstown, others are from outside Grahamstown and still others are foreign nationals. This is what one of the participants had to say:

*I have built the backyard shack to earn money in order for me to put a plate on the table. Since I have three flats made of stick and mud I charge my tenants R150. Two of my tenants are foreign nationals from Zimbabwe, and the other one is from Queenstown (May 21, 2012).*

Another married female participant aged 49 noted that:

*I have rented out the RDP house and we are using the backyard shack. I have rented out the RDP house because there isn't enough income. I have three grandchildren and a son and a daughter and they all depend on my pension grant and the rent from the RDP house (which is R500) adds on it to buy food, buy uniform, buy electricity (May 21, 2012).*

Some participants prefer shacks over RDP houses due to the poor structural quality of the houses; plus, shacks are very cheap to build or to renovate. Most landlords in the study were old people and they partly used their pension grant to renovate or upgrade RDP houses or build shacks. One old lady aged 63 argued that:

*This cement and brick shacks [referring to RDP houses] can fall at any time. I prefer the backyard shack because it is much better than the RDP house (May 21, 2012).*

Another one aged 65 said:

*We don't have enough sources of income and rectifying the RDP houses is expensive for us. Shacks are cheap to build, to renovate or to upgrade (May 21, 2012).*

Based on the above information, the study concluded that backyard shacks are not just a sign of poverty but they are economically advantageous because they offer low cost housing alternatives for the poor and also generate income for them.

#### **4.4.3 Settlement Design and Satisfaction**

The preceding section clearly details serious concerns and indeed complaints about housing design in Hlalani, which in many ways illustrates broader housing problems in the Eastern Cape specifically and South Africa generally. This current section, focusing again at local level, looks beyond housing design to examine the community design of Hlalani and levels and forms of dissatisfaction pertaining to this design.

Overall, 84% of the interviewed residents in Hlalani indicated that they do not like their area in which they are staying. Many are even considering relocating from Hlalani and staying elsewhere in town; however they do not have the financial resources to do so. The concerns raised are quite diverse, including no playgrounds, no pre-schools, no proper streets and no parks; general poor planning in terms of the layout of the area; the fifth and dirtiness of the settlement; and high levels of crimes.

From my study, it is clear that the built environment and the design of that environment are critical to issues of place and belonging. The built environment and any sense of attachment to a place, if shared widely by residents of a particular neighborhood, create for a specific locale its “own order, its special ensemble, which distinguishes it from the next place” (Relph 1976: 2). Throughout my study, though, Hlalani occupants mentioned constantly that they do not have a sense of belonging and identity to the settlement because of its design (and the quality of life associated with this); they stay there for no other reason than because they live there. One male participant commented about the settlement:

*The area is also disorganized. There are no proper streets, things are not planned properly like other sections such as Extension 9, Transit Camp etc. There are papers lying around and the area is just filthy (March 12, 2012).*

In this respect, the streets in Hlalani are not tarred and during windy days the place becomes extremely dusty. The area also stinks, especially in the mornings, because people throw dirty water and urine onto the streets.

Hlalani residents identified the poor settlement design as leading to problems pertaining to privacy, respect for others, safety and security. One female resident, in this regard, referred to the common

*Attitude where some people would just walk through other people's places when they feel like it to get somewhere and it's contributed to some residents affected feeling unsafe and not respected (April 20, 2012).*

Another male respondent aged 47 reiterated this point and linked it to crime:

*People have to walk through backyards to get to another yard and they were stealing fence posts. And that was leading to vandalism and crime issues for residents affected (April 23, 2012).*

Similarly, a resident of Hlalani spoke about “*pulling palings from fences*” when talking about these problems; when people walked through his yard they say “*it is a short cut and some of them are rude*” (April 23, 2012). Matters that relate to the built environment (or community design) can thus bring together concerns in relation to mobility, access, respect for boundaries and perceptions of safety within a community. The design of the human settlement can also lead to residents feeling closed in and secluded from other members of the community. One male participant aged 32 explained:

*There's only one road in and out. When it rains the roads become very muddy in such a way that you can't go see people on the other side; there's only one way in and it's sort of closed in (April 23, 2012).*

Hlalani residents also complained about the size of their plots and their inability to engage in any sort of urban agriculture as part of their livelihood activity portfolio. The size of the plots restricted the size of any possible vegetable garden and inhibited the cropping of home-grown vegetables as a source of household foodstuffs. They asserted that if they had bigger yards, then they were going to plan and make gardens. One married male participant aged 39 noted that

*If I had enough space to make a garden I was going to plough some cabbages, spinach, potatoes, pumpkins, tomatoes and so on. Then I would have to buy only a few things like mealie meal, powdered soup and cooking oil since I am not working (April 21, 2012).*

Some, including those on treatment for HIV/AIDS, argued that the size of their yards is a hindrance to good nutrition. One female single parent therefore noted that

*I am taking ARVs and vegetables are important for my health. I am unemployed and I cannot afford buying vegetables at Checkers or Shoprite. Having a garden can help me* (April 21, 2012).

Larger plots, quite possibly, could allow for vegetable gardens not simply for home consumption but also for the marketing of fresh vegetables in Hlalani and beyond, and hence contribute in a small way to livelihoods.

#### **4.5 Local Government**

The thesis, in terms of considering housing and human settlements, has placed appropriate emphasis on local government and questions pertaining to service delivery and democratic accountability. This is pursued in this section in relation to Hlalani.

The Municipal Systems Act (2000) seeks to guide the relationship between citizens and local government specifically in relation to the provision of services. The act strives to articulate the values of accountability, transparency, efficiency and consultation in municipal affairs, notably through the generation of dependable structures for community participation in these affairs. Through the improvement of service delivery on this participatory basis, this piece of legislation aims to advance the plans and programmes of developmental local government and good governance by putting 'people first' (Pottie 2003: 614). In this regard, the emergence and existence of strident civic organizations are seen as crucial in building linking capital (specifically networks between ordinary citizens and those in authority), hence allowing ordinary people to influence and be engaged in decisions made by state structures which directly their community (Lake and Huckfeldt 1998: 567). In practice, this participatory development approach seems to be at policy level only at national level, with the very opposite often the case on the ground: the experiences within the Makana Municipality, including in relation to Hlalani, seem to bear this out.

When asked if they experienced problems with the Makana Municipality in terms of democratic accountability and service delivery, 64% of Hlalani respondents answered 'yes' and 36% answered 'no'. Those who answered 'yes' argued for instance that

*Our municipality just uses us to vote that's all. They don't care about us. Once we have voted for them they neglect us. The meetings that they call are not beneficial to us* (April 16, 2012).

Another resident added:

*The municipality does not care about us; there are a lot of things which are not alright about these houses. We can't like such RDP houses. It's like they were doing for us just to hide our heads. The people who were responsible for building these houses defrauded the funds allocated to build houses (April 16, 2012).*

Another, in referring to the former officially-white side of Grahamstown, claimed:

*The municipality respects the educated doctors, professors and so on staying in town (April 16, 2012).*

Residents do at times seek to raise their concerns with the local municipality: 64% of the research participants therefore have done so specifically in relation to their RDP houses. However it appears that reporting any problems to the municipality is generally seen as a waste of time, as their complaints are not addressed let alone acted upon. One of the participants had this to say with particular reference to the RDP houses:

*We do call the municipality to come fix a problem but they don't show up. The government promised us decent houses but these houses are of poor structural quality and when we go and report them since we do not have money to repair them, they don't show up (April 16, 2012).*

A female respondent reiterated this:

*The houses have huge cracks, they can fall anytime. We have reported things like the quality of RDP houses but until today we are still waiting. We have heard that in other places the government has repaired RDP houses but here in Grahamstown I have never heard of that (April 16, 2012).*

Another 36% of the participants asserted that there is no point in reporting problems concerning RDP houses because it is a waste of time. This is what one male respondent noted:

*Others have reported but their problems have not been addressed, so there is no need to report these problems (April 16, 2012).*

As noted previously, Hlalani residents perceive the pit latrine system as leading to illness and disease, as well as contributing to a loss of dignity, yet residents claim that rarely does the municipality respond with any urgency in emptying the pits when full.

The process of communication seems to be a one-way process rather than a genuine dialogue. Hence, problems are reported but the municipality does not provide feedback. As indicated by one male respondent:

*We communicated all our problems to our Ward Councilors and they have promised to fix the problems but up until today things are still the same (April 16, 2012).*

The people in Hlalani have clearly lost trust in the Makana Municipality, and this is expressed in impatience and anger over the government's inability and apparent unwillingness to provide basic services to Hlalani. One respondent said in anger:

*Since we are being fooled that's why we will continue to protest for our social rights. The next step now is to burn down the Municipality's offices (May 21, 2012).*

Another one spoke about the same possibly impending response:

*We need to burn down the houses of the Councilors to force them to provide us with basic services. This will make them to see that we mean business (May 21, 2012).*

Participants in the different focus groups commented on the need for the local council to include residents in decision-making.

By being consulted, residents emphasized in particular the sense of pride and degree of ownership over community projects which might emerge. In one focus group, they asserted that:

*If Councilors had consulted us at the planning stage of the housing development project in order for us to voice our views, for example to contribute to the design of the houses, we were going to like our houses and our settlement. So we are not proud of the houses and the settlement itself (May 20, 2012).*

In another focus group they argued that:

*The reason we are not proud of our houses is because we were not consulted at the planning phase. We were just given houses that we don't like and it feels like it is not ours but the governments' houses (May 20, 2012).*

The loss of pride and dignity is manifested in the following quotation from one female Hlalani resident:

*I can't be proud of the house since it has cracks, no ventilation, floors are just a mess they were not properly done. The house was also not properly plastered. The government which built the houses for us should come and access the situation of the houses. The municipality does not care about us there are a lot of things which are not*

*alright about these houses. We can't like such RDP houses. It's like they were doing this for us just to hide heads. The people who were responsible for building these houses defrauded the funds allocated to build houses (March 16, 2012).*

Such sentiments express not merely dissatisfaction with government failure to provide basic physical needs (housing and infrastructure) but failures pertaining to facilitating the building of social relations which empower local citizens. Such failures go contrary to the emergence of sustainable human settlements.

Meeting the physical and social needs of lower income groups (such as those in Hlalani) is a critical function of the post-apartheid state and Section 152 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa encourages “the involvement of communities and community organization in the matters of local government”. In this context, Makana Municipality has the duty of facilitating the emergence of sustainable settlements by encouraging institutional and infrastructural development on a sustainable basis, providing adequate services to its citizens and encouraging local RDP house beneficiaries to work together to improve each other's lives. Many Hlalani respondents believed that working collectively as a community would be good for the development of the community but, as indicated earlier, serious problems of disrespect, mistrust and disunity exist within Hlalani. My fieldwork indicates that government action and inaction only serves to reinforce these tendencies.

Ever since the building of RDP houses in Hlalani, there have been no projects pursued by government such as community gardens, chickens projects or pig projects which might assist in the development of the area (given that local residents are living in abject poverty). At the same time, my study found that there is a culture of individualism existing in Hlalani in which people do not believe in collective action, or at least in the possibility of such action, for the betterment of the community. Hlalani residents would prefer to undertake activities on an individual rather than a communal basis, and hence government inaction on this front replicates the community ethos of individualism. Insofar as there was a government-sponsored project in Hlalani, most of the respondents indicated that, in practice, working individually was more feasible and realistic. They commented on the challenges of working collectively; as one unemployed female respondent noted:

*I think it is a good thing for us to work collectively as a community. When community projects are launched it needs to find us united and supportive as a community. It is not a problem working collectively; the main issue is trust. We do not trust each other (March 16, 2012).*

Another unemployed male participant aged 32 added that:

*It is a good idea to work collectively only if we can respect each other and the projects can be a success. If we can work together and forget about saying 'so and so cannot tell me this and that'. Such things will lead us nowhere; we need to be united so that everything becomes successful; anger is not a solution. If there is something wrong we need to sit down and fix the problem so that we will be able to move forward (March 16, 2012).*

The following sub-section discusses state provision of services in Hlalani in more detail.

#### **4.5.1 Provision of services**

Local municipality delivery of housing and services throughout urban South Africa remains unfulfilled. In large part, this is because municipalities face challenges of financial constraints in carrying out their constitutional directives to improve the quality and quantity of basic services to citizens (Khumalo et al. 2008: 4). In my study, residents identified service shortfalls as a critical failure on the part of Makana Municipality. Services may be available broadly speaking in certain cases, but accessing these can be problematic. For example one female participant aged 34 noted:

*There are times whereby we do not have access to water for a week. The water tank trucks come to supply us with water but they are not enough. The water tank trucks only come twice a week and sometimes we have to phone. Even the electricity will go off the whole day and we won't be able to cook and in some families there is no money to buy bread (March 17, 2012).*

Because of such issues, over the past few years South Africa (including Grahamstown) has witnessed the rise of urban-based community activism against the commodification of municipal services and demanding decommodification of basic social services like water, electricity and housing (Barchiesi 2008: 63). Commodification of services, including pre-paid electricity, impact most significantly on the urban poor.

With respect to this, Hlalani residents note that the services offered by the local municipality (and other state structures) are expensive for them since they have inadequate sources of income. Electricity, which is provided by the state parastatal called Electricity Supply Commission (known as Eskom), is often difficult for poor Hlalani residents to access on a regular basis. As one unemployed male participant said:

*At home we had an Eskom electricity box, but Eskom disconnected the box and took it. This was due to a disaster (there was wind and heavy rain) and the walls of my house fell. When I went to the Eskom offices to claim the box back, Eskom told me that I should contact the municipality. When I went there I was told that the municipality is unable to help me until Eskom gave me back my electricity box and cable. They also said to me I need to pay R800. I am unemployed and I do not have any source of income (March 16, 2012).*

This particular case highlights the problematic relationships which often exists between state structures in terms of coordination, as well as bringing to the fore the importance of proper housing for the provision of basic services such as electricity. In addition, it shows how socio-economically disadvantaged people suffer from inaccessibility to local state and other state services. Limited government intervention in the provision of services in fact places the burden of improving the lives of the poor on the poor themselves. Greater dependence on social capital among poor people becomes imperative in times of reduced state commitment of resources to improving the lives of the poor, but the question of the existence of social capital in communities like Hlalani is complicated and questionable (as explored in the following chapter).

My study also found that, besides water and electricity, the issue of availability of and access to health clinics in the area was important to Hlalani residents. There is no clinic in Hlalani, and residents walk many kilometres to Tanti clinic in another section of the township. By the time they arrive at the clinic, the queue is long and they have to stay there hungry the whole day. The nurses work slowly, in large part because there are few of them and the number of people being served by the clinic is overwhelming. Another challenge faced by Hlalani occupants is that if there is a very sick person who needs attention by the clinic, it becomes very difficult for them to take the sick person to the clinic. The respondents therefore suggested that the municipality should build a nearby clinic. The residents also complained about confidentiality in the clinic. One female respondent aged 33 noted that:

*If you go to the clinic, the nurses will go talking about your sickness around the township and you feel bad* (March 17, 2012).

Some residents, who are suffering from illnesses like TB and HIV/AIDS and need to collect their monthly medicine from the clinic, find it difficult to attend the clinic because of this social gossiping.

In 2010 the Makana Municipality introduced a project to eradicate the Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) toilets and replace them with flushing toilets in Hlalani. The project was part of the municipality's bucket eradication programme which was introduced in 2004. The project was valued at R7 million (Plaatjie 2010: 1). However, up until today, Hlalani residents have no flushing toilets and the funds for the project were defrauded. This was confirmed by one respondent:

*The toilet is outside and is not flushing. The municipality has been promising us for years now that they will build us flushing toilets* (April 21, 2012).

Another male participant aged 36 noted that:

*There are no community development projects going on, we only hear about the plan and budget but there is no implementation. There was a toilet project that was announced but it never started until today; where did that money go? Although they set up the drainage system, the toilet projects haven't yet started; it has been a while now* (April 21, 2012).

The company which was responsible for the pit toilet eradication project dug trenches to lay the sewerage pipe but after that there was no progress. The pit latrine (VIP) toilets are not only unsafe but they are also unhygienic, particularly for children. One female respondent noted that:

*Sometimes kids just go to the toilet thinking it's the same as other toilets, not knowing the dangers of the toilets that we are using* (April 21, 2012).

Furthermore, when it rains the loose soil covering the trenches leave them half open posing safety hazards to residents, vehicles, cows, donkeys and goats. Some respondents complained that the trenches cause rain water to flow into their houses and damage their furniture. The toilets are also unhygienic. The residents have problems with flies in the toilets. When it rains they get flooded with water and the smell which comes from the toilets is unbearable. There have also

been reports on the outbreak of typhoid fever caused by poor sanitation. One female participant aged 41 highlighted that:

*We have problems with flies in the toilets; It gets worse when it's raining because the pit gets flooded with water. The smell that is coming from the toilets is unbearable, and is posing a health hazard (April 14, 2012).*

There has been ongoing education about washing hands after going to the toilet and before handling food. But water cuts in different parts of the township undermine this initiative at times.

Overall, as intimated earlier, residents overwhelmingly mistrust Makana municipal officials. One of the reasons for this is their incapacity for bringing about any meaningful development through service delivery for the community. One male participant aged 37 said:

*I do not trust the local government officials. We have had many councilors and they have been promising but nothing is done. Money was allocated to build decent houses, but they built houses of poor quality. The government realized very late that there was corruption in the building of RDP houses. Councilors make themselves rich, they don't care about other people (April 11, 2012).*

Because of the deep distrust which prevails, residents do not want to associate themselves with the municipality. Some residents mentioned that they have resolved not to attend any meetings called by the municipality because they are simply being fooled by officials:

*When you go to the meetings they will tell you what you want to hear. Even if you can try to suggest things it is just a waste of time, so the best way is to do your own things and forget about the municipality (April 11, 2012).*

For democracy to work, clearly citizens must have trust and participate in the institutions of government (Delaney and Keaney 2005: 7). Further, residents identified incompetency, nepotism, favouritism and power struggles in the Makana council as the main source of the municipality's poor service delivery.

Issues of social inequality are also of direct concern to Hlalani residents when it comes to municipal service delivery. One male resident aged 48, when commenting on service delivery in Hlalani, said:

*Hlalani is not like other sections of the township. The houses are not in neat rows like other sections of the [black] township. The houses are just packed. Bath water is thrown on the streets next to houses (April 12, 2012).*

Another male resident aged 30, in making the broader comparison with the former white areas of Grahamstown, added that:

*Service delivery here in the township is very poor, but service delivery in town is good. I think the reason is that most of the people in the township are uneducated and they don't know their rights. People who stay in town are respected because they are educated (April 12, 2012).*

This statement suggests that residents of Hlalani are being discriminated against not purely on racial grounds (as happened during apartheid) but also on the basis of social class (insofar as education can be used a proxy for class status). This of course reflects the broader class and racial inequalities which haunt post-apartheid South Africa. The differential provision of (and access to) local municipal services which exist in urban areas reproduces the inherited racial and growing class divides in South Africa.

These inequalities feed into and animate South Africa's housing crisis and the broader service-based problems encountered on a daily basis by urban residents, including crime, poor education, inadequate nutrition, decaying neighbourhoods, insufficient health care and dependence on welfare. Hlalani settlement is in many ways a microcosm of the everyday struggles of black urban South Africans and their ongoing class and racial exclusion from the supposed development and redistribution since 1994. Residents linked the lifestyle of councilors with class inequalities. One male resident aged 41 exclaimed:

*It is painful to be neglected because the councilors promised us and they do not fulfill their promises. Councilors make themselves rich, and they don't care about other people. The government has a problem in delivering good services especially houses. We are treated like this because we are poor (April 12, 2012).*

They describe the municipality as a 'feeding ranch' (or gravy train) whereby municipal officials make quick cash and forget about the majority of poor people who have voted for them. Thus, while the municipality sustains itself as a source of enrichment for a few, human settlements such as Hlalani are devoid of sustainability. Human settlement sustainability though is fundamental for economic and social development, "as no social progress for sustainable

economic growth can occur without efficient settlement systems and settlement networks” (Sarkar 2010: 2).

For Hlalani residents, municipal inaction and unresponsiveness is interpreted in racialised terms. Some occupants asserted that the inadequacy of housing and service provision in Hlalani therefore has racial connotations; the state does not provide services because the recipients are not only poor but also black (and, like under apartheid, they are not identified and recognized as authentic citizens by the state worthy of the rights of citizens). They believe that people staying in ‘the other side’ of town (mostly white and rich) receive superior service delivery because they are not only rich but white. For instance, it is claimed that Grahamstown West always has uninterrupted water supplies, unlike poor black people staying in the township who go without water for a week or more. In this sense, the relationship between the municipality and the Grahamstown West population would be different from its relationship with the Grahamstown East population. If this were true, then housing service in Grahamstown is governed by a simple spatial perspective which is marked by racial and class dimensions. In short the local municipality seems to use the map to determine why and where proper service delivery should take place. Other Hlalani residents believe that, if the municipality officials were white, things would much be better in Hlalani. In this respect, they also believe that there is a new form of apartheid arising, with rich blacks oppressing other poorer blacks. One male participant aged 30 therefore claimed:

*We black people tend to oppress each other. Our councilors are black and we are also black. We voted for them but they oppress us (April 12, 2012).*

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

Hlalani settlement is a reflection of the broader problems pertaining to urban housing for poor blacks in post-apartheid South Africa. While the surveyed respondents are all recipients of the massive housing programme, the chapter makes clear that Hlalani residents continue to experience exclusion from the fruits of post-apartheid restructuring. They remain cornered in conditions of abject poverty and feel abandoned by both central and local state structures. The experiences reported in this chapter therefore speak to the deep and entrenched patterns of exclusion within which Hlalani residents exist on a daily basis, as reflected in housing provision, service delivery and local government representation. The built environment (housing and

settlement designs) in Hlalani, like all built environments, conditions social existence and social relationships; and this chapter provides a glimpse into the everyday existence of Hlalani residents. Despite state policies and programmes to the contrary, it seems clear that Hlalani is anything but a sustainable settlement in its social sense. The next chapter, which looks more specifically at social capital, provides a deeper insight into the relationship between housing and human settlement sustainability with specific reference to Hlalani.

## **Chapter 5:**

### **Social Capital in Hlalani**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

An earlier chapter (chapter two) spoke about the significance of social capital for human settlement sustainability. It is now generally accepted that housing and settlement design, though not having a direct causal impact, nevertheless conditions the formation, maintenance and possible decline of social capital in the form of relationships which bring about some form of social cohesiveness. Often this entails romanticizing social capital as a kind of panacea for challenges in urban settings including with regard to poverty alleviation (Moobela et al. 2007: 5). Social capital though, when understood more critically, also is marked and indeed animated by social inequalities and power imbalances; in this respect, it often becomes a form of exclusion and marginalization.

Central to the South African state's current housing programme is sustainable human settlements and this entails, if not mentioned explicitly, sensitivity to social capital formation. The state is pursuing the creation and development of safe, strong and socially-cohesive communities which embrace community life and social connections. The previous chapter has indicated that, broadly speaking, this remains a pipe-dream with specific reference to Hlalani. For instance, it highlighted the social distance between the central and local state on the one hand and the community on the other, and the failure to bring about linking capital which binds state and citizens. This current chapter focuses more specifically on the question of social capital by examining both intra-household and inter-household relations and the kinds of social networks which exist within Hlalani. The chapter is consistent with the argument developed so far, namely, that social capital formation insofar as contributing to community belonging and social cohesiveness remains an elusive dream for Hlalani residents.

#### **5.2 Intra-household Relations**

Households are a key focal point of contemporary human societies and a fundamental basis for social structuring of society and the social positioning of individuals in society. They are a critical place where social values if not produced are at least inculcated and, for this thesis, an important place and space for the generation, maintenance and possible undermining of social

capital (Edwards et al. 2003: 3). This section, in looking at intra-household relations has two sub-sections, namely, family and privacy.

### 5.2.1 Family Bonds

My research clearly shows that residents in Hlalani value their families (as located in households) as a site where identity and bonding relationships are forged. In this context, one male participant aged 30 highlighted:

*It is a very strong family relationship. We do comfort each other in times of trouble. However, we do fight sometimes like a normal family does, but generally there is a very strong bond. If I have a problem I can easily share it with them and not with friends, and they will comfort me* (April 16, 2012).

Dodson (2009: 52) suggests that family relationships “do not offer many of the positive factors found in friendships” but my study indicates that families continue to play a significant role in Hlalani, and that local residents turn first to family before turning to friends for various forms of assistance. Even more specifically, relationships of mutuality exist within immediate families more so than extended families. One unemployed male resident aged 30 noted in this regard:

*I do not ask anything from my relatives, I only ask from my mother if I need anything. My mother looks after me* (April 16, 2012).

Despite relational problems existing in some households more than others, family social relations tend to be characterized by trust, reciprocity and strong social ties. Parenting was found to be a key mechanism in the development of values such as trust and cooperation (and of social capital more abstractly). One female respondent aged 32 highlighted:

*My mother used to teach us to share whatever we have with our siblings. She also used to tell us that if we are united nothing is going to separate us and that believing in one another is a basis of a healthy family* (April 16, 2012).

These types of familial relations exist in conditions of marked physical overcrowding within houses in Hlalani. On average, at least amongst the residents who formed part of my study, there are seven individuals in any one house (with house sizes being about 40 square metres). According to (Graydon 2001), the definition of crowding depends on local cultures such that it is not unusual for large families under certain socio-cultural conditions to share what other cultures might consider cramped physical spaces. At some point, however, questions about space do begin to have a negative effect on the mental, emotional and sometimes physical health of

household members. Overcrowding though in itself may not lead to an undermining of social connectedness and social cohesion (Stone and Hulse 2007: vii) amongst family members located within a particular household (sharing a common physical space).

It may in fact be the case, with regard to Hlalani households, that the existence of large families in limited spaces brings these families together as socially functional units based on specific forms of interconnectedness. For instance, the cramped space within the RDP houses provides a number of vital opportunities to intermingle and interconnect together, if only to chat and watch television. RDP houses as physical structures, though perhaps built with insufficient cement, nevertheless cement the occupants together in a manner which more spacious houses would not. One of the unmarried female participants therefore stated bluntly:

*It is not good for the house to be small but its advantage is that it makes us very close*  
(March 15, 2012).

Overcrowding in Hlalani hence may not be understood by occupants in the same manner as posited by outsiders. However, it may be that Hlalani residents have adjusted to a bad situation and are seeking to rationalize their everyday existence as a form of compliance to a social condition which is beyond their control.

In this respect, it is certainly the case that problems do exist within Hlalani families sharing a RDP house. There are signs of disturbances, disrespect, arguments and divisions at times, but these cannot always be reduced to space constraints in any clear linear fashion. In some cases such problems can be attributed to questions about space. For instance, in certain households, family members on occasion come back home late at night, make excessive noise and disturb other family members who are sleeping. Such issues raise levels of stress and have the potential to boil over into more serious long-term problems including physical violence (Chan et al. 2006: 2). This was confirmed by one of the female participants, when noted in frustration:

*Sometimes we fight. I think what contributes most is because we are sick and we just vent our anger at each other. I think if the house was big enough and we had outside backrooms the fighting would be less* (March 15, 2012).

Hence, there is a correlation between the size of houses, overcrowding and conflict, though this is not a universal one. My study shows that sometimes conflicts within families consolidate

relations (or act as a binding agent) between family members rather than being associated with stress and divisions. One female participant aged 32 asserted that

*When you fight with your sibling you get to understand each other much better and you also get to respect each other; you get to know which boundaries not to cross (March 15, 2012).*

The next sub-section looks specifically at the issue of privacy within Hlalani households.

### **5.2.2 Privacy**

When asked about the quality of their RDP house, 88% of the Hlalani respondents expressed deep concern about the small size of the house. The key issue here is the question of privacy, which was alluded to in the earlier discussion. The design of housing units and prevailing socio-cultural norms are pertinent when it comes to the possibility of privacy concerns arising and undermining relations within households (Johnson 1952: 222). Insofar as right to privacy is considered as a fundamental human right or should be recognized constitutionally as a social right, it seems that the post-apartheid government has contravened this right in the case of RDP houses in Hlalani (and indeed elsewhere in Grahamstown and beyond).

The privacy problem is particularly relevant in the case of relationships between parents and children in Hlalani RDP housing. For instance, parents are sometimes forced to bathe in the presence of their children. The result is disrespect arising between parents and their children and parents in particular suffering a loss of dignity on cultural grounds. In this light, one of the female interviewees aged 30 declared:

*Sometimes if your parents want to take a bath you are forced to visit a friend even if you don't want to, to allow parents to bathe or give them privacy. However sometimes it is hard, like if it is raining or if it is at night. Well this thing has become normal in the house but it's wrong and unacceptable according to my culture, but what can we do (March 15, 2012).*

The spatial problem emerging from housing design therefore potentially brings about tensions within families centering on privacy, particularly if cultural prerequisites about maintaining the integrity of elders (parents in this case) are violated. The example highlighted in the quotation shows that cultural norms are often prioritized and privileged vis-à-vis arrangements (such as bathing) which are imposed upon families from the RDP built environment.

Culture though may at times be overlooked (or take a backseat) because of the size and character of RDP houses in Hlalani. An important example in this regard is that of circumcision amongst young male adults. Once young men have undergone circumcision they are supposed to stay in rooms outside the main house because, after the initiation ceremony, they are promoted to the status of men. But, in the case of Hlalani residents living in RDP housing, no such backyard rooms often exist. One male respondent aged 35 commented:

*We are men but we are still sleeping in the house with my sisters and mother. This is against my culture. I'm supposed to be having my own house outside because I'm now a man* (March 15, 2012).

These former boys, now men, are thus unable to live according to their new status and this undermines their new-found dignity as adults. This of course results from the fact that the socio-economic position of Hlalani residents regularly inhibits them on financial grounds from building onto their existing RDP houses; in addition, the new men are often unemployed and are not in a secure financial position to seek and rent alternative housing outside of their current household. Because of this, RDP housing as supplied by the South African state has failed to take into consideration such cultural practices.

### **5.3 Inter-Household Relations**

The previous section has discussed matters pertinent to intra-household relations. This current section now considers inter-household relations or relations between households within the Hlalani community. Households in low-income residential areas such as Hlalani rarely have the resources needed to meet their day-to-day needs and, in the context of shocks such as a death in the family, they find it difficult to sustain themselves as a viable unit. Because of this, such households are compelled to search for assistance from other local households. Insofar as this happens and resources are mobilized across households (and the ensuing discussion examines this in relation to Hlalani), then inter-household relations effectively become an expression of local collective power independent of state power and resources (Brisson and Usher 2005: 64). By way of summary of my key findings, it seems that in Hlalani there is only limited evidence of patterns of cooperative social interactions; in other words, mutual reciprocity and social cohesion are not pervasive and this leads to, if not a divided community, then a community devoid of social unity.

### 5.3.1 Neighbourliness

When asked if they look after (or assist) each other in the immediate neighborhood, 40% of respondents answered 'yes' and 60% answered 'no'. Those who answered 'yes' believed that they have a sense of reciprocity with their neighbours, whereby they assist each other in times of need. This is what one participant had to say:

*When I ask for something like sugar or tea from my neighbour [called melwane/meza in isiXhosa] she gives it to me. In turn when she asks for something like money or mealie meal I give it to her (March 25, 2012).*

Another participant noted that:

*My neighbour looks after my children if I am not around and I also look after her children as well. We wash each other's hands (March 25, 2012).*

Some of those who answered in the negative highlighted that even though some households in their area are relatively well-off financially, they do not help others in times of crisis. They spoke about the plight of particularly youth of school-going age whose education could be uplifted with support from the broader community. One male respondent argued:

*It would be good that people assist school kids especially those who have the potential and are keen to study. This will encourage the kid to attend school even if his family is struggling. You need not buy expensive stuff just to encourage him to attend school. If that child becomes successful he will remember that I am where I am because of lady so and so. The child will also learn to assist others (March 25, 2012).*

The implication is that this type of support is not taking place in Hlalani, as households tend to be inward-looking rather than community-spirited. This is despite the fact that residents would clearly prefer some kind of inter-household symbiotic relationship which enhances the livelihoods of all Hlalani households and brings about strong community ties. One male participant aged 34 argued:

*If we have a good relationship in the community, it's nice because if I have a problem here at home I can easily call my neighbour to help me. For instance, if we need to call an ambulance and we don't have a telephone, if I have good relationship with my neighbour I can easily ask to use his telephone (March 25, 2012).*

But households generally had only limited interaction with their immediate neighbours and most felt that it would be awkward to ask for financial or other forms of assistance from neighbours

for everyday needs let alone for extraordinary ones. This also stems from general mistrust between neighbours including positing insincere motives behind any out-reaching arm from another household. As one male resident aged 36 bluntly claimed:

*Some pretend to be helping you but they don't mean it. They will go around saying, 'I helped him' and this is not good (March 25, 2012).*

This overall hesitancy in forming inter-household bonds or even *ad hoc* relations of assistance is evident in the case of disputes within the community. Many disputes take place between households in Hlalani, including over alcohol, girlfriends or boyfriends, money (an unwilling to pay back somebody's money) and gossip (spreading lies about somebody). When asked if they sought mediation when disputes do arise, 34% of respondents answered 'yes' and 66% answered 'no'. Those who answered 'yes' had sought mediation from other nearby households or from locally-recognized and mutually-accepted structures. One male respondent aged 31, without specifying the nature or severity of the dispute, said:

*It once happened to me. I had a conflict with other guys. A meeting was called by Street Committees and the matter was discussed and resolved. The mediation did work because they listened. When we meet we greet each other (March 25, 2012).*

Most of those who answered 'no' indicated that, while disputes do occur, they no longer seek mediation because they do not trust any locally-based mediators; in the past, they claim, mediators took sides without first fully identifying the nature of the dispute. Others believe that there is no need to ask for mediation, as they handle the matters directly (without necessarily resolving them) or they prefer to let the dispute dissipate uneasily if at all. In this respect, one female resident aged 34 noted:

*Many times we have had conflicts; sometimes we just end up getting along and with others we are still enemies or we just end up pretending to each other. So there is no need to ask for mediation (March 25, 2012).*

The discussion so far would seem to imply that *Ubuntu* does not in any way exist between households within Hlalani and therefore fails to animate relationships between them. *Ubuntu* means "a spirit of fellowship and humanity" (Burnett 2006: 124). In short, it refers to the sense of community and morality linked with traditional African societies. My study directly confirms

the absence of *Ubuntu*, at least in terms of the social meanings which residents give to inter-household relations. One widow aged 55 clearly said:

*There is no neighborhood [community spirit] in our days, but in the past there was a lot of Ubuntu. In the past we lived like a family in the neighborhood, but now things are a total opposite. These days if you visit a neighbour and ask for sugar, they will say, 'where does she think we get the sugar from'. There is no sense of Ubuntu in the neighborhood. It is by luck to find somebody with Ubuntu (May 22, 2012).*

This reference to the past may simply involve romanticizing former times in the black townships. But there is a claim, among the older residents, that any loss (or lack) of *Ubuntu* has a generational dimension. The younger generation is said to have contributed to the undermining of inter-household unity. One female participant aged 57 was quoted as saying:

*In the past we used to say, 'hello my mother or my father' if it is a father- or mother-type figure. Now there is discrimination in the sense that she is not my mother or he is not my father. An old person in the society was everyone's parent, but not anymore (May 22, 2012).*

The absence of *Ubuntu* in Hlalani amongst those who reminiscent about it means the absence of humanity, dignity, unity, reciprocity and trust.

The notion of trust indeed runs as a central theme in many of my interactions with Hlalani households. When asked explicitly about trust between households, only 22% of respondents said that they trusted their neighbouring households. Such low levels of trust are expressed in the erosion of any sense of identity and identification vis-à-vis Hlalani as a site of community belonging. Some residents speak openly about suffering back-stabbing by their (seemingly) once trustworthy neighbours, such that they have looked for and found 'neighbours' (or people they can trust) outside of Hlalani. One bitter female respondent aged 32 elaborates on this sentiment:

*I have trusted and liked people in the neighbourhood and I have shared my problems with them. After I found out that they were backstabbing and pretending about how they liked me. I never trusted and liked them again. I just sit at home and watch movies with my family. I do not visit anyone in the neighbourhood. If I need to chat I go to my friend who is staying the other side of the township and then I come back and stay at home (May 22, 2012).*

Many relationships between nearby neighbours (understood spatially) in Hlalani have been broken, never to be repaired. Insofar as there was bridging social capital between households in the past, it appears that this has been drained out of the community; with some households almost completely alienated from any interaction beyond their own household.

Again, whether or not this represents a significant shift from previous years is difficult to identify and assess. Certainly, though, the older generation of Hlalani occupants constantly refers to this lost community. One female resident aged 55 discussed it metaphorically in relation to a lost family:

*In the past we lived like a family in the neighbourhood; we used to share, love each other but now things are a total opposite (May 22, 2012).*

Another female resident aged 56 reiterated this and implicitly touched upon the principle of *Ubuntu* in emphasizing the obligatory dimension of mutual assistance:

*In the past we had no orphans because if parents die the community took responsibility to look after the children but in this generation things are different; this generation is very selfish (May 22, 2012).*

The depth of social distance and mistrust within Hlalani is reflected in the fact that some residents do not even greet their neighbours. This is reflected in the following story-line by one female resident aged 55:

*You will go to bed in good relations with your neighbour but when you wake up and greet your neighbour the next day she is your enemy (May 22, 2012).*

While this unlikely refers to an actual experience, it does encapsulate in many ways the problematic inter-household relations which exist in Hlalani. Effectively, it implies that any relationships which are established are transitory and fleeting, that households do not have any basic understanding of neighbouring households, and that there is no sense of belonging and inclusiveness between households. Misunderstandings between households, arising from social distance, are rife and not conducive to the building of any common or bridging identities.

This entails a residential space which is marked by disunity and division, and a competitive ethos. Because of this, gossip and jealousy abound. As one male resident aged 52 highlighted:

*Here in the neighbourhood people are jealous, they don't want to see others being successful. If she sees me carrying groceries from Shoprite store she becomes jealous*

*because she doesn't want to see me happy and successful. Overall there is no unity here. There is also a lot of gossip and we are divided* (May 22, 2012).

Overall, in terms of social capital, social networking and cohesion in Hlalani do not animate the community at the inter-household level. However, the next sub-section looks more specifically at the question of friends and networking to determine if this general conclusion can be in any way qualified.

### **5.3.2 Friends**

More than half of the respondents (56%) indicate that they have friends in the neighbourhood, though it seems that the depth of friendship is often shallow or that friendship is intermittent or turns sour very easily. The housing design of RDP houses, as noted earlier, inhibits privacy and this facilitates at times the emergence of friendships. In this respect, one female respondent aged 30 noted that:

*I am now used to visit friends because I have to give my parents some space since we have a one room house* (May 24, 2012).

Of course, in itself this does not necessarily sustain friendships. Friendships are particularly vital for young adults who are mainly unemployed. Friendships in these cases offer some meaning to everyday existence and also allow young adults to structure their days. Male young adults in particular often conform and restrain their actions to gain approval from important friends and, in so doing, engage in practices which may be labeled as anti-social. One unemployed male respondent aged 30 therefore mentioned:

*Some of my friends are a bad influence and it is hard to tell a friend when he is wrong because you grew up together and you are doing everything together. So we have to conform and do the same things. We are very close with my friends. If you say this is wrong, he might end up saying that I think I am smart. So it is better for us to do the same things even if it is wrong* (May 24, 2012).

The friendships established between young male adults are often replacements for the absence of meaningful relationships within their respective households; these young adults are prone to fighting verbally with their parents and hence friendships within Hlalani may relieve or alleviate tensions built-up elsewhere.

Male friends tend to meet at street corners and in shops to discuss sports, girls and sometimes politics. The most common type of reciprocity entails the exchange or sharing of cigarettes, alcohol and illicit drugs, and the relationships as a general tendency are based on these instrumentalist-type transactions. Sometimes they steal to buy alcohol and drugs; however, they do not see themselves as criminals. Male friends also go to taverns to drink alcohol and there they sometimes meet the friends of their friends. Expressive support is not in evidence in these male friendships. One young male adult aged 31 revealed the following:

*I won't tell my friends even if I am going through hard times. The reason I don't want to tell my friends is that if it so happens that we quarrel or fight or had a conflict they will go around talking about my problems (May 24, 2012).*

Although there is instrumental support, it is found in petty things like the exchange of cigarettes and alcohol.

The networks of young female adults are very rich in expressive social support, as they find it relatively easy to go to their friends and share their personal problems. They realize though that these problems are likely to be shared with others in the female-based network and hence will not remain confidential. Female friends, compared to male friends, appear to make greater use of information technology (including “whats-up” and “face-book” via cellular phones) to stay connected, remain close and disseminate news. One female participant aged 30 noted that:

*There is no need for me to go see my friend who is two streets down from my place because of mix-it, whats-up and facebook. We can chat as if it is a face to face conversation (May 22, 2012).*

In this sense technology contributes to the formation of social capital through female networks in the settlement. In this regard, it is important to note that “the formation of social capital Information and Communication Technologies are found to enable individuals to thicken existing ties and generate new ones” (Zinnbauer 2007:23). The significance of this quotation is the reference to generating new ties. In Hlalani, the cellular phone-based technology enables young female adults to establish new contacts and networks and possibly friends outside Hlalani. In this sense, “mix-it”, “whats-up” and “facebook” are contributing to the erosion of any residual bonds of spatial proximity in Hlalani settlement.

High levels of trust do not seem to exist within either male or female friendships. Gossip, tensions and conflicts prevail in many instances. One female respondent aged 30 hence stated:

*I have many friends but I do not trust them. I have shared my problems with them in the past. I do not trust them anymore and I used to love them (May 22, 2012).*

This mistrust sometimes arises because of failure to reciprocate in acts of exchange. For instance, female friends exchange (amongst other things) make-up, money and cellular phone airtime; in some cases, friends refuse to return the favour and tension ensues. Sometimes the friendships appear to be mere pretense and more equivalent to acquaintances (or simply shallow friendships). One male respondent brought this to the fore in the following way:

*These people I spend my time with are not my friends, although I call them friends. A friend is somebody you can share deep secrets with (May 22, 2012).*

Again, mistrust is central to this failure to build strong and lasting friendships. Overall, then, the existence of friendships does not seem to counter the overall absence of social cohesion between households in Hlalani. The next section pursues this line of reasoning by considering community participation and social deviance in Hlalani.

## **5.4 Community Participation and Social Deviance**

Community involvement and participation in common activities is a key element in identifying the existence of social capital in practice and it facilitates community development (Reid 2000: 3). In opposition to this, social deviance undercuts community solidarity and cohesion.

### **5.4.1 Community Activities**

Participation in informal community activities and in civic associations is a form of social networking which enhances the prospects for sustainable communities (Narayan and Woolcock 2003: 238). My study of Hlalani found that only low levels of participation exist, such as cultural activities and sports. Indeed, when asked explicitly about belonging to community-based organizations, 80% answered in the negative.

During the planning phase of the RDP housing development in Hlalani, residents were not consulted by the state in any shape or form; no community input or local expression of views were incorporated into the planning phase. Hence, when asked if they were encouraged to participate in the planning phase of the housing development programmes, all respondents claimed that no such encouragement was forthcoming from the state. In addition, no residents

(during the three years prior to my study) indicated involvement in any state-initiated and -driven project. In fact, all residents claim that they have been totally excluded from any engagement in community development initiatives and that this absence of engagement has effectively destroyed any prospects of a sense of community belonging, identity and pride. Hlalani residents feel isolated and excluded from the state. One male participant aged 42 noted:

*We are not proud of how the streets and the houses were built; they should have asked us what is good for us. As a community we feel excluded by the municipality* (May 22, 2012).

The municipality only told them that houses were going to be constructed but they were never involved in the planning process.

Attendance at community events may contribute to a sense of belonging as this provides residents with opportunities to come together, interact and participate (Holdsworth and Hartman 2009: 89). Instead of any municipality-sponsored events, Hlalani occupants (74%) rather attend cultural and traditional events independent of the state. The dominant ethnic group in Hlalani is Xhosa-speakers and Xhosa culture is respected locally and upheld on a regular basis. Any differences and divisions between households (as spoken about earlier) are set aside and laid to rest on a temporary basis in the pursuit of observing cultural practices and events; such events are held by a particular household on for instance the death of a family member. They do this, as the dominant reasoning goes, because attending a cultural event while holding grudges against neighbours (or against the household holding the event) will mean that Xhosa ancestors will not bless the ceremony. In a Durkheimian sense, then, these ritualistic events have the unintended consequence of bringing about some degree of harmony and cohesiveness to an otherwise disjointed and dysfunctional local community.

These traditional ceremonies though do not only enhance social interaction, as they also play a role in relieving poverty. One male respondent aged 50 therefore claimed, in self-interested fashion:

*You know traditional ceremonies are beneficial to some of us because if there is a ceremony we attend and we will get food. This relieves the stress as I do not have food at home* (May 24, 2012).

Hlalani residents invest energy and time in preparation for traditional ceremonies because of some inkling or perhaps expectation of a return on the investment. Some residents help the

household holding the ceremony by, for example, cutting wood or slaughtering a goat or cow, expecting that they will receive food and alcohol in return at the ceremony when held. The kind of reciprocity generated here is what could be called ‘tit for tat’ reciprocity. One male respondent aged 49 explained how he was used by a neighbour:

*I heard that there was going to be a traditional ceremony. I went there to help in preparation of the ceremony; we worked the whole day, but they just said thank you and gave me food and that was all (May 24, 2012).*

Although cultural ceremonies seem to facilitate social interaction, again there is a sense in which this interaction entails some degree and kind of pretense and therefore rings hollow in terms of building longer-term relationships. Those who do not attend such ceremonies (26%) gave the following reasons: being unaware of the event or being too busy, or because the events are not relevant to their interests or their age group.

Involvement in leisure activities is also important in creating community networks and bonds vital for social cohesion. Different sports teams exist in Hlalani, including for rugby, cricket and soccer. A number of respondents cited that there are many talented sports people in Hlalani and a significant willingness on the part of residents to engage in sports, but that there are no playgrounds, sports kits and sponsors. Members of the focus groups commented:

*Although we do have teams we do not have sponsors. Surprisingly, teams from other parts of the township like Joza and Extension 9 receive sponsorship from the municipality. Hlalani teams have to fundraise or ask for assistance from individuals so they can join tournaments. There is a lot of talent here in Hlalani. However, we are unable to develop ourselves since we do not have sports kits, like footballs. We play soccer in the streets (March 16, 2012).*

This has a negative impact on the generation of social capital in Hlalani because “sport provides opportunities for the development of both bridging and bonding social capital” (Tonts 2005: 139). Thus, the absence of playgrounds, soccer kits and sponsors detrimentally affects the quality of residents’ everyday life and inhibits community integration and belonging. Participants believe that sports can play a critical role in the reduction of crime and in this context they make reference to successes in previous years. One male respondent aged 30 noted:

*There used to be a very beneficial programme for the youth in Hlalani which was administered by LOVE LIFE. It used to organize games for us but that programme is not*

*there anymore. That programme helped us to spend time playing and stopping us from doing crime and drugs (March 22, 2012).*

Hence, there is a correlation between involvement in sports and reduction in crime and other anti-social activities.

#### **5.4.2 Social Deviance**

Anti-social activities, often labeled as deviance (including crime), go contrary to the building of social resources such as community freedom, confidence and trust, with fear thereby substituting for participation and cooperation in community life. Many respondents were particularly concerned about a disturbing increase in the rate of crime in their area, with some proposing ways to reduce crime. In this study, residents identified poverty as the main cause of the high rate of crime. One male participant aged 36 asserted:

*There is no way people cannot steal these things because we are unemployed and we have no source of income. We will steal these things because we do not have jobs or projects. If maybe there were projects going on in our area then maybe the level of crime would be curbed (March 22, 2012).*

Proposals to reduce crime focused mainly on a greater police presence in the area. One male participant therefore suggested the following:

*There must be police who always patrol this place. There must be at least one van for each and every section of the township. In case there is something wrong going on, you can then phone the police station; the personnel there will in turn phone the police van patrolling Hlalani and say something is going on in house number so and so (April 12, 2012).*

However, some residents strongly believe that crime prevention should be more of a community-driven action by residents with local legal institutions to strengthen the community's ability to act against crime. Other suggestions focused on preventative measures, by ensuring that households 'put their heads together' and worked collectively for the betterment of the community. These thoughts are consistent with research into crime reduction within communities. For example, according to Graycar (1999), there are two main types of crime prevention: involving community members in local projects and committees (necessitating participation and engagement), and creating opportunities for employment for all community members. Hlalani residents, in different ways, emphasized both.

Currently, there is community policing taking place in Hlalani by community volunteers organized as Street Committees. Each street has a Street Committee responsible for crime prevention and maintaining social order. One female participant aged 31 explained:

*What happens is that let's say somebody is caught robbing or maybe there is a conflict in the neighbourhood. The Street Committee will intervene and try to resolve the problem as community members. For instance let's say somebody was caught stealing. The community members, the person and the family become involved and together with Street Committees agree whether they punish the person or fine him. If they don't come to an agreement then they call the police (April 14, 2012).*

Although this crime prevention programme is meant to assist everyone who is affected by crime on an impartial basis, it became clear from the focus group discussions that some victims of crime are not assisted by the street committees. It was suggested that this kind of discrimination or partiality is caused by previous personal disputes with a street committee member (such that the street committee fails to act on the alleged crime) and also at times by the simple fact that the victim is an extremely poor and marginalized member of the community and (without voice and support) is thereby neglected. As a result of this, some residents do not trust the street committee structures as a suitable basis for enacting justice in the community. This has accentuated divisions in specific neighbourhoods with some residents being pro-street committees while others are anti-street committees.

At the local level, the prevention of crime is vital to the realization of safe and secure neighbourhoods. However, 94% of the Hlalani respondents do not feel safe when they walk down their street after dark. Those who have no such fear are all male. Women in particular feared rape, assault and robbery. Though my study was unable to obtain accurate statistics on these and other crimes in Hlalani, the above statistic alone clearly identifies crime (including violent crime) as a significant problem. Kawachi and Kennedy (1997) argue that mistrust and distrust in local communities, which are often connected to forms of social exclusion and isolation, create ripe conditions for crime. This argument was confirmed by my study. One young unmarried male respondent argued:

*All they know how to do is to jail us; they do not think about the causes of such deviate behaviours (April 14, 2012).*

Another youth emphasized the same point:

*As much as we have skills and talents, no one seems to care about the youth. Our future is going down the drain; some of us end up in prison. The ward councilors don't care about us; they do not do anything for us (April 14, 2012).*

For the older residents in this study, a sense of safety was of particular importance. Some older people even spoke about not feeling safe in their houses and others related terrifying incidences of burglaries and theft. One older resident aged 67 said:

*I don't like my area because the place is not good for people of my age. The young here are violent; you can be robbed or killed anytime. Most of the youth here use drugs (April 14, 2012).*

However, it was not only older residents who were concerned with safety. This was a key issue raised in focus group discussions, questionnaires and interviews by all age groups. For example, one younger male resident in a focus group said:

*It is not safe here in Hlalani. Although there is a police station in town, but when we call the police they do not come on time or they do not come at all. You cannot walk here at night because there is a high level of crime. Although we do have police, they are not doing their job. Sometimes people from other parts of the township come here to rob people since they are unknown (March 16, 2012).*

Such fear of crime has implications for engaging in community activities, particularly if those activities involve travelling at night.

In this respect, one female participant expressed deep concern:

*Sometimes it is hard to visit a friend at night because you fear that you might be robbed and sometimes stabbed. Sometimes it is hard to attend evening church services because you fear being robbed and raped (April 14, 2012).*

Another male participant explained the connection between their immediate living environment and the wider community in the following way:

*One day I was from fetching water and I saw some guys I know robbing a nearby shop. I watched with other community members; some people said to me I must call the Street Committee. These people who were robbing were from Hlalani and they knew me. There is no way I can report these people because I fear for my life since they know me (April 14, 2012).*

It would seem that a vicious circle is operating here: namely, social dislocation leads to crime but, in turn, crime has a feedback effect in reproducing social dislocation.

## **5.5 Positive and Negative Social Networks**

This section focuses on three institutions which prevail in Hlalani (churches, *stokvels* and gangsterism) and which have yet to be examined in this chapter. In doing so, I identify their implications for social networking and cohesion in the local community. During good times and troubled times, individuals turn to a range of different institutions for support and comfort (Robicheaux 1998: 4). I refer to churches and savings clubs (known as *stokvels*) as positive networks and gangsterism (in the form of the gangs called the ‘twenty eights’ and the ‘twenty sixes’) as negative networks from the perspective of primarily bridging social capital. All these institutions exemplify bonding capital, but it is important to note that even ‘positive’ networks are exclusionary. Nevertheless, churches and *stokvels* are far more likely than gangs to generate social capital of a kind which will facilitate community cohesion.

### **5.5.1 Church**

The interviews reveal that churches provide both expressive and instrumental support. Expressive support entails assisting church members emotionally during stressful times. For example one female aged 55 participant noted:

*Church is where we offload our burdens especially on Thursdays during women’s prayers. As women we’ve got problems, so this makes us to unite and to be one and carry other’s burdens through prayer. When you come out of church you will feel better (May 22, 2012).*

From this statement, it becomes clear that the shared problems faced in life (in this case, by women) bring residents together, acting so to speak as ‘social glue’. Instrumental support entails supporting church members materially and financially; hence, as one female resident put it:

*If somebody in the church passes away we will raise funds to cover funeral costs and we also donate things like rice, potatoes, cabbages and carrots (May 22, 2012).*

Besides these contributions, church members attend the funeral wearing the church uniform which symbolizes unity in Jesus Christ. Reciprocity and trust help church members to cooperate and work together to achieve shared objectives. Indeed, church members believe (and in most cases, quite rightly) that mutual assistance is embedded in their daily practices and this has a direct influence on social cohesion. However, this reciprocity is exclusionary in that social

support is only available to members of that particular church or denomination. When asked if churches in their area assist needy people as such, residents tended to answer in the negative. One female respondent aged 55 said:

*No, they only assist church members and if you are not you won't get anything (May 22, 2012)*

This was confirmed by one female church member who said:

*In church if you attend you must be known and you are given somebody who will guide and spiritually advise you and that is going to be your leader (May 22, 2012).*

On the whole, my study reveals that members of church communities have more extensive and stable social networks (and greater access to social support) than do their non-church going co-residents. But even within churches, there is variation in levels of support provided. More specifically, active church members receive more social support and less active members receive less support. One male participant aged 51 asserted:

*We assist members accordingly. If a member participates more in church activities the church will also assist him more, but if a member participates less then we will contribute less as well as in time of trouble. This is not revenge but it is a way of encouraging members to attend church services and activities (May 22, 2012).*

This is consistent with the study by Ellison and George (1994: 58) which concluded that “active participants in religious congregations may receive greater social support, on average, than their less active or unchurched counterparts”. Such practices act as a form of social control in preventing non-church members from abusing the resources found in the church; and, for less active church members, it acts as a way of disciplining members to ensure that they adhere to church principles.

Most church going members in the study mentioned that they meet often in a week to share the ‘Word of God and to support each other spiritually, socially or otherwise. Such ongoing participation in church activities brings together people with similar beliefs and values, as well as providing a fertile ground for the initiation of friendships. One church member noted:

*We meet twice or thrice a week to strengthen our faith, share the Word of God, advice each other and make friends and sometimes get husbands, hahahaha [laughter] (May 22, 2012).*

### 5.5.2 Stokvels

Many women in the study who are single mothers (and sometimes widows) are members of *stokvels*; this helps these women to generate sources of income to raise their children. A *stokvel* is “a type of credit union, or communal buying group, in which a group of people enter into an agreement to contribute a fixed amount of money to a common pool weekly, fortnightly or monthly, to be drawn in rotation according to the rules of the particular *stokvel*” (Townsen and Mosala 2008: 1). *Stokvels* in Hlalani help members in many ways in addition to financial assistance. They satisfy participants need for sharing, belonging, social interaction and emotional support. This arrangement is also facilitated by the fact that some members were co-workers, neighbours or members of the same church, which facilitated ongoing contact outside of formal *stokvel* meetings. One woman aged 43 indicated:

*As members of the stokvel we go beyond mutual financial assistance. If one of our members comes with any problem we sit down and discuss it and help the member (May 16, 2012).*

My research highlights though that there are very few *stokvel* associations in Hlalani. Many other *stokvels* existed in the past, but divisions arose within them and the members went their separate ways. The reasons cited for their disbanding involve claims about some co-members, namely, that they are unreliable, untrustworthy, marked by jealousy and practice witchcraft. One former member indicated:

*I used to be a member of a stokvel. But we separated because of jealousy. Some even bewitched your money so that it disappears and you do not see what you have used it for. I know people don't believe that there is witchcraft but it does exist. The thing which makes us not to be successful is jealousy (May 16, 2012).*

*Stokvel* members highlighted the importance of trust in their associations, and they indicated that there are mechanisms in place to build and maintain trust and ensure that the social networks flourish. For instance, as one member noted:

*When we make a monthly contribution to our bank account a member has to go to the bank, deposit the money, and then bring the deposit slip to other members. We also fine *stokvels* members who absent themselves in the meetings without reporting (May 16, 2012).*

They thus recognize that trust “is a key ingredient in transactions, a lubricant permitting voluntary participation” (Dasgupta 2001: 312), though ensuring that members comply (such as confirming bank deposits) seems to go contrary to a living and active trust.

### 5.5.3 Gangsters

The research found that there groups of gangsters in Hlalani which are involved in criminal activities such as rape and robbery which negatively affect the community. Due to the fact that community policing in the area is almost absent, the settlement has become a breeding ground for gangsters. Reputation is very important to all gangsters in Hlalani. The gangsters gain and maximize their reputation by being as violent and anti-social as possible, at least in relation to the forms of crime within which they engage. The gangs are called the ‘twenty eights’ and the ‘twenty sixes’. The twenty eights rob people without normally harming them physically; however, sometimes they do molest or rape victims. The twenty sixes rob and intentionally harm people; they believe in shedding blood and sometimes victims are killed. The twenty eights are called ‘sunrise’ because they operate during broad day light, while the twenty sixes are labeled ‘sunset’ because they operate at night. The effects of the gangs on the community as a whole are fear and terror, both day and night.

The local concentration of young males who are unemployed and lack tight familial social controls facilitates gang membership; once a member, gang discipline kicks in. But between the two gangs there is conflict at times, despite or perhaps because of their different *modus operandi*. One male respondent aged 30 who is a member of the ‘twenty sixes’ claims:

*The twenty eights and the twenty sixes hate each other because of their differences on how they do their business [of robbing people] (May 22, 2012).*

Even within one particular gang there is antagonism. The same gang member said:

*We don’t trust each other. It is the survival of the fittest; you must always watch your back (May 22, 2012).*

The only reciprocity that occurs in the gangs is that of alcohol, dagga and other drug substances. Although they operate as a group, they do not emotionally support each other if for example a member loses a family member. In these groups there is no expressive social support.

Violence is not only directed to the community but even to members within the group, often through initiation ceremonies. For example, in the case of initiation of a new ‘twenty eight’ member, as told by a member of this gang:

*The seniors in the group can send you to rob somebody and when you come back they take whatever you have robbed. Sometimes you are beaten or stabbed. This is just to make you a strong member. After certain stages you gain full membership (May 22, 2012).*

In the case of membership in the ‘twenty six’ gang, as indicated by a member of this gang, each member will need to kill someone at some time to ‘*strengthen your number*’ (May 22, 2012), that is, to gain full membership.

Gang members have their own particular lifestyle, meeting every day to smoke, chat and discuss robberies and robbery strategies. They do not attend any other types of meetings or gatherings in Hlalani because they are not particularly concerned about the overall welfare of the community. Clearly, then, these gangs – while engaged in intense bonding social capital internally – are negative networks in the sense of minimizing the prospects for a broader, community-wide bonding process.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

Though certain kinds of reciprocal relations do exist in Hlalani at both intra-household and inter-household levels, it seems clear from this chapter that social capital (if measured by a number of indicators as a proxy for social cohesiveness) is not the basis for social interaction within Hlalani. Both bonding and binding social capital (relating to intra-household and inter-household relations respectively) are under-developed and, as discussed in the previous chapter, linking capital between state and community is particularly under-developed. Though there is a shared recognition of the failures of the state vis-à-vis housing and service delivery and, indeed, even a rejection of the state, this has not translated into community belonging and identity as a basis for local forms of interaction. Rather, as a general trend which seems to animate social life in Hlalani, mistrust, non-reciprocity and incipient conflict exist in abundance. These conditions of existence in Hlalani are far removed from policy and programmatic announcements of sustainable human settlements in urban South Africa. This chapter, in focusing on Hlalani as a case study, has therefore shown how the local built environment has contributed to social relationships which are not characterized – in any authentic sense – by social sustainability.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusions**

### **6.1 Introduction**

As its main objective, the thesis has critically analysed housing and sustainable human settlements in post-apartheid South Africa with specific reference to Hlalani in Grahamstown. In terms of the notion of sustainability, the focus has been exclusively on social sustainability and more particularly on social capital. This main objective was pursued by way of three main secondary goals, namely:

1. To detail the socio-economic conditions and livelihood strategies of Hlalani residents;
2. To identify and discuss the experiences and attitudes of Hlalani residents in relation to housing provision in the light of social sustainability housing indicators; and
3. To map out the forms of social interaction, community activities and state-citizen relationships which exist in Hlalan.

The first two secondary goals are discussed respectively in the following two sections (Section 6.2 to Section 6.3). The next section (Section 6.4), in addressing the third secondary goal, seeks to establish the linkages between the conceptual framing (as discussed in Chapter 2) and the empirical evidence (as outlined in Chapters 4 and 5) and, in doing so, confirms the significance of this study sociologically. In the last section, I conclude the thesis.

### **6.2 Socio-Economic Status and Livelihoods of Hlalani Residents**

The demographic composition of the households in the survey show that significant overcrowding exists within Hlalani households. In general, as detailed in Chapter 4, residents live in abject poverty if poverty is understood simply as “the state of lacking adequate means to live comfortably and the want of things or needs indispensable to life” (Govender et al. 2007: 118). Households tend to have one member formally employed but household income generated through formal employment is limited (with only one surveyed respondent earning more than R3,000 per month). Hence many residents pursue a range of other livelihood strategies notably through informal petty trading activities.

Poverty and housing are inseparably linked (Blane 2006) and, in the case of Hlalani residents, their conditions of poverty are constantly manifested in their day-to-day lived experience in relation to housing, water, sanitation and other services. In this regard, poverty is not merely a material condition but a human condition. The residents of Hlalani therefore speak with great passion and concern about the indecencies and indignities which they suffer daily in post-apartheid South Africa, as reflected in the re-occurring problems they experience with the toilet system. The indignities of their lives exist despite the existence of a democratic ANC government which – at least rhetorically and often in practice – seeks to counter the legacies of apartheid by offering decent dwellings and accommodation for poor urban blacks. This state failure, so to speak, must be understood in the context of the challenges which were discussed in Chapter 3 with reference to housing provision and human settlement design at the national level. These challenges have been made more difficult by the adoption by the South African state of macro-economic policies and programmes of a neo-liberal kind which posit social expenditures as unproductive investments and contrary to economic growth.

### **6.3 Housing in Hlalani and Social Sustainability Indicators**

In terms of the second secondary objective, an analysis of housing (and services more broadly) in Hlalani in terms of any measure or indicator of social sustainability would necessarily conclude by claiming that social un-sustainability pervades the community. Such a measure might include pride in the place of residence, a sense of belonging to a broader social grouping, a community ethos, satisfaction of basic (including social) needs or harmonious social relationships. All these, and other possible indicators for social sustainability, seem to be undercut in the case of Hlalani as the discussions in both Chapters 4 and 5 indicate.

Though the term ‘community’ has been used at times to refer to Hlalani in this thesis, I have used it sparingly. The term of course conjures up all sorts of images but certainly ‘consensus’ and ‘cohesion’ often come to the fore when thinking about ‘a community’. No actually-existing community though fits this ‘model’ of a community as all communities are invariably also sites of domination and conflict. The point though is that Hlalani seems to be particularly marked by the absence of consensus and cohesion which may, in fact, not be particularly different from other parts of Grahamstown East or poor black ‘communities’ across the urban landscape of contemporary South Africa.

The absence of social sustainability (and of community as understood at least consensually) in Hlalani appears in the seemingly most mundane spheres of life in Hlalani, but spheres nevertheless which are critically important to the residents themselves. These spheres relate to, amongst other things, the following: the poor quality and structural defects of Hlalani houses which lead to cramped and damp conditions and contagious diseases; the lack of sporting opportunities for the youth and their often wayward behavior in the eyes of older residents; the fear of walking, particularly for women, through the streets of Hlalani at night and even during the day because of violent crime; the individualist ethos which seems to dominate the perspective of households as they compete even between themselves for survival, and which speaks volumes about a sense of un-belonging rather than belonging; and the widespread abuse of drugs and alcohol which causes conflicts within households.

Overall, the current social networks which do exist in Hlalani do not facilitate community participation and do not provide the basis for the alleviation of poverty. Low levels of trust and solidarity in particular do not allow for the emergence and development of efforts to bring about change by engaging with local state structures in any meaningful manner. While housing design and settlement design are not direct causal factors in explaining these challenges, certainly they are key conditions within which they arise and are maintained.

#### **6.4 Social Capital: Community Interaction and Government Accountability**

This leads into the third secondary objective which speaks directly to the main objective of the thesis: social capital and sustainable human settlements. In relation to the kinds of social capital discussed earlier (in Chapter 2), it seems clear that the main form of social capital which occurs in Hlalani is bonding capital rather than either bridging or linking capital.

Bonding capital is prevalent within households or at intra-household level. Household members ‘pull together’, for instance, in and through the pursuit of different livelihood strategies and the pooling of household resources in the face of great adversity. However, women more so than men tend to be more focused on the care and nurturing of household members particularly children. At the same time, household design leads to intra-household conflict on occasion, such as over questions about privacy and respect inter-generationally. The intensity of household relations leads to an inward-looking perspective on life vis-à-vis the wider community and hence undermines the prospects for bridging capital across households.

The social sustainability indicators intimate that bridging capital (and hence community interaction) would be noticeably weak within Hlalani, as they highlight the failure on the part of residents to develop a common social identity for engaging in shared practices. This indeed is the case. Nevertheless many social groups – and more informal types of interaction – have emerged which entail social networking across households for common purposes. Included here are church groups, *stokvels* and youth gangs. These crisscrossing social interactions each bring about their own kind of solidarity though, internally, they are marked by significant levels of mistrust. Simultaneously, they exclude others and may in fact bring harm to others, as the case of the ‘twenty-six’ and ‘twenty-eight’ gangs brings to the fore.

Linking capital, with specific reference to the relationship between state and citizenry, is all but lacking in Hlalani. Hlalani residents indicated that they were in no way meaningfully involved in the housing programme initiated and implemented in the township by the state and that the state, for all intents and purposes, does not seem to be aware of the necessity of democratic accountability to citizens, at least to poor urban black citizens. Because the municipality is at the coal-face, the wrath of Hlalani residents is in large part directed to the local municipality which, after all, is the constitutionally-assigned local development agent. Residents repeatedly spoke, and quite aggressively at times, about the sheer un-accountability of municipal officials when it comes to ongoing service delivery problems in Hlalani and they claim that such officials are there simply to line their own pockets. In this regard, insofar as – nationally – the South African state may wish to proclaim itself as a developmental state (and this is problematic given its neo-liberal leanings), it certainly does not appear as a democratic developmental state.

## **6.6 Conclusions**

Overall, the discussion of social capital leads to the inevitable conclusion that social sustainability is a misnomer with respect to Hlalani. The combination of bonding, bridging and linking capital – as they exist in Hlalani – does not add up to a sustainable human settlement. Intriguingly the absence of linking capital, or the disenchantment of Hlalani residents with the local municipality, does not appear to animate the consolidation of bridging capital between households of a kind in opposition to the municipality. If anything, this absence has led to a withdrawal of Hlalani households from broader interaction with each other and thus has served

to insulate households from each other. In other words, it may be that bonding capital within households is intensifying.

This argument, I would suggest, is the key contribution made by this thesis to existing sociological knowledge. Bonding, bridging and linking capitals must be seen as mutually animating each other, and in a contingent and fluid manner. Although they may be discrete and separable analytically and descriptively, they point to sets of social relationships on the ground which intertwine and give shape to each other. Their particular forms and the interrelations between them are historically- and socially-produced and therefore subject to change. My study has illustrated the current forms and interrelations with respect to Hlalani settlement in Grahamstown as a particular case study. These conclusions made about bonding, bridging and linking capitals describe the main tendencies apparent currently in Hlalani, but further research would need to be undertaken at a later stage to chart their shifting forms and interrelations in the future.

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- c) Higher secondary level
- d) Tertiary level
- e) illiterate

7. How many people living in this household? { }

8. How long have you been staying here
- a) 6 months
  - b) 1 year
  - c) More than a year

9. How many people in this household are employed in a full time job? { }

10. If employed what is your monthly income?
- 1= Below R550
  - 2=R551-1050
  - 3=R1051-R1550
  - 4=R1551-R2050
  - 5=R2051-R3050
  - 6=R3051-R5050
  - 7 = R5051+

11. If no one is employed in the household what is/ are sources of income?  
 Elaborate.....  
 .....  
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**Section C. Social Interaction, Community Participation and Community Stability**

25. Which of these organizations exist in your area? You can tick more than one.

a. Churches	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Community forums	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Stokvels	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Clubs	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Dance groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

26. Do you belong to any of the organizations? Yes  No

27. Were you encouraged to participate in the planning phase for housing development in your area?

Yes  No



<b>31.</b>	Do you participate in community events, eg meetings, weddings, funerals, cultural ceremonies?		
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
	32. a) If yes, how often? a. Seldom		<input type="checkbox"/>
	b. Sometimes		<input type="checkbox"/>
	c. Often		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>32.</b>	Do you have friends in the neighbourhood?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>33.</b>	How many would you regard as friends?	A) None	<input type="checkbox"/>
		b) One	<input type="checkbox"/>
		c) Few	<input type="checkbox"/>
		d) Many	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>34.</b>	Do you look after each other with your neighbours?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	35. a) If yes, what kind of things/goods do you normally exchange?		
	a) Flour		<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) Sugar		<input type="checkbox"/>
	c) Rice		<input type="checkbox"/>

	d) Money	<input type="checkbox"/>
	e) Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>
35.	Do you trust your neighbors?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
36.	In case disputes arise within the community, Are residents willing to seek mediation?	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
37. Which of these services and/ facilities are available in your area? (Tick more than one)		
	a) Schools	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>
	c) Meeting places (halls)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	d) Playing fields	<input type="checkbox"/>
	e) Clinics	<input type="checkbox"/>
	f) Parks	<input type="checkbox"/>
	g) Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Appendix 2-**  
**Interview Guide (Focus group discussions and in-depth Interviews)**

**Social Capital (social Interaction, reciprocity, trust, participation)**

1. How can you describe Hlalani? Is it a right place to stay in or not?
2. Is there anything that you do not like about Hlalani?
3. Do you have friends?
4. What kind of sports do you have in Hlalani?
5. How many times do you often see your friends?
6. Do you attend community/municipal meetings?
7. How can you describe your neighbours? Are they neighbours which can help you in times of trouble or not?
8. Was there a time when you had conflict with a neighbor? If yes, did u seek mediation?
9. Is Hlalani a safe place? Can you walk at night without fear?
10. Do you have relatives here in Hlalani?
11. If you were to compare Hlalani with other sections of the township like Extension 9, was it well planned? Does it have streets? Clean etc.
12. Do you trust your neighbours?
13. With your friend what do you normally do?
14. Can you easily identify a stranger in your place?
15. In the neighbourhood, do you greet each other?
16. Do you have friends in your neighbourhood?
17. Who do you contact if you have a problem?
18. Can you go ask for help in the neighborhood?
19. How can you describe your relationship in your family?
20. Have you ever helped someone in the community in the last three months?
21. If you had a problem would you go to your friends and ask for help?
22. What do you benefit from your friends?
23. How can you describe this area is it where people help each other or where people go their own way?
24. Why do you think relationships among community members should be good?

25. Do you as neighbours help each other without expecting something in return?
26. Do you belong to any organization in your area? eg Stokvel, church etc.
27. Were you encouraged to participate in the planning phase for housing development in your area?

**Local Municipality (service delivery)**

1. What can you say about the municipality with regards to problems that are faced by Hlalani?
2. Does the municipality encourage activities like soccer, cricket, rugby etc? and do you have playgrounds?
3. Does the municipality encourage community mobilization whereby the community work together for the betterment of Hlalani as a whole?
4. Do you trust the local government/officials that they can push for the development of the community?
5. Do you think the municipality is doing its job with regards to service delivery?
6. Do you think the communication between the municipality and Hlalani residents is effective?
7. According to your own opinion, do you think the municipality treats you (people in the township) equally with people staying in central Grahamstown?