

Understanding Informal Settlement Growth in Regional Towns: The eThandukukhanya Case Study

By

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this research report is my own, independently compiled work from data obtained while conducting research of the mentioned area. It is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Public and Development Management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University by me or any other person.

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Family is my centre; it is my fortress, my source of strength, my inspiration. Without family I am nothing, and I have nothing. All that I am, I am because of them.

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Abstract

The area of focus that has been identified for this research paper is the eThandukukhanya informal settlement on the outskirts of the town of Piet Retief in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. The study will attempt to understand informal settlement growth in regional towns by using this settlement as a case study. The study will give a brief introduction to the challenges of informal settlements at Mkhondo Municipality in the Gert Sibande District of Mpumalanga, where the informal settlement is situated. The paper will examine the background and provide a 'snapshot' of the historical circumstances that led to the current challenges faced by the country regarding the growth of informal settlements. The researcher will attempt to establish whether provision of RDP houses to the poor is in fact encouraging in-migration to towns like Piet Retief; and explore whether other alternatives can be utilised to deal with the challenges posed by the increase in informal settlements in this area.

List of acronyms & Abbreviations

Acronyms

UN	United Nations
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
MIG	Municipal Infrastructure Grant
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme

Abbreviations

Department	Mpumalanga Department of Local Government & Housing
Settlement	Informal Settlement
The policy	The National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements
The Municipality	Mkhondo Municipality

List of Definitions

- *Informal Settlement* refers to an illegal township that is unplanned and unstructured, often found on vacant land close to urban areas.
- *Slums* refers to areas of residence that appear to be haphazard and not fit for human beings to reside in
- *In-migration* refers to an exodus or relocation from one area to another
- *Service delivery* refers to the provisions made by government
- *Infrastructure* refers to roads, electricity, water and sewer connections
- *Tenure security* refers to the provision of a title deed, whether full or sectional, to all homeowners
- *Basic services* refers to provision of adequate water, electricity and sewer
- *Illegality* refers to a state of acting without proper rights or legitimacy
- *Unplanned* refers to communities that develop accidentally or spontaneously in areas that have not been designated for human occupation
- *Low-cost housing* refers to an economical type of house built for the poor
- *Integrated development* refers to an inclusive form of development that includes different racial and social groups
- *Structured upgrading* refers to a properly planned development that takes place within an approved spatial development plan, and which includes an holistic community development
- *Holistic development approach* refers to ensuring that the growth that takes place involves all social and economic amenities as well as all resources required to live an effective life, such as schools, clinics, churches, houses
- *Triangulation* refers to the use of various sources and data collection methods to confirm one's findings.
- *Shacks* refer to houses built with scrap material such as corrugated iron sheets, cardboard, plastic, paper, stone, sticks or mud.
- *Transversal waiting list* refers to the system in which municipalities capture the names of South Africans that need and qualify for RDP houses

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

There is presently a severe crisis caused by the uncontrolled increase of informal settlements throughout South Africa. Resolving this problem has generated a lot of political interest. As part of the effort to address this challenge, the government has subscribed to the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that aim among other things to eradicate informal settlements by 2014. This paper will examine the causes of the escalation of informal settlements in the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement and the role of in-migration in the expansion of this informal settlement. It will also try to establish whether a relationship exists between the provision of houses and in-migration, and also whether other alternatives were considered in addressing the proliferation of informal settlements. The research will focus on the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement in Mkhondo Municipality of the Gert Sibande District, in the southern part of Mpumalanga (see Figure 1).

Historically, *non-whites* in South Africa were restricted by apartheid laws from moving freely around the country in search of better opportunities. One such law was the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950, introduced by the apartheid government in order to prevent anyone who was not white from residing or working in established and economically viable areas. The Act ensured that prime land was reserved for whites. Wikipedia reports on the Group Areas Act of 1968 suggest that between 1965 and 1985 approximately 3,5 million 'non-whites' were forcibly removed from their homes as a result of apartheid regulations. This meant that non-whites had to face a strenuous and costly commute to reach their places of work which were often located some distance from their enforced residential areas.

Since the abolition of the Group Areas Act on 5th of June 1991, South Africa has seen an upsurge of non-whites relocating to economic hubs in search of

better job opportunities and a better life for themselves and their families. This has resulted in an increase of uncontrolled informal settlements on vacant land on the outskirts of towns like Piet Retief, where the informal settlement that will be used as a case study for this research is situated. According to Mpumalanga's *Proposed Policy on Informal Settlement Upgrading*, there are one hundred and thirty-four (134) recorded informal settlements in the province which comprise of eighty-eight thousand three hundred and ninety-seven (88 397) households.

1.2 The location

Figure 1 is a map of Mpumalanga province, showing the position of Piet Retief town in Mkhondo Municipality where the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement is situated, the focus of this research and home to about four hundred and eighty-nine thousand (489 000) people, with an estimated unemployment rate of about 50%. The local municipality is predominately rural and comprises various small towns like Amsterdam, Heyswepe, Driefontein, Iswepe and Piet Retief, which is the hub of Mkhondo Municipality. Some areas in Mkhondo Municipality are so remote and rural that residents have limited access to the basic services afforded to them by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No.106 of 1996). For some communities running water remains a distant dream.

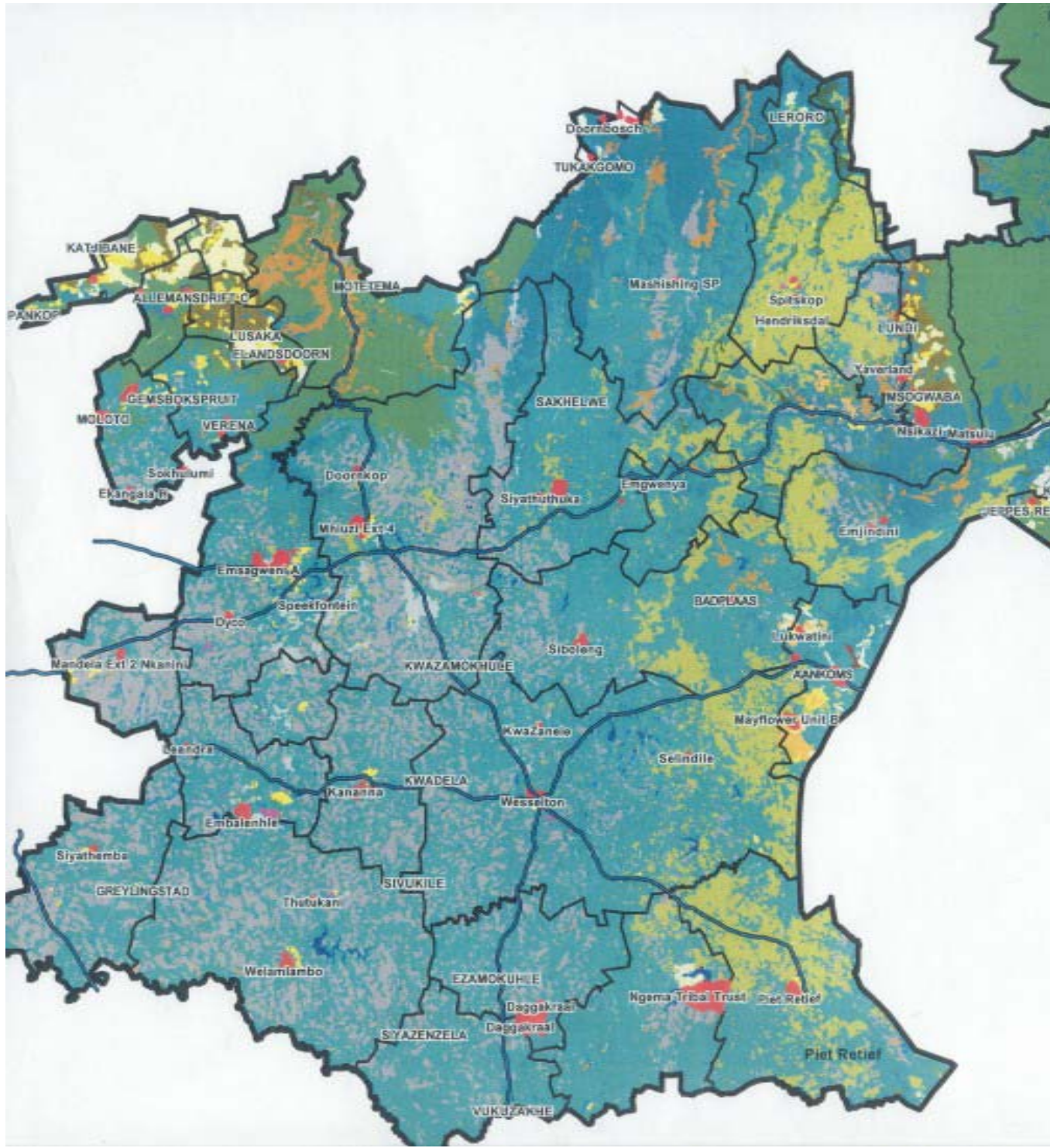


Figure 1: Map of Mpumalanga Province

Source: Survey on the demographic and socio-economic factors of eThandukukhanya informal settlement at Mkhondo Municipality.

For communities like Maphepheni and Malayinini, villages located about 15 kms outside of Piet Retief, realising their Constitutional rights to clean water and sanitation remains an unlikely prospect. In fact, year after year these areas are sidelined as more high profile areas are prioritised for infrastructure projects. It appears that urban areas remain the priority in the integrated development plan (IDP) of the Municipality, and when resources are limited, rural areas normally fall at the bottom of the priority list. Furthermore, these areas are sometimes not even included in the Municipality's IDP document and if they are, the planned developments are often not funded. This means that for the next three years, residents of rural areas like Maphepheni and Malayinini should not expect any form of infrastructure development to take place in their villages.

It is no wonder then that some of the residents of these areas have chosen to move to informal settlements such as eThandukukhanya informal settlement, where service delivery, though slow, is inevitable. It is worth mentioning that although the eThandukukhanya informal settlement is less than ten years old, almost seventy-five percent (75%) of the residents have access to clean running water, as opposed to villages like Maphepheni and Malayinini which have been in existence for over three decades but barely have access to clean water or communal taps. The reality is that people outside of Piet Retief and Amsterdam seldom enjoy equitable distribution of resources from their local municipality. It is these uneven planning patterns that have contributed, inter alia, to the increase of informal settlements in Mkhondo Municipality.

The eThandukukhanya informal settlement has been growing steadily in the past five years due to in-migration resulting from farm evictions and people moving closer to the town of Piet Retief in search of job opportunities. As a result, land is becoming depleted. For this reason, Mkhondo Municipality has recently started to purchase under-utilised land from Mondi Forests to ensure that more land is available to cope with the increase of the informal settlements. Like many rural municipalities, poverty is very high in Mkhondo Municipality because many black people, who make up the majority of the

Municipality, were previously employed as farm workers, earning below minimum wages. As a result of new migration laws, land occupation and ownership rights, as well as new labour laws, more people have decided to leave the farms where they grew up in search of better job opportunities in urban areas. Currently, Mkhondo Municipality has a total of eight informal settlements with a total of fifteen thousand seven hundred and forty (15 740) households (see Annexure B).

The eThandukukhanya informal settlement has a population of about thirteen thousand, nine hundred and twelve (13 912) residents, which represents an approximated six thousand, nine hundred and fifty-six (6 956) households. Almost sixty-eight percent (68%) of residents reside in informal dwellings; only two percent (2%) have built formal houses for themselves, while the others have already benefited from various low-cost housing programmes provided by the Department of Housing. The informal settlement is situated along the Wakkerstroom road to Newcastle via Volksrust in the Pixley Ka-Seme Municipality, to the west and the N3 to Durban to the east. The N3 is one of the busiest roads in Mpumalanga, as it is a key route for transportation of goods from Johannesburg, Pretoria, Secunda, Witbank and the mines in Ermelo. On a daily basis, one can see trucks transporting anything from mining equipment, coal, frozen foods, timber and wood to and from Richards Bay in KwaZulu-Natal Province. On average, five trucks pass through Piet Retief per hour, making it a hub for the trucking industry. It was inevitable therefore that a number of residents of eThandukukhanya informal settlement have started taking advantage of the job opportunities afforded by the trucking industry.

1.3 Problem statement

Although delivery of low-cost housing is very slow, a number of houses have been built; but it appears that with every new low-cost house constructed, the number of shacks within the informal settlement is quadrupling instead of decreasing. At times it appears as if low-cost housing acts as a catalyst for

mushrooming of informal settlements, in that the informal dwellings always crop up within or adjacent to new low-cost housing developments. On average, six hundred low-cost houses are constructed in Piet Retief annually, with the exception of special projects. In spite of this, informal settlements within Mkhondo Municipality have not stopped growing. Currently, about sixty-five percent (65%) of Mkhondo Municipality is rural; of the less than thirty-five percent (35%) of the population living in urban and semi-urban areas; more than sixty percent (60%) live in informal settlements. Most of these informal dwellings are made of sticks, stone and mud, with the balance made of cardboard, paper and plastic or corrugated iron sheets.

The exact current housing backlog is presently unknown to the Municipality. This may be because the Municipality's current strategy to address the housing crisis appears to be reacting to demands made by homeless people, rather than developing a comprehensive strategy to counter the problems caused by the increase of informal settlements. Since the population growth is about three percent (3%) per annum, the rate at which service delivery takes place fails to measure up to the demand for housing, land and basic services. Mkhondo Municipality is a classic case of an area where the demand for housing greatly exceeds supply; a situation that is not likely to be reversed in the foreseeable future.

1.4 Purpose statement

The purpose of this research is to investigate the reasons for the steady increase of informal settlements in eThandukukhanya. The study is meant to assess whether provision of low-cost housing has an effect on in-migration; and whether formalising formal settlements (by building low-cost housing) will assist in ensuring that these settlements are eradicated by 2014 or whether such an approach will merely serve to perpetuate the spread of unsanctioned settlements.

The study will explore the role in-migration has played in the escalation of informal settlements in urban towns like Piet Retief, and will examine whether a relationship exists between housing provision and in-migration, and whether the provision of low-cost housing is really the only alternative available to deal with the informal settlement challenge. This will be established by asking the research questions outlined below.

1.5 Research questions

The research paper will attempt to answer the following key questions:

- a) Does supplying houses in informal settlements result in in-migration?
- b) Does the current housing strategy have the effect of intensifying the escalation of informal settlements?
- c) What are the alternatives to providing houses?

1.6 Chapter outline

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the research paper. It contains a brief background to the informal settlement problem and outlines the situation at Mkhondo Municipality. It also outlines the research problem, and lists the research questions that will be used.

Chapter 2 contains the literature report and looks firstly at international experiences in dealing with informal settlements and migration as well as academic literature on migration, housing and informal settlements. Thereafter, the researcher discusses migration patterns. Lastly, the researcher discusses the legislative and policy context, which will include the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa as well as the national policy on upgrading of informal settlements.

Chapter 3 deals with the research methodology that is utilised in the study, looking at different qualitative research methods that could be used within a case study context.

In **Chapter 4**, the researcher presents the findings of the study. The chapter summarises data collected from documentation, observations and interviews.

In **Chapter 5**, the researcher analyses the findings and data collected from documentation, observations and interviews.

In **Chapter 6** the researcher will come up with recommendations and conclusions based on the findings in chapter 4.

Chapter 2: Literature Report

2.1 Introduction

This section examines literature relevant to the topic. The aim is to establish whether a relationship exists between the increase in the number of informal settlements in Mkhondo Municipality and the growth in the numbers of people migrating to Piet Retief by using the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement as a case study. The researcher will firstly discuss academic literature on migration and informal settlements. Thereafter the study will look at international experiences in dealing with informal settlements as well as migration theories and assess whether there is a relationship between the number of people migrating to Piet Retief and the increase of informal settlements at Mkhondo Municipality. Lastly, this section will consider what the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states about provision of housing and what *the National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements envisages* as a strategy to eradicate all informal settlements in the country by 2014, in line with the Millennium Development Goals. .

2.2 International experiences

2.2.1 Theorising urban migration

According to Bardin (1977) in Stren (1994), the volumes of people who decided to migrate to urban areas at the end of the colonisation period became more than the state could cater for with regard to provision of basic services for everyone residing in urban areas. As a result of continuing in-migration despite the shortage of serviced residential sites, urban areas have been inundated with slums and informal settlements, which appear on vacant land in and around major towns and cities. In chapter 2 of the book entitled '*Urban Research in the Developing World, Volume Two: Africa*', Mabogunje (Stren, 1994) looks at '*the Urban Problematique in Africa*' and how migration

has impacted on urban life. His emphasis in this article is on matters relating to the provision of services “in the city, issues of land and housing, the quality of urban environment” (Stren, 1994:24) and other processes of development.

According to Mabogunje in Stren (1994) “The mass influx of rural migrants into cities was seen in the context of people striving to partake of the new opportunities offered by modernization and, in the process, to alter dramatically their production and consumption orientation (Stren, 1994:28) He raises concerns on how this influx is affecting spatial development planning in light of the rapid and sudden urbanisation of Africa. Mabogunje also expressed concern about the ability of urban cities to handle the infrastructure burdens that are created by industry as well as by overpopulation of Africa’s cities.

Furthermore, according to Mabogunje, Todaro (1971 in Stren), referred to this migration to urban areas as a “massive rural exodus” (Stren, 1994:28) Mabogunje states in his article that many articles have concluded that this in-migration was not as a result of ‘real wages’ but was motivated by the hope of earning a higher income in the city. He explains that because the employment opportunities presented were fewer in the urban areas than the high number of people arriving in the cities, this shift did not significantly improve average income, nor did it appear to improve living conditions. Instead, many of the uneducated migrants found themselves residing in worse living conditions than at their rural homes. Others found themselves unemployed and joining the urban poor, whose existence involved daily struggle to feed their families.

According to Kharoufi in Stren (1994), studies have shown that a third of the increase in population in urban Egypt is as a direct result of in-migration (PADCO, 1982:70). Kharoufi highlights the extent to which ‘internal migration’ has caused an uneven population distribution in Egypt. Furthermore, Saal al-Din Ibrahim (1982) in Stren (1994) is of the opinion that “internal migration is responsible for the redistribution of about 25% of the country’s [Egypt] population” (Stren, 1994:55). Kharoufi further identifies three periods of interest with various migratory patterns. The first period between 1930 and

1960 saw a large number of migrants from rural areas relocating to Egyptian cities. This led to the relocation of nearly a fifth of Egypt's population to Cairo and Alexandria.

The second period of 1960 to 1976 saw the number of migrants to urban areas decreasing because of the tough living conditions under which migrants with no education or formal skills were forced to live. The author also identified a change in the political environment as a contributing factor. The third period was from 1976 up to 1986; which saw a further reduction in migration from rural areas. Widad Morqoss (1988:18-20) in Stren (1994) explained this as being due to "a change in migratory destinations" (1994:57). He was convinced that people had opted to migrate to oil-producing countries rather than to Egypt's cities. While other authors attributed this decline to a drop in industrial growth, rising unemployment rates and a shortage of accommodation, Mohieddin (1991), in Stren (1994), felt that recent strides made in transportation could have made it easier for people to travel between their rural homes and the cities. According to Kharoufi, "the migrant is inclined to leave those areas with poor infrastructure and low employment – often rural – and move to destinations that offer greater opportunities" (Stren, 1994:57). He also highlights that in many cases it is not acknowledged that women migrate for matrimonial reasons.

Kharoufi in Stren (1994) illustrates how slums have developed in the cities of Morocco due to lack of serviced land for people migrating from rural areas. As a result, '*clandestine housing*' is increasingly becoming a popular form of housing for low income earners. This has "proliferated since the 1960s ended in cities like Tangiers, Sale and Settat" (1994:63). These *clandestine* houses are considered illegal because they are built without proper planning or authorisation on land that has not been developed or demarcated for residential homes. Studies according to Kharoufi have shown that as the population in cities increases, land available for the poor to occupy also steadily decreases.

In the article "Globalization, migratory movements and urbanization", Borja and Castells state that globalization plays a major role in encouraging rural-

urban migration. According to Findley (1993) in Borja and Castells (1997), rural-urban migration contributed about forty percent (40%) to urban growth in the years 1975 to 1990, which rose from thirty-six point six percent (36.6%) which had been recorded for the period between 1960 and 1970.

Furthermore, Campbell (1994) records that of the estimated eighty million international migrants worldwide, about half are living in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. It is said that migrants make up about eight percent (8%) of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa. Borja and Castells (1997) state that although migration in general has risen, there were times in history when the influx of migrants was higher. An example which they identified was that, in the United States, there was an increase in the number of immigrants after immigration laws were reformed in 1965. However, this increase is much lower than the influx between 1904 and 1914. In 1914 alone about 1, 2 million immigrants arrived in the USA. They highlight that the only change in migration is that the immigrants no longer come from Europe alone, but from other ethnic groups as well.

2.2.2 Housing and informal settlements

One of the problems with housing provision is 'poor social integration', which Borja and Castells attribute primarily "to a disassociation of planning and houses building schedules (1997:144). It is unfortunate that, in an attempt to urbanise the poor, governments tend to create a social divide that leaves certain areas classified as RDP townships or 'ghettos', in the case of the USA; where the urban poor are lumped together. The flaw in this type of planning that appears to prevail in developed and developing cities and towns is that it is based on "the assumption that producing houses, and at best, ensuring minimum urbanization and services (transport, school) means producing a piece of the city and conferring citizen status on its inhabitants" (1977:146).

2.2.3 Dealing with informal settlements in international context

It is for this reason, therefore, that the upgrading of the eThandukukhanya informal settlement will require an integrated development approach that includes the building of houses, schools, clinics, and social amenities such as community halls, parks and sports fields. Furthermore, it would also involve the provision of infrastructure such as access roads, electricity, sanitation and basic water connections, which are some of the factors highlighted in the policy on upgrading of informal settlements, the National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements (2004).

The eradication of informal settlements has been a challenge for the government to deal with for some time now. With the rapid and uncontrolled increase in the number of informal settlements around the country, by-laws will have to be put in place first to ensure that government's efforts to remove informal settlements is successful. In an ambitious attempt to solve this problem, Thomas Thale of the City of Johannesburg announced that the municipality aimed to implement a programme to eradicate all informal settlements around Johannesburg by 2004 (Thale: 2002). The extent to which this has been achieved will be examined further.

According to Rene Lefort and Amy Otchet in the article *John Abbott, South Africa's City Stitcher*, the main drawback is the top-down approach normally employed in dealing with uncontrolled mushrooming of informal settlements. They suggest that the two possible alternatives are either a people-based approach, which is currently being utilised in countries faced with great poverty such as India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. The second approach entails partnerships between Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), community organisations and professionals.

It is clear that strict laws will have to be developed to prevent illegal occupation of vacant land. Municipalities should be advised to develop enforceable bylaws that are in line with the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land (Act No. 19 of 1998) and the Prevention of Illegal Eviction From and Unlawful Occupation of Land Amendment Bill (2006). These will assist in ensuring that informal settlements do not continue

to increase in the present manner, and will thus support the efforts of the Department of Housing to eradicate informal settlements by 2014.

2.3 Migration patterns

Migration has been practiced for centuries by various communities and peoples of different races, cultures and income levels. In fact, according to Skeldon (1990) and Tilly (1978), in Gerderblom and Kok (1994), migration is not a new phenomenon at all. They trace notable occurrences of '*population mobility*' to as early as the 17th century. In South Africa, one may be excused for thinking that migration came with the new, *post-apartheid* laws; however, it is believed that migration merely became more significant when *apartheid* laws restricting the movement of black South Africans were abolished. As a result, Posel (2003) states that "...in the new South Africa, people would choose not to be labour migrants but would rather migrate to and settle permanently at the places where they work" (2003:5). This thinking has resulted in an increase in urban *slums* otherwise known as informal settlements. This will be discussed further in the research paper.

Furthermore, Alan Morris, co-editor of the book *African Immigration to South Africa: Francophone Migrants of the 1990s*, highlights that "immigration to South Africa has [historically] been a white phenomenon" (Morris & Bouillon, 2001:9). This, according to Morris, is as a result of the numerous restrictions that were placed on black Africans during the 20th century who wished to enter the country. Then, permission to enter South Africa was only approved for people who had employment contracts in the country; who were then granted only up to eleven months to work in the country and were prevented from traveling with their wives or children. This was a mechanism used by the government to prevent immigrant from being tempted to take up permanent residence in South Africa. According to Morris, with the abolition of *apartheid* came "the scrapping of the white-only immigration policy" (Morris & Bouillon, 2001:10).

2.3.1 Causes of immigration

According to Denis Kadima in Morris & Bouillon (Chapter 3), in an article entitled *Motivation for emigration and character of the economic contribution of Congolese emigrants in South Africa*, people tended to migrate to South Africa because of the poor socio-economic conditions they were subjected to in their home countries. However, De Haan, in his article *Livelihoods and Poverty: Roles of Migration a critical Review of the Migration Literature*, is of the opinion that *pull factors* play a major role in migration. He states in his article that there is a distinct indication that in many cases, people migrate “in reaction to newly developing opportunities” (De Haan, 1999:15). De Haan’s view presents a likely explanation, because in Piet Retief for example, people migrated from neighbouring farms and rural areas in search of the job opportunities available at Mondi Forests, which is the biggest employer in Mkhondo Municipality. The reality is that people migrate for various reasons, from the ‘pull’ of development in urban areas to poverty to change in agricultural patterns that affect socio-economic conditions in their area of origin.

a) Relationship between migration and development

According to De Haan (1999), existing literature on migration has not provided a compelling argument to show that a relationship exists between the rationale for migration and urban development. He admits that while recent trends many suggest that development and urbanisation may have fuelled the need for migration, this remains an unsubstantiated assumption that appears to have some currency; needless to say, a number of factors have led to migration; and development is only one of them.

b) Relationship between migration, poverty and inequality

It is believed that poverty can be a great incentive for people to consider migration, and that people migrate in the hope that they can make a better life for themselves and their families. However, Lipton *et al* in De Haan (1999)

declare that migration can also result in greater levels of inequality amongst people from the same rural area, because the opportunities that are available to the migrants depend on a number of factors, such as education and wealth, and these two factors will determine the types of jobs, accommodation and privileges that the migrants will enjoy.

As a result, the more educated migrants are 'pulled' to urban areas by the possibilities of better and more stable job opportunities, and a chance to take full advantage of their educational qualifications, or simply to further their education because they have the financial resources to do so. On the other hand, poorer and less educated migrants are 'pushed' to cities and towns by the lack of job opportunities in their villages, redundancy of the skills they have acquired or the devastating poverty that exists in their villages or regions.

These various causes of migration have resulted in inequality among people that originate from the same or similar areas. Therefore the reasons for migrating will eventually determine whether, once in the new environment, the migrants will be classified as amongst the *newly empowered* or the *urban poor*, who will be the focus of this research.

c) Relationship between migration and agricultural patterns

De Haan (1999) is of the opinion that migration has had little effect on agriculture, which happens to be central to rural existence. He highlights that in the past, men went to cities and towns in search of job opportunities while women stayed in the villages to look after the home and continue subsistence farming. In fact, he points out that migration could be good for agriculture in that the men sent home money to improve rural farming. However, Croll and Ping (1997) in De Haan (1999) point out that while some people migrate in search of a better income that will supplement farming; others migrate because they no longer want to be involved in subsistence farming or any other form of agriculture. Consequently, neither land availability nor adequate employment within the agricultural sector agriculture is likely to deter these people from migrating to neighbouring towns and cities.

The article says that migration has led to a shortage of strong men to work in farming, which has had a negative effect on agriculture. A number of authors appear to hold the view that rural development could be the answer to reducing out-migration in rural areas. This is based on the assumption that people migrate because there is insufficient development in rural areas. On the contrary, Bigsten (1996) in De Haan is of the view that “rural development is not likely to stop migration” (de Haan, 1999:24).

2.4 Legislative and policy context

2.4.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

The right to housing is one of the fundamental human rights accorded South Africans in the constitution. According to section 26 in Chapter 2 (The Bill of Rights) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa:

“26. Housing

- 1. Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing.*
- 2. The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right.*
- 3. 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.”*

(Chapter 2, section 26)

The Grootboom Case

The Grootboom Case is a ground-breaking case that saw ordinary citizens triumph over the state by using the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa to drive their point across. In a judgment delivered on 17 December 1999, Irene Grootboom was listed as the first applicant in a

case against Oostenberg Municipality, the Cape Metropolitan Council; the Premier of the Western Cape Province, the National Housing Board and the Government of the Republic of South Africa. The premise of the case was that ordinary citizens wanted to see the realisation of the rights bestowed upon them in Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights, specifically on section 26 and 28 of the Constitution. Section 26 reads as follows:

- (1) Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing*
- (2) The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right.* - Section 26 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

The case of Grootboom and others versus the Republic of South Africa made headlines worldwide, as the Grootboom community united to fight against unfair evictions and to argue their right to access to housing, land and health care in the Constitutional Court of South Africa. Unfortunately, the joy they felt in October 2000 was short-lived because, four years down the line, all they had to show for their efforts, as Bonny Schoonakker's article in the Sunday Times, 'Treated with contempt' explained, was a smelly ablution block. It is important to note, however, that Judge D. M. Davis ruled in 1999 as follows:

"For the reasons given it is my view that the applicants have in principle made out a case for shelter pursuant to s.28(1)(c) of the Constitution, but that they have failed to make out a case for housing pursuant to s.26. I say in principle, because relatively little attention was given in the papers to the nature of the shelter to be provided, to its location, or to which of the respondents should be responsible therefore. Indeed, it was only in the replying affidavits that the applicants, through their attorney, made some practical suggestions as to the nature of the relief."

- Case No. 6826/99 Irene Grootboom and other applicants: P23

He therefore suggested the following ways to remedy the situation in Wallacedene:

“I propose that an order shall be issued in the following terms:

- (1) The application insofar as it relates to housing or adequate housing, and insofar as it is based on s.26 of the Constitution, fails and it is dismissed;*
- (2) It is declared, in terms of s.28 of the Constitution that;*
 - a) the applicant children are entitled to be provided with shelter by the appropriate organ or department of state;*
 - b) the applicant parents are entitled to be accommodated with their children in the foregoing shelter; and*
 - c) the appropriate organ or department of state is obliged to provide the applicant children, and their accompanying parents, with such shelter until such time as the parents are able to shelter their own children”.*

Case No. 6826/99: Irene Grootboom and other applicants: P26

2.4.2 The national policy on upgrading of informal settlements

The *National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements* is the national housing policy, located within the *National Housing Code*, which regulates how to deal with escalating informal settlements in South Africa. The policy, Section 1.1.1, defines informal settlements in terms of their illegality and the fact that they are unplanned. The policy highlights that these settlements are normally located in open areas that may not be suitable for residents such as flood lines or land with dolomite. The policy also states that the private sector is reluctant to invest in informal settlements due to lack of infrastructure and the high poverty and crime levels.

a) Aims and objectives of the policy

The aim of the policy is to provide stability to previously disadvantaged communities and the poor in general, who wish to reside closer to towns and cities, by providing, as stated in Section 13.9, a healthy and safe living environment, a sense of empowerment (economically, socially and as a

community), as well as tenure security. Tenure security refers to the provision of a title deed, whether full or sectional, to all residents of informal settlements. This means that those residents who do not qualify for low-cost housing as set out in *the Housing Act No. 107 of 1997* would, in terms of the National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements, be allowed to purchase the land they occupy at the cost of installing basic services.

The policy on Upgrading of Informal Settlements aims to provide an integrated type of development, whereby the project would result in not only the construction of houses, but where the development would only be complete when the settlement is provided with proper infrastructure, consisting of basic water, electricity and sewer connections, access roads, schools, clinics, a police station, economic amenities such as small businesses and shopping centres, and social amenities such as sports grounds, parks and community halls. The big question, which this research will attempt to answer, is whether the provision of houses in this instance is really the best strategy to deal with the challenge posed by the rising number of informal settlements.

In section 13.2.1 of the policy, the main objective of the National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements is outlined as the facilitation of “structured upgrading of informal settlements” (2005:4). Often, the reality is that when dealing with informal settlements, Mkhondo Municipality, like many other municipalities, concentrates more on the housing and service delivery aspect of the policy than any other aspect, whereas “the programme entails an area and/or community focus, fostering a holistic development approach with minimum disruption or distortion of existing fragile community networks and support structures” (2005:6). In reality, the holistic development suggested by the policy is normally not regarded as important as the actual building of houses. It is crucial, therefore, when implementing the policy, to take the following into consideration:

“The challenge of informal settlement upgrading must be approached from a pragmatic perspective in the face of changing realities and many uncertainties. Informal settlements should also not be viewed as merely

a “housing problem”, requiring a ‘housing solution’ but rather as a manifestation of structural social change, the resolution of which requires multi-sectoral partnership, long-term commitment and political endurance. At the outset therefore, a paradigm shift is necessary to refocus existing policy responses towards informal settlements from one of conflict or neglect, to one of integration and co-operation.”

National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements, Section 13.1: p.3.

b) Interventions to prevent increase of informal settlements

The Mpumalanga Department of Local Government and Housing is in the process of developing a provincial policy on informal settlement upgrading, with the working title *Proposed Policy on Informal Settlement Upgrading* (2005). It highlights the responsibilities of all stakeholders in preventing the establishment of further informal settlements. It outlines the role of Municipalities as being to:

“...generate by-laws on managing Informal Settlements within their jurisdiction. Such by-laws should regulate how Municipalities will control migrating people as well as indicate processes to be followed when applying for land to settle.”

National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements, Section 12: p.7

These by-laws would assist municipalities to regulate illegal occupation of land and ensure that once an informal settlement is upgraded, no further land invasions occur. By-laws are also essential in regulating the use of land from which informal settlers are relocated and to prevent re- invasion thereof.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The research design utilised in this study was a qualitative non-experimental design. The study was done at Piet Retief in Mkhondo Municipality, south of Mpumalanga province (see Figure 1), and involved interviewing and observing residents of the eThandukukhanya informal settlement. The rationale behind using qualitative research methodology was to get first-hand information from all stakeholders on whether the current approach to housing informal settlers was really addressing the question of community sustainability or if it was actually encouraging in-migration. A qualitative approach would allow the interviewees to give their opinion on the current housing strategy or lack thereof, as well as other alternatives to dealing with the problem of informal settlements.

3.2 Research strategy and methodology

Qualitative (non-experimental design) research was conducted to collect data for the study. Merriam (2002) defines the role of qualitative researchers as being to understand how people interpret or perceive situations. An *interpretive qualitative approach* is the ideal method to be used in this study because, according to Merriam (2002), the objective of this approach is to learn “how individuals experience and interact with their social world, the meaning it has for them” (2002:4). An interpretive qualitative approach aims to understand the relationship between migration and housing demand or growth of informal settlements from the perspective of the residents of the informal settlements. A critical qualitative approach on the other hand also aims to “investigate how the social and political aspects of the situation shape the reality” (2002:4). A critical qualitative approach would either look at whether the interests of the residents are met by the policy on upgrading of informal settlements or identify whose interests the policy aims to serve.

The research will try to establish whether the current strategy is addressing the needs of the poor or aims to clear up an existing mess. Furthermore, it will try to ascertain whether migration is leading to a need for housing or the need for housing is leading to migration. According to Merriam (2002), there are several approaches to a qualitative research: these include *basic interpretative, ethnography, critical, phenomenology, narrative analysis, grounded theory, post modern- post structural* and *case study*. For the purposes of this paper, a qualitative case study approach will be utilised. However, a basic interpretative approach will be utilised within the case study approach. Merriam describes the case study approach as “an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual, group, institution, or community” (Merriam, 2002:8). She states that a case study is characterised by the unit of analysis rather than the subject being investigated. For example, experiences of residents of an informal settlement regarding service delivery would be a qualitative study and not a case study. However, eThandukukhanya informal settlement could be used as a case study. Therefore, in a case study, the unit of analysis would be a particular programme that is chosen “because it was typical, unique, experimental or highly successful...” (Merriam, 2002:8).

3.3 Rationale for the case study approach

3.3.1 Rationale for the study

The rationale for conducting this research is to find out why people migrate, and whether there is a relationship between migration and the increase in informal settlements at eThandukukhanya. This was identified as a problem because a number of people find themselves living in devastating poverty with limited access to clean water, sanitation, roads and security of legitimacy. The study will examine the extent to which current legislation has contributed to the rise in in-migration. A case study will be used in order to have a study that is focused on a particular area that the researcher can easily monitor. The

eThandukukhanya informal settlement is ideal because the researcher can learn a lot, in relation to the area of study from it. Moreover, the knowledge gained from the study will help in dealing with the problem of informal settlements in a more efficient manner.

The research will therefore attempt to establish whether the needs of the residents of informal settlements are being met by the Department of Local Government and Housing's current strategy to eradicate and upgrade the existing informal settlements. This topic is relevant to public and development management because it will look at whether the Department of Housing is approaching the issue of development in a holistic manner or if its core interest is to merely provide adequate shelter without considering the real needs that draw people to these settlements.

3.3.2 Reliability and validity

a) Internal validity

The researcher will utilise internal validity to analyse findings. According to Merriam (2002), internal validity looks at how congruent one's findings are with reality, that is, comparison between what we think and reality. "In a qualitative research, the understanding of reality is really the researcher's interpretation of the participant's interpretation or understanding of the phenomenon of interest" (Merriam, 2002:25). It is therefore important, according to Merriam, "to understand the perspectives of those involved, uncover the complexity of the human behaviour in context, and present a holistic interpretation of what is happening" (2002:25).

Merriam regards internal validity as a key component of qualitative research. As a result, triangulation is one of the strategies the researcher uses to demonstrate internal validity. Triangulation refers to "the use of multiple investigators, sources of data, data collection methods to confirm emerging findings." (Merriam, 2002:31). Triangulation can be done using several methods of collecting data, to ensure reliability and validity. Therefore the

researcher will use interviews, document analysis and observation to collect data. That way, interview responses can be checked against documented findings as well as documentation during field visits.

b) Reliability

Reliability goes hand-in-hand with validity. Reliability refers to the extent to which research yields the same results again and again. The study will rely on qualitative research to attempt to establish “whether the results are consistent with the data collected” (Merriam, 2002:27). According to Lincon & Guba (1985:88), in order for data in a qualitative research to be considered reliable, it has to be dependable and consistent, not necessarily the same every time. These authors also argue that since the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the researcher can become a more reliable instrument through training and practice (Merriam, 2002:22).

Moreover, a number of techniques of analysis can be used to assess reliability as can triangulation, and peer-examination, which involves discussing the process of the study with colleagues. The researcher could also utilise the audit trial as well as the investigator’s position, that is, “critical self-reflection by the researcher regarding assumptions, worldview, and biases, theoretical orientation, and relationship to the study that may affect investigation” (Merriam, 2002:31).

c) External validity or generalizability

“The basic question for qualitative research is the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations” (Merriam, 2002:28). However, Merriam feels that it is not possible in a qualitative research to “generalize statistically” because small samples are chosen precisely to get an in-depth understanding of an issue rather than a general understanding. The author goes on to say that generalizability is possible in qualitative research only if the focus is on what one can learn from conducting an in-depth analysis and in considering how the knowledge can be “transferred to another similar situation” (Merriam, 2002:28). It will be very difficult therefore to generalise in this particular research because neither the research nor the population size

was big enough to effectively come up with conclusive results. Moreover, given the size of the settlement, it may not be proper to generalise and assume that the results of this study can automatically be extrapolated to other informal settlements.

d) Ethical issues

Merriam (2002) indicates that for research to be considered valid and reliable, the researcher must be an ethical person. Normally, ethical dilemmas in qualitative research would arise when addressing issues relating to methods of collecting data and distributing findings. It is very important for the researcher to stipulate how he or she will ensure that the privacy as well as the identity of participants is protected. To avoid causing an ethical dilemma, the researcher must make sure that any relationships with the participants of the study do not affect the validity of the research. Merriam (2002) furthermore believes that the researcher needs to be impartial and value all opinions even those that are different from his or her own; and must avoid trying to intimidate interviewees. Furthermore, the researcher should ensure that the study is not used to push personal agendas. According to Merriam (2002) it is important to note that there are instances when ethical issues cannot be legislated, but should rather be instilled within the researcher.

3.3.3 Key data sources

a) Strategies for data collection

Merriam (2002) identifies basic interpretative, ethnography, critical, phenomenology, narrative analysis, grounded theory and post-modern / post-structural as common genres used in a qualitative research report. For this research, a combination of basic interpretative and critical qualitative research will be utilised within a case study context. The two genres as well as a case study are explained below:

b) Basic interpretive qualitative research

In an attempt to define basic interpretative qualitative research it is important to note that “a central characteristic of qualitative research is that individuals construct reality in interaction with their social worlds” (Merriam, 2002:37). As a result, “researchers conducting a basic interpretive study would be interested in

- i). How people interpret their experiences
- ii). How they construct their worlds, and
- iii). What meaning they attribute to their experiences.” (Merriam, 2002:38)

c) Critical research

Critical research was influenced by a number of traditions, including “Marx’s analysis of socio-economic conditions and class structures, Habermas’ notions of technical, practical and emancipatory knowledge, and Freire’s transformative and emancipatory education” (Merriam, 2002:327). Merriam goes on to quote Marx (1962:212) who wrote that critical inquiry was a “relentless criticism for all existing conditions, relentless in the sense that the criticism is not afraid of its findings and just as little afraid of conflict with the powers that be” (Merriam, 2002:327). According to Merriam (2002), critical research questions are framed in terms of power, especially in terms of who possesses it, how power is negotiated and the nature of the structures within the community which reinforce the current distribution of power.

The author bases this on the assumption “that people unconsciously accept things the way they are, and in so doing reinforce the status quo” (Merriam, 2002:327). Critical research looks at whether this power struggle results “in the marginalization and oppression of those without power” (Merriam, 2002:328). This method of research involves analysing written text, film, dance and drama, to reveal assumptions underlying the text about the world and the way things are. The main goal of researchers is to be critical “to uncover and challenge the assumptions and social structures that oppress” (Merriam, 2002:328).

In his book *Finding your way in qualitative research* (2004), Henning describes a couple of research tools, available in the research field, but only the following will be utilised in the research paper:

- a) In-depth interviews with various residents of informal settlements on an individual basis
- b) Using the eThandukukhanya informal settlement in the Gert Sibande District, Mpumalanga as a case study
- c) Documentation on the subject will also be utilised to enhance the argument, such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the National Housing Code of 2000, the Housing White Paper of 1994, the Policies on the Upgrading of Informal Settlements and other relevant documentation.

3.3.4 Sources of data

Merriam (2002) identifies interviews, documents and observations as major sources of data. She encourages researchers to use multiple data collection methods in order to ensure that the findings are valid. Sources of data can either be from primary data or from secondary data and will be collected using the following methods.

a) Primary data

Primary data refers to first-hand information that the researcher obtains directly from the source. In this study this will be obtained through interviews with residents of eThandukukhanya informal settlement. Moreover, according to Lancaster (2005), primary data can be collected through experimentation, interviewing and observing people within the sample frame or conducting surveys. For this research, primary data will be collected through the use of questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The following strategy will be utilised:

- i. Questionnaires will be used to gather data from the residents of eThandukukhanya informal settlement. Therefore a stratified random sample will be taken of about forty people of the 1 200 beneficiaries that will participate in the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement Project.

- The sample will be selected based on household income, marital status, gender, number of dependents and age.
- ii. Moreover, in-depth interviews in the form of focus group discussions will be conducted with a group of about ten beneficiaries that are residing within the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement, that have varying circumstances such as income, marital status, gender and age.
 - iii. Observations of the residents of the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement.

A combination of structured and unstructured interviews will be utilised for this research. Interviews will consist of structured questions, which are viewed as generic to all participants, but less structured open-ended questions will largely be used in order to ensure that the interviewees are able to express themselves and also raise issues that the researcher may have overlooked.

b) Secondary data

Secondary data refers to data that is already available somewhere in one form or other. An analysis of documents will be utilised as another major source of data. According to Merriam (2002), these documents could be available orally, in written format or visually, in the form of photographs or as cultural artefacts. The author believes that the advantage of using documents is that they already exist and cannot easily be changed or altered like a scene that is being observed. Documented data is therefore more reliable because the information is always consistent, regardless of who collected the data, whereas when observing a community, the data collected may be influenced by the presence of an outsider in the community (whether to produce a better or worse picture).

Moreover, documented data, unlike observation or interviews, is not dependent on the human factor (such as moods, biases, etc). According to Merriam (2002), documented data also includes web pages and literature that is available on-line. To enhance the research paper, an analysis of documentation on housing and migration patterns will be done, including, but not limited to, the following:

- i. Academic literature on informal settlements
- ii. Literature on migration theories and patterns.
- iii. The National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements (the national policy on the upgrading of informal settlements) and the Housing Act.

3.4 Research development

Graziano and Raulin (2004) in Lancaster (2005), identify deductive and inductive types of research that a researcher can utilise. For this research, an inductive approach will be used. According to Lancaster, in an inductive research approach, the researcher will develop a hypothesis and theories with the aim of “explaining empirical observations of the real world” (Lancaster, 2005:25). These empirical observations will be based on experiences of residents of the eThandukukhanya informal settlement. The researcher will observe the day-to-day activities of the residents of the informal settlement and also conduct interviews with them.

The advantage of using inductive research is that it allows the researcher more flexibility, especially in the designing of the research and in deciding on sample size as well as the kind of data to be collected. This way, the research would become more structured and focused.

3.5 Data analysis

The research will adopt an interpretivist framework to analyse the data to be collected because, according to Henning (2004), it tries to bring meaning to, and an understanding of, the way of life of the participants in the study. The researcher will ask the designated research questions. A qualitative approach will therefore be more relevant to the research because the study aims to find out why people choose to reside in informal settlements.

This would be difficult to effectively establish using a quantitative research method because, to get a sense of what people think, in-depth interviews are necessary. This would allow the interviewee to speak freely and honestly without too many restrictions that may inhibit the reliability of the data, thus ensuring that the results are more valid. Moreover, according to Merriam (2002), data analysis begins when the researcher first begins to collect data.

Furthermore, Merriam (2002) believes that the advantage of ensuring that data collection and its analysis are done simultaneously is that it allows the researcher a chance to change strategies along the way when he or she realises that the current approach is not yielding the desired results. Merriam explains that “although all qualitative data analysis is inductive, different theoretical stances and different disciplines have evolved particular strategies for data analysis” (Merriam, 2002:14). A constant comparative method can therefore also be utilised to analyse data.

3.6 Limitations of the research

Since little has been done on the subject of this study, it may be hard to find adequate reading material to support the discussions for this research. However, intensive efforts will be made to obtain satisfactory information to support the research. It may be that information relevant to the research may not be available in writing and may therefore be more difficult to obtain. Since the area of study involves only a small part of the country, it may not adequately reflect the true sense of how severe the problem is.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study are outlined. The situation at eThandukukhanya informal settlement is summarized in terms of the biographical information of participants of the study; which will look at the interviewees' citizenship, gender, race and age, duration of stay in the settlement, household income and level of services. The survey also asked questions about the housing situation in South Africa, the policy on upgrading informal settlements, which looked at how interviewees would like to be assisted, and their views on both the housing policy and the policy on upgrading of informal settlements. The study also dealt with the relationship between housing and in-migration, which looked at whether interviewees had houses 'back home' and explored the reasons why people who participated in the survey chose to migrate. Lastly, the survey looked at alternatives to housing provision and whether participants of the survey would be willing to accept housing assistance that did not involve ownership of an RDP house.

The researcher conducted a survey involving fifty (50) residents of the eThandukukhanya informal settlement. The sample consisted of men and women from different age and racial groups, as well as people who have stayed in the informal settlement for different lengths of time ranging from a month to over fifteen years. Forty participants of the survey were asked to complete a questionnaire which consisted of structured closed questions as well as open-ended questions. The other ten were invited to participate in a focus group where the same open-ended questions were asked by the researcher. These allowed the participants to express themselves freely in an informal setting, thus adding value to the study. The questionnaire used in the interviews is attached as Annexure A. Figure 2 aims to give the reader an indication of what the average informal settlement is like.



Figure 2

4.2 Location of the informal settlement

As explained, eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement is situated in Piet Retief in Mkhondo Municipality, in the Gert Sibande District Municipality, along the Wakkerstroom road to Newcastle via Volkrust, with the Pixley Ka-Seme Municipality to the west and the N3 to Durban to the east. According to Kharoufi, studies have shown there is a rising land availability challenge caused by the increase in population in urban areas. Due to the large population influx in urban towns and cities, the land that is available for the poor to occupy is becoming limited. For this reason, Mkhondo Municipality has recently started to purchase under-utilised land from Mondi Forests to ensure that more land is available in order to cope with the expansion of the informal settlement, where many low-income earners find refuge.

4.3 The role of Mkhondo Municipality

The study revealed that Mkhondo Municipality had made strong attempts to develop the eThandukukhanya informal settlement into a recognised township. The Municipality has made great strides towards improving living conditions in this informal settlement by purchasing the land that was invaded by informal settlers from Mondi Forests, installing bulk services and infrastructure, connections of internal reticulation and applying to the Mpumalanga Department of Local Government and Housing for RDP housing units. These are discussed in more detail below:

4.3.1 Purchasing of land from Mondi Forests

When people first started invading land on the outskirts of Piet Retief in the early 1990s, they chose to reside on vacant land that belonged to Mkhondo Municipality. However, as the informal settlement grew, they began invading under-utilised land belonging to Mondi Forests. As the informal settlement continued to grow, the Municipality made a decision to purchase the land that informal settlers had already invaded from Mondi Forests. As a result, the informal settlement now has nearly eight thousand approved residential sites.

4.3.2 Installation of services

By the end of April 2006, electricity meters had been connected to all occupied shacks by the Municipality. MIG and DWAF funds were utilised for installing bulk water and sewer connections throughout the informal settlement. The same funds were also utilised in the construction of a bulk water supply line from the new treatment site to the existing reservoir next to eThandukukhanya extension 5. Thereafter, an internal reticulation project was initiated using funds from both Mkhondo Municipality and Gert Sibande District Municipality.

4.3.3. Application for housing project

Mkhondo Municipality then submitted a proposal to the Mpumalanga Department of Local Government and Housing in 2005, stating that they required 1 500 housing units to upgrade eThandukukhanya informal settlement. In the proposal, they explained that the Surveyor-General had approved the general plan of the informal settlement; the township had been registered and had been included in the Municipality's IDP, which outlined all planned social and economic amenities up until 2009.

4.4 Situation at eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement

The eThandukukhanya informal settlement is home to some of the poorest residents of Piet Retief and has a total population (at the time of the study) of approximately seven thousand and fifty-two (7 052) households (see Table 1). The study indicated that only two percent (2%) of the households interviewed are headed by non-South Africans, and observations indicated that several households that were in reality headed by non-South African women, were portrayed as being headed by South African men; who had identity documents and were thus in a better position to apply for an RDP house. The remaining participants of the survey were South African citizens from various parts of the country. The study also indicated that fifty-one percent (51%) of the participants are women.

Mere observation will establish that most of the residents of this community are female. The reason for this seems to be that the men seek employment far from home, while a large number were unmarried mothers who left home after falling pregnant. From the black mourning attire that is a common sight in this settlement, one can only assume the high number of women-headed households is as a result of the death of the husband or life partner, who was probably also the bread-winner. Moreover, the large number of housing beneficiaries between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-six receiving a disability grant leads one to conclude that the considerable number of deaths

in this informal settlement is AIDS-related. Furthermore, the majority of informal settlers, ninety-four percent (94%), who participated in the study, were Black, with only six percent (6%) of these being Coloured.

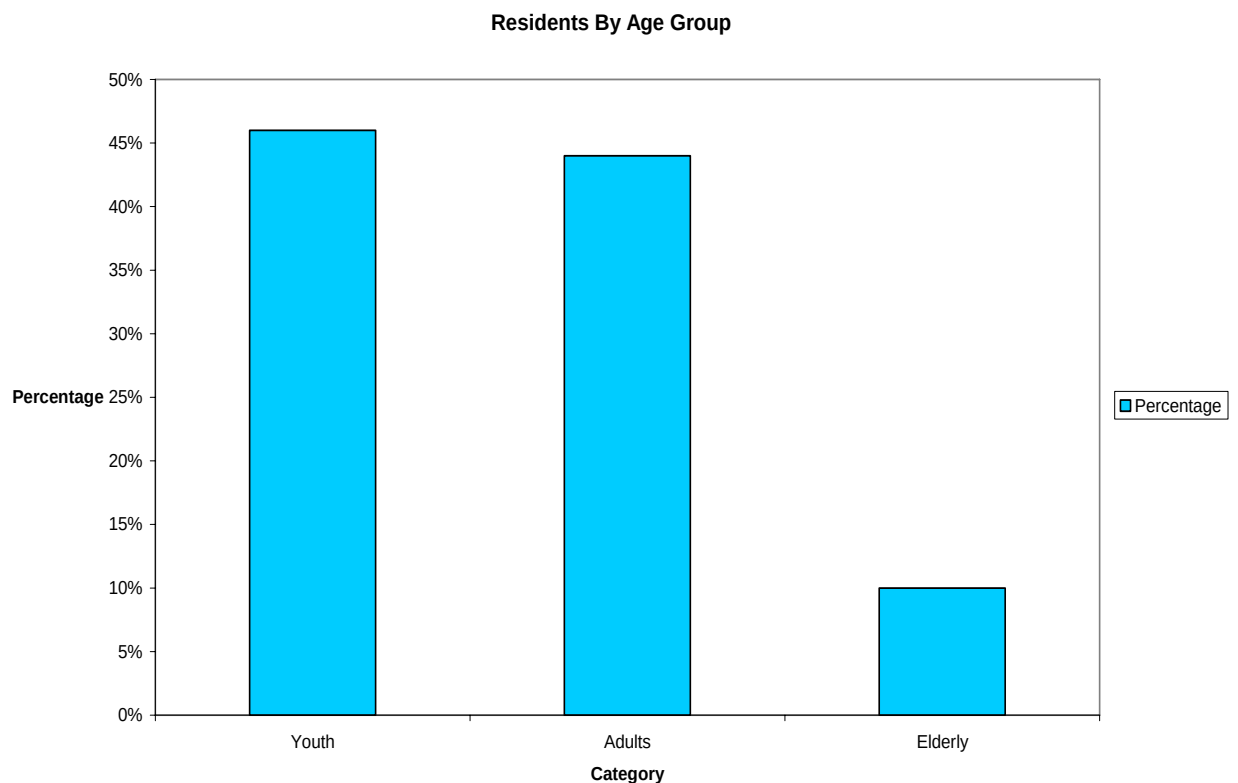
The eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement consists of four main sections; these are eThandukukhanya Extension 4 & 5 (commonly known as Phola Park), Mangosuthu, Osloop and Ajax (see Table 1 above). This breakdown into sections makes it easier for the municipality to monitor progress in the settlement. Half of the households in this informal settlement are headed by single mothers: these consist of women as young as eighteen years of age and as old as a hundred. The research revealed that forty-six percent (46%) of the participants of the interview were younger than thirty-five years of age. Adults between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-nine years consisted of forty-four percent (44%) of participants of the interview, whilst only ten percent (10%) of the population was older than sixty years (as shown in Figure 3 below).

Table 1**Settlements within eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement**

Settlement	House-holds	Land status	Services	Causal factors
<i>eThanduku-khanya</i> Extension 4 & 5 (also known as Phola Park)	+/- 2500	Municipal land	Graded roads, electricity and waterborne sewer system and taps	Population growth and farm evictions, illegal immigrants from Swaziland Relocated from Enkomeni because the area was reserved for a cemetery.
<i>Mangosuthu</i>	+/- 3000	Municipal land	No electricity, no water and no roads	Demand for housing units Some evicted by farmers
<i>Osloop</i>	+/- 500	Municipal land	No electricity, no water and no roads	Population growth
<i>Ajax</i>	+/- 1052	Municipal land	Electricity, water and roads	Demand for housing units
Total	+/-7052			

Source: Factual status report on mushrooming of unplanned settlements in the province.

Figure 3



4.5. Biographical details

When observing this settlement, it became clear that the community consisted of a large percentage of youth and women. Although there are a significant number of elderly citizens, the largest number appeared to be young, single mothers under the age of thirty-five. During a survey conducted at eThandukukhanya informal settlement, only two percent (2%) of the interviewees said they were not South African citizens and fifty percent (50%) of the participants of the interview were males. Furthermore, five percent (5%) of the interview participants were under the age of twenty-one. Thirty-seven percent (37%) indicated that they were between the ages of twenty-one and thirty; thirty-eight percent (38%) of the participants were between the ages of thirty and forty. Eight percent (8%) of the interviewees were between the ages of forty and fifty years. Five percent (5%) of the participants were between the ages of fifty and sixty years and seven percent (7%) of the participants were above sixty years of age. Moreover, of the participants of the

interviewed, ninety-two percent (92%) were Black and eight percent (8%) were Coloured; there were no Whites or Indians interviewed.

When asked how long they had stayed in the informal settlement, twelve percent (12%) of the participants indicated that they had resided there for less than one year; and twenty-one percent (21%) indicated they had stayed there for more than a year but less than three years. Only seven percent (7%) had resided there for a period between three and five years. Those who had lived in the eThandukukhanya informal settlement for between five and ten years constituted about thirty-nine percent (39%) of the participants; of the survey, eighteen percent (18%) had been there for less than fifteen years but more than ten years. The remainder of 3% (three percent) had stayed there for more than fifteen years.

In addition, seventy-two percent (72%) of participants indicated that they were indigent with a monthly household income of less than one thousand five hundred rand (R1 500), which included child support grants for between one and seven children. A further twenty-one percent (21%) had a household income of between one thousand five hundred rand and two thousand five hundred rand per month as a result of either the household having two people receiving an old age pension or disability grant and/or a child support grant for two or more children or with one spouse employed in the planting or harvesting divisions of Mondi Forests. A further six percent (6%) indicated that their monthly household income was between two thousand five hundred rand and three thousand five hundred rand, normally these were families with at least one spouse employed by Mondi Forests or the trucking industry. The remaining one percent (1%) had a monthly household income of above three thousand five hundred rand.

According to Mabogunje, Todaro (1971 in Stren), in a quest for a better life and a desire to take advantage of the opportunities provided by urbanization, numerous uneducated migrants ended up living in worse conditions than they had left behind in their rural homes. This rang true in this settlement where the study revealed that seven percent (7%) of the interviewees indicated that they

usually purchased water per bucket more than a hundred meters (100m) away from their homes. A further eleven percent (11%) of the participants indicated that they purchased water from neighbours who had running water on their stands between ten meters (10m) and one hundred meters (100m) away; only eighty-two percent (82%) indicated that they had running water on their stands. Furthermore, less than one percent (1%) of the participants indicated that they had a flush toilet inside their houses; and a further sixty-seven percent (67%) of the interviewees indicated that they had a flush toilet outside their shacks but within the same stand. Twenty-eight percent (28%) indicated that they had a VIP or pit latrine next to their shacks. Four percent (4%) claimed not to have a toilet at all.

4.6 The effect of housing policy on informal settlements

The aim of the policy is to provide poor and previously disadvantaged communities who wish to reside closer to urban areas with a stable, healthy and safe living environment; a sense of empowerment, as well as tenure security, as stated in Section 13.9 of the policy, including a holistic development approach that includes RDP houses, middle and high income housing, rental units, schools, recreational facilities, shops, churches, clinics and other amenities that may be required by the community. The intention is to create settlements or townships where everything required by communities on a daily basis is within easy access. This would in turn reduce the need to migrate because schools or healthcare are too far or because there is no reliable transportation nearby.

The survey revealed that given a choice of how the Government would assist them, eighteen percent (18%) of the participants of the interview wanted the Government to assist them to purchase land to build their own house; two percent (2%) preferred to get an affordable house or flat to rent. The majority, seventy-eight percent (78%), wanted to own an RDP house, while two percent (2%) wanted assistance with a loan in order to build a house for themselves. When observing the conversations that the residents had with each other as

they went about their daily duties, it became clear that many of them did not understand the implications of owning an RDP house. Many insisted that they wanted to own an RDP house even though they did not see themselves residing in this area on a permanent basis.

When asked what they knew about Government's policy on upgrading informal settlements, only eight percent (8%) of participants knew something about it. However, sixty-six percent (66%) had noticed that government was prioritizing people living in informal settlements but did not understand why this happened. Some people had observed that the more unsanitary a person's living conditions, the higher his or her chances of receiving an RDP house quickly. This was evident by the numbers of new shacks that were being built adjacent to new low-cost housing developments. Nine percent of the interviewees had assumed that it was easier to get an RDP house if one lived closer to town, while seventeen percent (17%) knew nothing at all and could not give an opinion on the matter. When monitoring the trends in this settlement, the researcher also realised that some of the women had migrated to be closer to their spouses; which according to Kharoufi, (Stren, 1994) was in many cases not recognised as a reason for migrating.

When asked whether knowing about the policy had encouraged any of them to migrate to this informal settlement, fifty-nine percent (59%) of those who had known about the policy said it had. The rest, like Mabogunje (Stren, 1994) states in his article, were convinced that this in-migration would help them get a better life although this was not as a result of 'real wages' as most of them did not have a job awaiting them when they migrated to this settlement. Most of them were motivated by the hope of earning a higher income in Piet Retief. An additional thirty-four percent (34%) of the interviewees who knew about the policy found out about it from a friend; while sixty-six percent (66%) heard about the policy in a community meeting.

The study also revealed that forty-two percent (42%) of the participants felt that the major advantage of knowing about this policy was that they could inform their loved ones to migrate to the informal settlement to increase their

chances of getting an RDP house. Observations indicated that in spite of the fact that many of the interviewees did not know about the existence of the policy until the day of the interview, many had already invited a friend and relative or two to join them in this informal settlement. It would seem that just the knowledge of a large project such as the one that was being piloted at eThandukukhanya informal settlement was enough to get residents alerting whoever was willing to listen about the news of the proposed housing development. Most of the participants have invited at least one family to move into the eThandukukhanya informal settlement since finding out about the policy during the interview.

Eighty-three percent (83%) of the interviewees indicated that they would move to another informal settlement if they felt that their chances of accessing housing would increase; Thirteen percent (13%) felt that informal settlements would continue to increase as long as there were no jobs. They were of the opinion that people were applying for RDP houses because they could not afford to provide proper shelter for their families. Only four percent (4%) indicated their reluctance to move again; a large majority of these were residents over the age of fifty who had resided at eThandukukhanya for more than 10 years. Finally, only thirteen percent (13%) of the interviewees knew that a person was only entitled to one RDP house in their lifetime, while the rest thought that as long as one lived in a shack, one was still entitled to receive an RDP house; regardless of how many times he or she had benefited.

4.7 Housing and in-migration

When asked if they had a house 'back home', ninety-five percent (95%) of the participants of the interview said they did not. Of the five percent (5%) that said they owned a house in their original homes, only ten percent (10%) admitted that it was an RDP house, the remainder claiming that they had built their own houses with either mud or brick and mortar. None of them admitted to having previously owned a bonded house, mainly because most of them

were unemployed and did not earn enough for the bank to finance them. Most of the people who had built their own houses (with years of savings) said that a relative was looking after the home for them. Amongst those who owned an RDP house, eighty-eight percent (88%) had left a friend or relative to look after the house, nine percent (9%) said they were renting the house out and one percent (1%) had just left and did not know what had happened to the house. The remaining two percent (2%) had sold their houses for the equivalent of a 'bus ticket' out of their rural homes. Assessing the actions of the residents of the eThandukukhanya informal settlement, it is not difficult to see that many of them still cannot comprehend how valuable their RDP house is. It seems that many of them apply for an RDP house for the wrong reasons.

For instance, a young rebellious girl may leave home, while still attending school, to move in with a man in his thirties. No sooner do they move in together than they start preparations to apply for an RDP house together. According to Denis Kadima in Morris & Bouillon (Chapter 3), in an article entitled *Motivation for Emigration and character of the economic contribution of Congolese Emigrants migrants in South Africa*, people tended to migrate to South Africa because of the socio-economic conditions that they were subjected to in their home countries. The same analogy can be used for these young girls who move in with older men because they are trying to escape the intense poverty at home. Unfortunately, when this relationship inevitably falls apart, the unlucky ones find themselves 'out in the street' and unable to apply for another an RDP house, while the 'lucky' ones are abandoned and left to feed children and pay for municipal services they cannot afford, which eventually leads to them deserting the house and moving back home or moving in with another man.

Only twenty-seven percent (27%) of the interviewees indicated that they had not applied for a house in the new projects because they already applied for an RDP house or owned one 'back home'. The rest indicated that they continued to submit applications for houses regardless of whether they had applied previously or had been awarded an RDP house, because they believe that eventually their applications will be successful. When walking through the

informal settlement, one can often hear people giving examples of people they know or have heard of that received an RDP house more than twice. They would use these examples therefore to give themselves false hope and even convince themselves that because their RDP houses were in a different province, it would not be discovered that they already own a house.

Thirty-two percent (32%) of the interviewees indicated that they had migrated to eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement to be closer to work which, according to Posel (2003), was becoming a trend in the new South Africa, where more and more people were choosing not to be labour migrants. Unfortunately, due to a shortage of affordable accommodation, this has resulted in an increase of informal settlements. Twenty-three percent (23%) of the interviewees indicated they had migrated to this informal settlement because they wanted to be independent of their parents. A further thirty-four percent (34%) of the interviewees came to Piet Retief in search of work at Mondi Forest. Lipton *et al* in de Haan (1999), indicated that there were 'pull' and 'push' factors that encouraged people to migrate to urban areas, they stated that the more educated migrants are 'pulled' to urban areas by the possibility of better and more stable job opportunities while poorer and less educated migrants are 'pushed' to cities and towns by the lack of job opportunities in their villages, redundancy of the skills they have acquired or the chronic poverty that exists in the villages from which they come. It became clear during the interviews that many of the participants of the survey had migrated to this settlement with the hope that 'life had to be better out there'. In addition, nine percent (9%) of the interviewees indicated that they had migrated to eThandukukhanya informal settlement in order to improve their chances of getting an RDP house, while the remaining two percent (2%) merely wanted to own land where they could build their own homes.

When asked if they had encouraged anyone to migrate to this informal settlement since they moved there, seventy-nine percent (79%) of interviewees indicated that they had invited their relatives to stay with them in the hope that they would also benefit from the low-cost housing projects in eThandukukhanya informal settlement. Fourteen percent (14%) had told

friends from their rural homes that their chances of getting an RDP house would improve if they moved to the settlement, and only seven percent (7%) indicated that they had not invited friends and relatives to join them.

Of the interviewees who had stayed in eThandukukhanya informal settlement for less than one year, forty-three percent (43%) admitted they had been motivated to move to this informal settlement by the prospect of getting an RDP house. When observing activities in the settlement, one can see that since the low-cost housing projects commenced, more and more young people are migrating into the eThandukukhanya informal settlement, such that some have begun occupying land along the hills and floodline. Of the participants in the survey who had stayed in this informal settlement for more than one year but less than three years, forty-one (41%) felt that moving to this informal settlement would increase their chances of getting an RDP house. Thirteen percent (13%) of the participants who had resided in this informal settlement for between three and five years indicated that they had chosen this settlement having heard that the government was giving RDP houses to the residents and hoped that owning a site would increase the chances of receiving a house sooner. Two percent (2%) of the participants who had resided in this informal settlement for more than five years but less than ten years, as well as one percent (1%) of those who had resided in the settlement more than ten years had been enticed by the prospect of eventually obtaining an RDP house.

4.8 Alternatives to housing provision

When asked whether they would consider another alternative to owning an RDP house, seventy-two percent (72%) of participants said that the prospect of getting an RDP house had been a good motivating factor when deciding to move to eThandukukhanya informal settlement. However, twenty-eight percent (28%) of participants said that the prospect of getting an RDP house had no bearing whatsoever on them relocating. Interactions with members of the community showed that the residents who indicated that their move was

not motivated by the prospect of getting an RDP house were those who had migrated to the informal settlement due to farm evictions. This group ended up occupying the land simply because they had nowhere else to go.

The researcher also established that most of these people had resided in the settlement for more than five years. Seventy-two percent (72%) of the interviewees felt that the provision of low-cost housing was the only alternative to deal with the challenge of informal settlement, while the remainder felt that the provision of low-cost housing was not the only alternative to deal with this challenge. Instead, they were of the opinion that the provision of low-cost housing was contributing to the increase in the size of informal settlements. Many of them felt that if the government provided more jobs, the need for RDP houses would reduce, as would the need for informal settlements.

Fifty-two percent of the interviewees indicated that an ideal alternative to dealing with escalating informal settlements, apart from providing houses or home ownership, would be to ensure that everyone had access to land in order to build their own homes. Thirty-nine percent (39%) felt that if the government would provide more jobs, the housing crisis would reduce significantly, while a further nine percent (9%) indicated that they would like to see the Department of Housing providing decent and affordable rental accommodation for people residing in eThandukukhanya strictly because of work commitments. However, only fourteen percent (14%) of the interviewees said that they would be willing to rent for a while until they decided whether or not they intended to reside in the eThandukukhanya informal settlement on a long-term basis. The rest clearly stated that they would not be interested in renting as long as the option to own a house was still available. It seems that for many of the participants renting, no matter how affordable, meant that they would not ever own a house. Even the residents that were currently renting were not very keen to rent a house or flat from the government if they could own a house and not pay anything at all.

In summary, the reasons why people migrated to urban areas included poor socio-economic conditions at their rural homes, such as poverty, poor

healthcare and a lack of proper schools for their children, as well as a desire to be closer to job opportunities. Less common reasons were a desire to own an RDP house and a wish to be closer to their spouses. In the next chapter, the data collected in the survey will be analysed and recommendations and conclusions presented.

Chapter 5: Analysis of findings

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will analyse the findings from the previous chapter as they relate to the research questions posed, using triangulation to demonstrate internal validity (Merriam, 2002), which will be utilised to analyse findings. According to Merriam (2002), internal validity looks at how congruent one's findings are with reality, that is, it makes a comparison between what we think and the reality. To achieve this objective, the researcher will use a combination of data collected during interviews, observations of the residents of the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement as well as literature on the subject. It is therefore important, according to Merriam, "to understand the perspectives of those involved, uncover the complexity of the human behaviour in context, and present a holistic interpretation of what is happening" (2002:25).

It is for this reason that the researcher will commence with a brief analysis of the biographical details of the residents of the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement. Furthermore, the researcher will adopt an interpretivist framework to analyse the data that was collected because, according to Henning (2004), it tries to bring meaning and to understand the way of life of the participants of the study. The researcher will therefore attempt to establish whether the provision of houses in informal settlements, specifically RDP houses, does in fact result in in-migration; whether the current housing strategy has the effect of intensifying the escalation of informal settlements; and whether there are other alternatives to providing houses to informal dwellers.

5.2 Biographical details

When analysing the biographical details of the participants, it became clear that the informal settlement consisted of a large percentage of youth, with

seventy-seven percent (77%) under the age of 40. Most of the participants earned a monthly household income of between two hundred rand and one thousand, five hundred rand which was a clear indication of the high level of poverty in this settlement, especially because a number of residents depended almost entirely on grants, either child support, disability or pension grant. Most of those who reflected a combined household income of more than one thousand five hundred rand were families with at least one spouse working for Mondi Forests or in the trucking industry and the other earning a child support grant. Ironically, a large number of households with an income between one thousand five hundred and two thousand five hundred rand were headed by pensioners who both received an old age pension. In the past, this meant they would not be able to access a full housing subsidy because they earned more than the threshold allowed for one to access a full housing subsidy! The majority of the participants had access to basic water and sewer provision.

5.3 Relationship between housing and in-migration

As a result of apartheid laws such as the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950, non-whites in South Africa were prevented from moving freely in their own country to explore better job opportunities, and when these laws were repealed on the 5th of June 1991, an influx of labour migrants occupied vacant land close to urban areas in order to be closer to their places of work or to search for better opportunities in the towns and cities they had been kept away from for years. According to Mabogunje in Stren (1994) "The mass influx of rural migrants into cities was seen in the context of people striving to partake of the new opportunities offered by modernization and, in the process, to alter dramatically their production and consumption orientation" (Stren, 1994:28). As true as this may be, others are actually 'pushed' to urban areas by the poor socio-economic conditions in their rural homes, such as inadequate schools and healthcare facilities, lack of basic services and poor access to housing. as outlined in section 26 of Chapter 2 (The Bill of Rights) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

It is usual for people to aspire to a better life for their families than they had in the past. Currently, South Africans are exploring what their country has to offer and in the quest for a better life, it is no wonder then, as De Haan puts it, they would be tempted to react “to newly developing opportunities” (De Haan, 1999:15). The only thing that is obvious here is that South Africans are enjoying their freedom to choose; should they really be expected to care if this disorganizes our planning system? In Mkhondo Municipality, there is a prevalence of inequitable distribution of resources caused by uneven planning patterns, which are still perpetuating the injustices of the past, in that priority areas are the urban areas where the ‘previously advantaged’ South Africans still reside. These irregularities in the distribution of resources have prompted residents of surrounding rural areas to migrate to towns like Piet Retief and settle on the outskirts of town, in the hope of eventually realising their fundamental human rights.

This has resulted in an increase of informal settlements in Mkhondo Municipality, more especially the eThandukukhanya informal settlement, which is situated in the hub of Mkhondo Municipality. Unfortunately, this move has, as Mabogunje in Stren (1994) feared, drastically affected spatial development planning and placed a huge burden on the infrastructure within the Municipality. As a result, of the eighty-two percent (82%) of the residents of the eThandukukhanya Informal Settlement that indicated they had running water on their stands, more than thirty percent (30%) cannot access running water during the day due to strain on the existing pressure tank. Although a number of authors feel that rural development could be the answer to reducing out-migration in rural areas, one is inclined to agree with Bigsten (1996) in De Haan when he states that “rural development is not likely to stop migration” (De Haan, 1999:24), because the researcher’s assessment of the situation is that the attraction is more the unknown than anything else. People seem to believe that whatever is available in the rural areas is much bigger and better in the towns and cities. Therefore, there will always be an attraction to experience the unknown or the previously forbidden.

Furthermore, when asked if they had a house 'back home', although most said they did not, five percent (5%) said they owned a house in their original homes, and of these only ten percent (10%) admitted that it was an RDP house. What is interesting is that of those who left houses behind, only owners of RDP houses had simply abandoned their homes without a second thought. Even people who had left behind a 'stick and mud' house had either left a relative to look after the house for them or rented it out. Only owners of RDP houses indicated that they had never returned to check what had become of their house. When one observes these reactions and eavesdrops on conversations that took place after the focus group session, it is evident that people are convinced that as long as they move to an area with a low-cost housing development, they will be able to get another house. Others even believe that this is made easier if they no longer have ties to the old RDP house. Many of the interviewees felt that the house belonged to the state and that the state could afford to build them another RDP house if and when they chose to migrate elsewhere. Many even indicated that this was the 'price' of their vote! By looking at the way the residents of the eThandukukhanya informal settlement behave, it is clear that many of them do not comprehend how valuable their RDP house is.

It became clear from the interviews that many of the interviewees who had moved to this informal settlement in the last five years had hoped that migrating would increase their chances of getting an RDP house; when this was confirmed, most of them then invited their friends and relatives to join them. Hence, for the past two to three years, since major housing developments commenced in the eThandukukhanya informal settlement, the size of the informal settlement has increased significantly. From a distance, one can see shacks that have been built haphazardly on open spaces that were earmarked for churches and roads and even on the foothills and at the edge of the stream with even more shacks being squeezed into the already overcrowded settlement. Although the residents of this informal settlement are not quite clear on what the Municipality has planned for them, they retain the hope that somehow, they too will eventually be catered for.

5.4 Effect of current housing strategy on informal settlement growth

More often than not, where there is a substantial low-cost housing project, shacks will crop up. After several months observing the eThandukukhanya informal settlement, it is the view of the researcher that the informal settlers are great strategists who have perfected the art of forcing government's hand while pretending to be innocent bystanders. What may look to an untrained eye like a haphazard, sloppy and uninformed act of desperation is actually a well thought out and carefully calculated plan to force the government to help them jump the queue in the transversal waiting list. Why else would these shacks be in plain view and not on more suitable pieces of land away from the main roads and prime spots?

Furthermore, from the interviews the researcher ascertained that approximately sixty percent (60%) of the participants indicated that they had resided in the eThandukukhanya informal settlement for between ten and twenty years. These were victims of farm evictions who had been born on neighbouring farms and had suddenly found themselves homeless with nowhere to go. One can even see a marked distinction in the manner in which their shacks are built as compared to those of the newer arrivals. The homes of those residents that have been in the area for more than ten years are neater, bigger in size and built with sticks, stones and mud, with adequate ventilation. Those of the new arrivals are smaller, one or two room closets built using sticks and mud, or boards, paper and plastic and no proper ventilation. These newer houses or shacks are designed to fall apart; and even with able-bodied men living in these shacks, no real repairs or renovations are made to make the shack more livable once it starts to disintegrate. This, one can only assume, is meant to create the required negative visual effects.

Since finding out about the Government's policy on upgrading informal settlements many of the interviewees indicated that they had told as many people as they could to migrate to eThandukukhanya informal settlement. Many of them agreed that having information of this nature had proven to be

advantageous in deciding whether to invite the rest of their family to join them or not. What was clear from the feedback from this study was that as much as most of the participants had not been aware of the specifics of the new policy, they had noticed the policy shift and had decided to position themselves strategically in case their observations were accurate. Many of the participants of the study seem to view government as a compassionate parent who could not stand to see his children suffering, and therefore would not allow them to live in shacks that got flooded every summer and thus infested with insects and diseases. One can only assume therefore that these shacks looked neglected because the occupant needed to maintain his or her competitive edge!

In addition to this, the study revealed that the majority of the residents of this informal settlement were willing to do just about anything to own an RDP house. This was demonstrated by the fact that a shocking eighty-three percent (83%) of the interviewees indicated that they would move to another informal settlement if they felt that their chances of accessing housing would increase. For many of them, this informal settlement held no sentimental value at all, and they would be willing to migrate at the drop of a hat if the odds of getting an RDP house would improve. Many also indicated that they would be more willing to reside in this informal settlement if they were to get permanent employment around Piet Retief. On the other hand, almost all the participants who had resided in the eThandukukhanya informal settlement for more than ten years indicated that they would be reluctant to move again, even if moving would increase their chances of getting an RDP house.

5.5 Alternatives to providing own houses

The question to be asked is whether the provision of low-cost houses in this instance is really the best strategy to deal with the challenge posed by the rising number of informal settlements. While conducting this study, the researcher attempted to find out whether trying to eradicate informal settlements by providing houses to informal settlers was helping to reduce the

problem or leading to a rise in in-migration. The aim was to interact with the residents of this informal settlement to establish whether or not they felt that the government should assist the poor in some way other than the provision of RDP houses. The majority of the interviewees (seventy-eight percent) felt that owning an RDP house was still the best solution to the informal settlement problem. Ironically, the people saying this also indicated that given a chance at permanent employment elsewhere in the country, they would not hesitate to take it. Although it has been established that people migrate for various reasons, what cannot be avoided is that, once people move into informal settlements; be it for socio-economic, matrimonial or other reasons, it becomes a housing issue, requiring a housing solution. The question is whether the ownership of an RDP house is the only solution. The reality is that, once people have migrated in search of a better life, the government needs to honour the promise inherent in the Constitution to provide all South Africans with adequate shelter.

During the interviews, one got the distinct feeling that there was a possibility that some people felt that by opting not to take advantage of the opportunity to obtain an RDP house now, they may never get a second chance to take up the offer again. As a result, they felt that if the opportunity to own an RDP house presented itself, they would take it, regardless of the consequences. The study showed that some people would be content with land where they could build for themselves without fear of evictions, and which would be guaranteed by ensuring that land owners are given title deeds as proof of ownership. There were, however, a few interviewees who felt that the provision of low-cost housing was only perpetuating the problem and that the provision of low-cost housing was contributing to the increase in informal settlement. However, many of them felt that if the government provided more jobs, the need for RDP houses would reduce, and thus the informal settlement challenge. This meant that in order to provide a feasible alternative to owning an RDP house, the previously disadvantaged would need to have the means to sustain that alternative. For instance, if the alternative was to provide affordable rental accommodation, the target group would need to be

employed in order to afford to pay the monthly rental. Many of the participants of the interview were reluctant to rent if they could get a house for free.

In summary, therefore, it appears that people migrated due to a desire to improve their socio-economic circumstances. Many of them were evicted from neighbouring farms and had nowhere else to go while others were driven by the hope that life would improve if they were closer to urban areas and the concomitant job opportunities. From this study, it became obvious that the rental option would only truly be effective once the option to own a house was no longer on the table.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and conclusions

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will make recommendations and draw conclusions based on the findings of the study. In effect, the chapter wraps up the study by reiterating the question of whether the current legislation has the effect of intensifying the development of informal settlements. The researcher will further consider whether a relationship exists between the provision of housing and rural and urban in-migration. Lastly, the available alternatives to providing houses will be assessed; against this background, we remind ourselves of the following, as laid out in the National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements:

“The challenge of informal settlement upgrading must be approached from a pragmatic perspective in the face of changing realities and many uncertainties. Informal settlements should also not be viewed as merely a “housing problem”, requiring a ‘housing solution’ but rather as a manifestation of structural social change, the resolution of which requires multi-sectoral partnership, long-term commitment and political endurance. At the outset therefore, a paradigm shift is necessary to refocus existing policy responses towards informal settlements from one of conflict or neglect, to one of integration and co-operation.”

National Housing Programme: Upgrading of Informal Settlements, Section 13.1: p 3.

6.2 Recommendations

Exploration of the policy on upgrading of informal settlements raises the following questions regarding gaps; the manner in which information is disseminated, involvement of stakeholders, and the reality on the ground

versus the provision of rental accommodation, as well as the qualifying criteria that is utilised. These gaps are discussed further as follows:

6.2.1 Dissemination of information

One of the observations of the study was that a large number of the residents of the informal settlement, who are in effect potential beneficiaries of the process, were not even aware that a policy on upgrading of informal settlements exists. Furthermore, those who were aware of the policy found out about it during a community meeting held in the previous twelve months, yet they do not fully understand how it works. Many of the interviewees were unaware that they are entitled to only one RDP house in their lifetime. Many felt that the government had to provide them with a house and they could simply demand one irrespective of whether they had previously received one or not. It is therefore recommended that the Mpumalanga Department of Local Government and Housing develop an aggressive programme to promote better understanding of housing policies within communities.

6.2.2 Involvement of stakeholders

Although the vision of the policy is to provide holistic human settlements, only houses have been constructed thus far. It is also unclear when the schools, clinics, recreational and economic facilities that were planned in the IDP of the Municipality will be provided and by whom. Instead, houses have been built in isolation, with vacant undeveloped pieces of land around the settlement that have the potential of attracting migrants. As a result, the esteem in which the housing project is held is undermined by the fact that beneficiaries complain that the housing development is far from schools and clinics, exacerbated by the fact that there is no reliable public transport available, especially for the group that was relocated to eThandukukhanya Extension 5. It is suggested that the Mpumalanga Department of Local Government and Housing form a stakeholder forum that will include the Department of Education, the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, the Department of Health and Social

Services, the Department of Agriculture, Land and Environmental Affairs, the private sector and the taxi associations. The purpose of this forum would be to plan jointly to develop a strategy to ensure that the outstanding amenities and services are provided concurrently with the RDP houses. If this is done, residents of these informal settlements will not feel the pressure to migrate to other areas in order to be closer to social and economic amenities.

6.2.3 Reality versus the provision of rental accommodation

In addition, most of the interviewees were unwilling to rent especially if they could own an RDP house. Many indicated that they barely made enough money to feed their families and could not afford the added burden of paying rent. A number indicated that although they were currently renting, owning an RDP house would provide much-needed financial relief. Interviewees indicated that unless more jobs were created, the rental alternative would not be feasible in the long term. It is therefore recommended that steps be taken through public-private partnership arrangements to facilitate more jobs that will enable occupants of rental units to pay monthly rentals. One strategy that could be utilised to create jobs is the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) which encourages the use of a labour-intensive approach to service delivery. In short, through co-operative governance, companies would agree to use people instead of machinery on public projects, and provide unskilled labourers with employment in the booming construction industry.

6.2.4. The qualifying criteria

Furthermore, evidence from the study suggests that some people do not value their RDP houses, because those who did not abandon their houses sold them for the equivalent of a 'bus ticket' out of their rural homes. However, as much as we may frown on this behaviour, it is not unexpected. What does government expect when it builds houses for people in an area where they have no roots, no family ties and no job? One could even question the logic behind the qualifying criteria for an RDP house, which prioritises amongst

other factors twenty-one year-old unmarried and unemployed single mothers. Since government cannot bring the jobs to the people, there is a need to develop a strategy that will allow people the freedom of movement to reach jobs, without leading to the increase of undesirable informal settlements. While there may not be adequate evidence that migration leads to the need for housing or growth in informal settlements, it seems clear that where there is an influx of in-migration, there will soon be a need for housing or land or both. To address this problem, the Department of Local Government and Housing, together with Mkhondo Municipality, needs to develop viable strategies to deal with the challenges presented by in-migration to Piet Retief, that will ensure that migrants have a decent place to stay and yet have the freedom to migrate whenever they want to without worrying about the house they will leave behind or whether they will get decent accommodation elsewhere in the future.

6.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, interaction with the community of eThandukukhanya informal settlement has led the researcher to conclude that even where in-migrants may feel that their lives were significantly worse in this urban settlement than in their rural homes, many of them would still be unwilling to return to the life they left behind. This could be as a result of a resilient hope that things will eventually improve, and when this happens they will be strategically placed to enjoy the benefits. Post-1994 transformation has, to a large extent, contributed to the rise in in-migration. Many of the participants indicated that although they had migrated to this informal settlement in search of job opportunities, they had been motivated by the realisation that the government was prioritising the upgrading of informal settlements in the country. However, due to the fact that only eight percent (8%) of the interviewees had knowledge about the policy prior to migrating to this informal settlement, one could conclude that the majority of residents had migrated for economic reasons and perceived the benefit of receiving an RDP house was that it would improve their living conditions significantly. It was implicit during interactions

with residents that, as long they still had hope of a better life for their families, a large number of them would be willing to migrate again; even if that meant they would not be able to enjoy their right to housing again. Clearly, the desire for a better life in this case, far supersedes the need to own a house.

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Annexures

ANNEXURE A: SURVEY ON UNDERSTANDING INFORMAL SETTLEMENT GROWTH IN ETHANDUKUKHANYA INFORMAL SETTLEMENT

Please indicate your answer with an **X** next to the relevant answer

SECTION A

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS:

1. Are you an SA citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male
3. How old are you?
4. Race: ☐ Black ☐ White ☐ Coloured
☐ Indian ☐ Other (Specify) _____
5. How long have you stayed in this informal settlement?
☐ Less than 1yr ☐ 1 – 3yrs ☐ 3 – 5yrs
☐ 5 – 10yrs ☐ 10 – 15yrs ☐ More than 15yrs
6. What is your household income (Yours & your spouse's combined salary)?
☐ R0 – R1500 ☐ R1501 – R2500
☐ R2501 – R3500 ☐ R3501 & above
7. Where do you get water?

8. What kind of toilet do you have?
☐ Flush toilet inside ☐ Flush toilet outside
☐ VIP Latrine ☐ No Toilet

SECTION B

THE HOUSING SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

9. Ideally, how would you prefer Government to assist you?

10. Do you think that the current housing strategy has the effect of intensifying the escalation of the informal settlements?

11. To the best of your knowledge, how many times can one person get an RDP house?

SECTION C

POLICY ON UPGRADING INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

12. What do you know about Government's policy on upgrading informal settlements?

13. Has knowing about the policy encouraged you to migrate to this informal settlement?

14. How did you find out about this policy?

15. What do you think are the advantages of knowing about this policy?

16. If you did not know about the policy before, how will you use this information to your own or someone else's benefit?

SECTION D

HOUSING AND IN-MIGRATION:

17. Do you have a house back home?

☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, what kind of house & who is currently occupying it?

18. Given your answer to question 13, have you applied for another RDP house in any of the new housing projects?

☐ No ☐ Yes

19. Why did you migrate to this Informal Settlement?

20. How many people (family and friends) have joined you here since the housing projects started in hope of getting an RDP house?

21. Do you know anyone amongst your neighbours who chose this particular Informal Settlement because they heard that other residents had received houses from government?

SECTION E

ALTERNATIVES TO HOUSING PROVISION

22. When you came to this settlement, were you motivated by the prospect of getting an RDP house?

23. Do you think that the provision of houses is the only alternative to deal with informal settlement challenge?

24. What, in your opinion, would be an ideal alternative to deal with escalating informal settlements (apart from providing houses/homeownership)?

25. If there was another form of housing available to you at an affordable rate would you be willing take that instead of owning a house?

ANNEXURE B: MKHONDO MUNICIPALITY SETTLEMENTS

Settlement	Households	Land status	Services	Causal factors
<i>EThanduku-khanya</i> Extension 4 and 5 Phola Park	± 2500	Municipal land	Graded roads, electricity and waterborne no sewer system and taps	- Population growth and farm evictions, illegal immigrants from Swaziland - Relocated from Enkomeni it was place for cemetery.
<i>Mangosuthu</i>	+ - 3000	Municipal land	No electricity, no water and no roads	- Demand for housing units - Some evicted by farmers - Others they from Tswepe farms
<i>Osloop</i>	+ - 500	Municipal land	No electricity, no water and no roads	Population growth
<i>Ajax</i>	+ - 1052	Municipal land	Electricity, water and roads	Demand for housing units
<i>Nkonjanini</i>	+ - 1103	Municipal land	Electricity, water and roads	Population growth
<i>Ngema Trust</i>	+2035	Tribal land	Communal stand pipes and graded main roads	Tribal authority does not regulate proper land distribution
<i>Dirkiesdorp</i>	+ - 550	Municipal land	Electricity water and roads	Evictions by farmers
<i>Werwadien under extension 4</i>	± 5000	Municipal land	No electricity, no water and no roads	Population growth