

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation is my own unaided work. It is being submitted to the Degree of Master of Science in Development Planning to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other University.

.....
Signature of Candidate

.....day of.....year.....

Abstract

Diepsloot, a township in Johannesburg, South Africa, was used as a case study to explore the perceptions of people in informal settlements towards their role in limiting pollution in their environment. The method followed was qualitative, and primary data were collected through the use of key informants (Ward Councillor and Environmental Health Officer), and three focus groups. Diepsloot is a marginalised residential area located in the Northern perimeter of the City of Johannesburg. The settlement is spatially fragmented, reflects a high residential density and is plagued with high levels of unemployment and poverty. Compounded by poor municipal service delivery, these challenges lead to a range of environmental problems such as overflowing solid waste on the streets, water pollution, and high levels of indoor air pollution. The study found that there were varying levels of commitment to limiting pollution by people in the informal settlement. This (commitment to limiting pollution) was largely dependent on community action through the formation of street committees. In streets where there was community cohesion, street committees were stronger and environmental conditions were better. In contrast, environmental problems were worse where street committees were weak or not operating. Regarding the role of government, the major constraints leading to unresponsive interventions were the limited scale of municipal operation and their poor communication with residents. Suggested corrective measures include recycling, education on pollution and the need for institutional strengthening. Further research aimed at identifying a set of appropriate partnerships and institutions needed for responsive interventions in informal settlements is required.

Key words: South Africa, pollution, community perceptions, informal settlements, ward councillor, Environmental Health Officer, institutions, solid waste, air pollution, water pollution, local government, street committees.

Dedication

To my late brother Sonti Mporetji and my parents, Mushayathama Mburedzhi, Makwarela Mburedzhi and Njoni Mporetji, who encouraged me and my siblings to go to school and cared for us

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List of acronyms

CAF	Community Advisory Forum
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CFCs	Chloro-flouro-carbons
DANCED	Danish Co-operation for the Environment and Development
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
EHO	Environmental Health Officer
GDEA	Gauteng Department of Environment and Agriculture
GJMC	Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council
HFCs	Hydro-flouro-carbons
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
Joburg GDS	Johannesburg Growth and Development Strategy
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEC	Member of Executive Committee
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSDF	Regional Spatial Development Framework
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
UK	United Kingdom
UMAP	Upgrading of Marginalised Areas Programme
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nation Commission on Environment and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

The world we created today, has problems which cannot be solved by thinking the way we did when we created them- ***Albert Einstein***

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