

Social issues

Related to the unemployment and crime discussed previously, residents commented on high rates of teenage pregnancy and the fact that girls engaged in relationships with sugar daddies because of poverty. A lack of education was blamed too, and concerns about HIV/ AIDs mentioned. The perception of the area varied. Some found it very noisy, usually worsened if living near a tavern.

Others found the area peaceful. Residents worried about taverns being unlicensed and being a place of crime. Some mentioned positive developments, such as sports facilities and the community centre in Rethasabing which helped to occupy the youth. Schools were seen as good and some provided food for children, but not all areas had schools. Churches were viewed as very important in the area.

Conclusions and implications for policy

Industrial decline in Ekandustria is the biggest concern. Many people have lived in the area for a long time and have invested in their housing. There has been some improvement in services, and facilities although there are still problems and gaps. Residents are still living in serious poverty and they want policies and assistance with accessing employment. Casual work and inconsistent, poorly paid and casual employment is a dominant problem.

Further improvements are needed in basic services and facilities in the area. Transport and mobility are also particular concerns. Addressing the high unemployment and industrial decline is a major challenge.

Abandoned factories in Ekandustria



Research on experiences of living the urban periphery in other African cities

Similar research has taken place in Molweni, Hammonds Farm, Waterloo, Lufhereng, Protea Glen and Waterworks in South Africa and Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. The researchers spoke to men and women in the community, collected resident diaries and photographs, and interviewed residents and key professionals. The findings of the research showed that residents had experienced both positive and negative consequences of the changes that had occurred in their areas. Some of the key findings in other areas are as follows: RDP housing is much appreciated elsewhere but residents struggle with affordability and also access to jobs and services such as clinics. Conditions in informal settlements remain very poor with little evi-

dence of improvement. Residents are very anxious about waiting times for housing and many are living in poverty. In some areas on the edges of cities local government is quite weak or is far away, and in these cases some local powerful men control whole areas and can often be useful to residents but also operate through a culture of fear.

Lufhereng, Soweto, South Africa



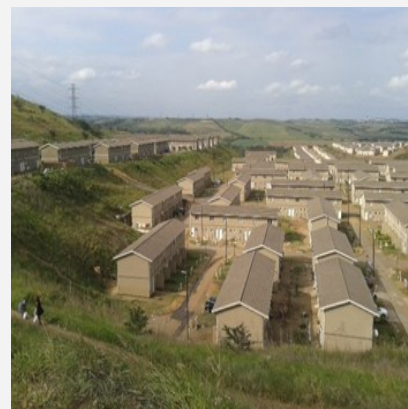
long commutes into the city centre for work. Residents noted the new investments in employment opportunities in their areas or beyond. But, many lacked the right skills for the work or were seen as too old or not supporting the right political party. Many struggled with basic things like lack of access to photocopiers etc. to submit CVs for consideration. These findings would all be shared with relevant government authorities and also with those involved in urban planning and housing.

Yeka bado, Addis Ababa



More information and contact details:
<https://www.wits.ac.za/urbanperiphery/>

Residents in many cases note the importance of shopping malls and new shopping facilities both is making their daily lives easier but also sometimes providing employment. Lack of employment was a dominant theme across South Africa and this undermined most residents' otherwise positive experiences of all the changes. In Ethiopia, more residents had employment but they really struggle with the costs of their new government homes and also with the very



Hammonds Farm, Durban, South



Living the urban periphery: investment, infrastructure and economic change in African city-regions: Ekangala and Rethabiseng

Introducing the Research Project

December 2018

In 2017 a group of researchers from the University of Sheffield in the UK and the University of the Witwatersrand in SA began a research project in Ekangala and Rethabiseng in the western edge of Tshwane. The researchers were interested in finding out how changes in areas on the peripheries of African cities happen (especially changes in infrastructure), who makes these changes, and, most importantly, how these changes are experienced by people living there. The researchers focused on a few different types of infrastructure, so the study includes examples of investment in housing, roads, transport, basic services, and investment in industrial areas. The researchers wanted to test the idea that infrastructure investment in the urban periphery can improve the quality of daily life for the communities where new infrastructure has been put in place.

The research in Ekangala/Rethabiseng formed one 'case' in a much larger project researching seven different areas in three city-regions in Africa. There are two other cases in Gauteng – Winterveld in Tshwane, Lufhereng, Protea Glen and Waterworks in Johannesburg and Rand West— and two in eThekweni in KwaZulu-Natal: first the cluster of Hammonds Farm, Waterloo, Canelands and Coniston, and second, Molweni, Crestholme and Crestview. There are also two case in Addis Ababa the capital city of Ethiopia: the areas of Tulu Dimtu and Yeka Abado. The researchers hope to understand each of these places in detail and compare them to each other to increase our knowledge of how infrastructure changes affect poverty reduction and how people living in these areas experience these changes.

In Ekangala and Rethabiseng 45 people wrote diaries about their daily life for a two-week period and took photographs showing living conditions, services and experiences of their neighbourhood. The researchers spoke to 31 of these men and women in the community, and six professionals involved in planning and urban development to gather further information. Surveys (questionnaires) were undertaken with around 200 residents. This pamphlet summarises the main findings of the research based on information we gathered from residents of Ekangala and Rethabiseng. Unfortunately there is not enough space to report on everything that was said.

Experience of changes overtime

Overall, residents of Ekangala and Rethabiseng portrayed a negative picture of the changes they had experienced in their respective areas overtime. A common thread that cut across all the areas researched including Dark City and Phumekhyaya informal settlement was that the decline of Ekandustria industrial park over the years has affected the socio-economic status of residents negatively.

many people are unemployed and facing poverty on a daily basis (Ekangala resident)

In addition there is a generalised sense of stagnation owing to little government and private sector investment. Although government is now attempting to improve infrastructure in Ekandustria, this has still to yield significant new jobs, and several factories have closed over the years. However, Rethabiseng offered a slightly different picture in this regard as there has been recent investment in RDP housing. The U-Save in Ekangala has helped, but is not seen as enough.

there have been lots of changes around Rethabiseng such as the construction of RDP houses and a school (Rethabiseng resident).



Transport, mobility and location

Taxis and buses are the only forms of public transportation available to residents. With the decline of Ekandustria, people are looking for work as far as Pretoria but residents noted that the location of Ekangala and Rethabiseng makes it too expensive to commute to work.

In addition, the bus service which is the cheaper option is considered unreliable

People that work in Pretoria and live in Dark City it doesn't work as the bus is too expensive and so you are working for transport (♀ Dark City resident).

and time consuming. Despite this, students who are attending colleges in Pretoria rely on the buses for transport.

The buses are very slow. They also not very reliable (♀ Dark City resident).



Disused taxi/bus rank in Ekandustria

Taxis are considered expensive and outside of peak hours, they also take time to fill up. So residents can take a long time to go short distances. From places like Rethabiseng, it is difficult to get direct taxis to Pretoria and residents complained about

"Travelling to Pretoria is difficult. To get there you need to hike to Cullinan and then get a taxi from there to Mamelodi. It costs R60 to get from RB to Pretoria and it can take about

the time they spend travelling.

The absence of nearby shopping centres in Ekangala and Rethabiseng also means residents have to commute more often to Bronkhorstspuit which is expensive for many residents. The introduction of a reliable bus service on this route would be welcome.

For Phumekhaya residents, taxis and buses don't come into their area and they have to walk to Ekangala proper which is inconvenient when it is raining or when

Taxis do not come here .You have to travel to Nkandla and then take a taxi that goes into Bronco but that can be expensive. You then have to walk back from Nkandla with all your shopping/ groceries. You have to call your children to bring the wheelbarrow and to help

they are carrying any luggage.

When riding by taxi it is easy however sometimes it can take time for them to be full, so it takes longer to leave (♀ Ekangala resident)

Connectivity between township is also poor for instance it some residents complained that there are no taxis between Rethabiseng and Ekangala. Some roads are not tarred and taxis do not use them meaning residents have to walk.



Taxis at the R513 intersection

Employment, work and livelihoods

Rising unemployment is a huge concern for most households in Ekangala and Rethabiseng. The closure or relocation of firms from Ekandustria has made it worse. Some residents continue to rely on firms based in Ekandustria for work but other opportunities have arisen in coal mining as new mines have opened nearby. Despite this, a great number are still unemployed. The long distance to Pretoria, Ekurhuleni and Joburg coupled with expensive and inefficient transport make it difficult for people to travel to seek work. Residents' abilities to seek work are also affected by quite basic issues such as the very high cost of photocopying and printing CVs and application forms. Residents make a lot of effort to seek work, queuing daily for casual work, often with no joy.

This research supports the need for the urgent revitalisation of Ekandustria to sustain the socio-economic base of surrounding communities, although it recognises that this is likely to be difficult in the current economic environment.

A substantial proportion of residents rely on government grants for their livelihoods. However there are several informal economic activities such as spaza shops, car washing, vending, salons that people are engaging in to sustain themselves. Public works schemes are also important, but people are concerned about the short-term temporary nature of work available.

" The food parcels often do not reach those most in need. Also, the social grant is not enough and will only last two weeks and so after that people are back to square one." (♂ Dark City resident).

Some parts of Ekangala however include people who are better off with jobs such as professional, managerial, technical and sales work. This is also evident in the type housing in parts of the area.

Informal businesses in Dark City



Alcohol, drugs and crime

The high incidence of crime was a major issue in all the areas researched. The crimes range from muggings, car hijacking, murder and rape. Many residents displayed their concern about crime and serious interventions are needed in this regard. The presence of a local gang was mentioned by some residents, who noted how violent this gang was, and how they used threats to control residents. The police were seen as less willing to confront this gang.

The increasing crime levels were linked to the increased intake of a drug called

" most of the young people smoke Nyaope as they have nothing else to do, so resort to drug abuse...Due to desperation people also steal they even steal cars . If you try and stop them they will kill you ." (♂ Dark City resident).

Nyaope. In Rethabiseng, Dark City, Phumekhaya, Ekangala, there was enormous concern on the number of nyaope

addicts who are accused of engaging in criminal activities to fund their addiction.

The lack of job opportunities was blamed for the increased uptake of drugs as people seek activities to keep themselves busy.

In Rethabiseng, residents note that the absence of a police station in their community has led to an uncontrollable increase in crime. They complained about calling either the Ekangala or Bronkhorstspuit police stations and how the police take a long time to attend to them

"I do not feel safe as the criminals can then do as they please. If you call the police to Rethabiseng they can take one or even two hours." (♂ Rethabiseng resident).

The low visibility of police officers, more so in Phumekhaya, was also blamed for the increased incidence of crime.



caricature of Nyaope boys

Service delivery

There are differences in the level of services in the areas found in Ekangala and Rethabiseng.

Phumekhaya as an informal settlement is the least serviced with barely any services. There is no electricity, sanitation and residents share communal taps that are illegally connected. The rolling out of basic services would be welcome.

" we use paraffin to cook. However, paraffin is expensive . It is also not safe to cook with paraffin in the same shack that you sleep in " (♀ Phumekhaya resident).

The areas of Rethabiseng we did research comprise formal houses that have access to various basic services. However one of the challenges highlighted was that electricity and water connections in the area are poor. This was also expressed by Ekangala residents in Dark City.

"The electricity source is very unreliable and when it turns off it causes a lot of problems: "If you have groceries in the fridge they're getting spoilt" (Rethabiseng resident).

For some residents in Ekangala, housing, water and electricity are still lacking. Others indicate that there have been improvements in infrastructure, including a

clinic, play parks and stadium. Service conditions in Dark City are still poor in some areas, with the persistence of pit toilets. Still there are improvements in various services, especially in street lighting.

Health facilities provoked many comments.—about opening times in Ekangala, queues and waiting time in Dark City, and the lack of a hospital in the area. Whilst some residents were content with the services at Dark City clinic, they were unhappy with the ambulance services that take a long time to respond in emergencies.

" When people are sick the ambulance also takes very long- I called the ambulance for a pregnant woman and the ambulance took an hour and thirty minutes. I had to deliver the baby as ambulance took too long! " (♀ Rethabiseng resident).

Residents commended the installation of street lights in Rethabiseng and Dark City and attributed this to the reduction in criminal activities. There are also several schools in all the areas that residents are happy about but there are no educational facilities to cater for students after matric. Setting up a college of vocational training centre would be a welcome initiative considering the size of Ekangala and Re-

thabiseng and their close proximity to Ekandustria. This will also make sure the community have a sufficient skills base to take up any opportunities that might arise as the industrial area revitalises.



Shared water connection in Phumekhaya