

# From Flooding to Formalization

## *A Case Study of the Informal Settlement of Green Park, Cape Town*

Andreas Saaghus



Master Thesis in Human Geography  
Department of Sociology and Human Geography

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# Abstract

This thesis seeks to explore how a formal actor, represented as the city administration in Cape Town, governs, meets and interacts with the informal settlement of Green Park, trying to find a concrete solution to a flooding problem as well as a long-term solution through formalization. In line with the shift from government to governance, the thesis illustrates the growing complexity of urban decision-making, especially in the dealings with informal settlements.

By using a qualitative case study approach, the study examines in-depth the interactions and communications between various relevant actors. The main findings from this study suggests that horizontal and vertical disconnections between various actors in the urban decision management network have resulted in the actors' differing perceptions and understandings of what the implemented projects are. Moreover, the study argues that a growing involvement of a wide range of actors suggests a blurring of the perceived formal-informal divide in the urban decision-making.



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Enjoy the read.

Much love,  
Andreas

Oslo, September 2016.

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# Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
CBD	Central Business District
CFDS	Cape Flats Dune Strandveld
CLIMWAYS	Climate change and urban water governance: Pathways to social transformation
CoCT	City of Cape Town (administration)
CORC	Community Organisation Resource Centre
CRA	Concerned Residents Association
DHSP	Driftsands Human Settlement Project
DoE	Department of Energy
DRM	Department of Disaster Risk Management
GP	Green Park Informal Settlement
ISM	Informal Settlement Management
LA	Los Angeles Informal Settlement
Mayco	Mayoral Committee
MEK	Member of Executive Committee
NSD	Norwegian Social Science Data Services
PSC	Project Steering Committee
UCT	University of Cape Town

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Topic

On a global scale, the last few decades have been marked by massive changes to urbanization. Virtually all countries of the world are becoming increasingly urbanized. Next to the natural urban growth, millions of people move into cities and urban areas. In 2008, for the first time in history, the majority of the world's population resided in urban areas and in the coming decades it is estimated that 90 percent of worldwide population growth will take place in cities, especially in the Asian and African countries (Watson, 2009). In the United Nations (2014), *World Urbanization Prospects*-report it is estimated that 2.5 billion people will be added to the world's urban population within the year 2050.

The promise of urban life is for many associated with numerous advantages. Better access to basic services, education and health care; enhanced opportunities for political and cultural participation, better jobs and a higher income, are just some of the rewards an urban life could offer. Nevertheless, in many cities the burgeoning urbanization becomes a challenge to the sustainable and proper development of cities. Municipal and local governments are not able to sufficiently provide the necessary infrastructure, nor to develop proper policies that would ensure that the benefits of the urban life are equally shared (United Nations, 2014). These urban inequalities are perhaps best illustrated through the massive growth and expansion of 'informal settlements' and slum areas in and around major cities. This is especially true in countries in the 'developing' world where spaces of informal development many places have overtaken the formal one. In fact, the majority of the population in sub-Saharan Africa now resides in what can be described as informal areas or informal settlements (Huchzermeyer & Karam, 2006).

### 1.1.1 Informal Settlements

Different types of informal settlements are found in almost all developing countries and is estimated to house over one billion people globally, a number which is expected to more than double if the current growth continues (Jordhus-Lier, 2014).

To accurately define what is an 'informal settlement' can be difficult, especially as these often differ a great deal in size, type, shape and form. Moreover, the term 'informal settlement'

can depending on the context be represented and associated with many other terms: ‘unplanned settlements’, ‘squatter areas’, ‘unconventional dwellings’, ‘non-permanent structures’, ‘slums’ or ‘inadequate housing’. All these abovementioned terms could to various degrees have been adequately used as they all intertwine and overlap making it even harder to find a generally accepted definition (Massey, 2013). Nonetheless, when I use the term informal settlement in this study, I see it in accordance with the UN Habitat Program definition, as used by the City of Cape Town as well.

“i) Residential areas where a group of housing units has been constructed on land to which the occupants have no legal claim, or which they occupy illegally; ii) unplanned settlement and areas where housing is not in compliance with current planning and building regulations (unauthorized housing). “ (UNSTAT, 2005)

The massive influx of poor, vulnerable people moving into cities and settling in informal settlements and urban slums calls for city governments to think differently about how they plan and construct their cities, and how best to deal with the burgeoning informality. This has become especially important in areas vulnerable to environmental disasters, as the millions of people living in these areas often tend to be the least adequate to meet and deal with these types of disasters and stressors (Braathen et al., 2014).

### **1.1.2 ‘Formalization’**

When I throughout this study refer to ‘formalization’, I speak of to the process where the government provides an informal settlement with adequate accommodation such as mortar brick housing, and proper service provision (water, sanitation, electricity) and lastly, the security of tenure, separating it from the informal settlements who as described above, lack the ‘legal claim’ to the occupied land. Note that a process of ‘formalization’ must not be confused with ‘upgrading’. Whereas the ‘formalization’ of an informal area provides the security of tenure for the residents, an ‘upgrading’ comes with improved services or housing structures, but is not going to change the *nature* of the informal settlement – “it is still going to be informal” (Regional Coordinator, interview 21.09.15).

## **1.2 Case in Point: Green Park Informal Settlement**

This study is largely limited geographically to South Africa’s second largest city, Cape Town. Since the country’s democratic transition in 1994, many steps have been made to try and best

meet and deal with the growing number of informal dwellers in the urban environment. This “meeting” between the CoCT and the informal settlement, the formal against the informal, is the focal point of this whole thesis. This meeting is exemplified in the CoCT’s intervention and work in the informal settlement of Green Park.

Green Park is a relatively small informal settlement located within Driftsands Nature Reserve, about 20 minutes from Cape Town CBD (see figure 1.1 below). It is one of the oldest informal settlements in the city but has for many years been somewhat overlooked by both governmental bodies in the CoCT, the Province of Western Cape and on national level. Green Park is located next to a wetland which has made issues of flooding a serious and recurring problem as many of the households are left exposed during the cold and rainy winter months on the Cape Peninsula. Green Park are without any electrical connections and basic service-provision has generally been poor.

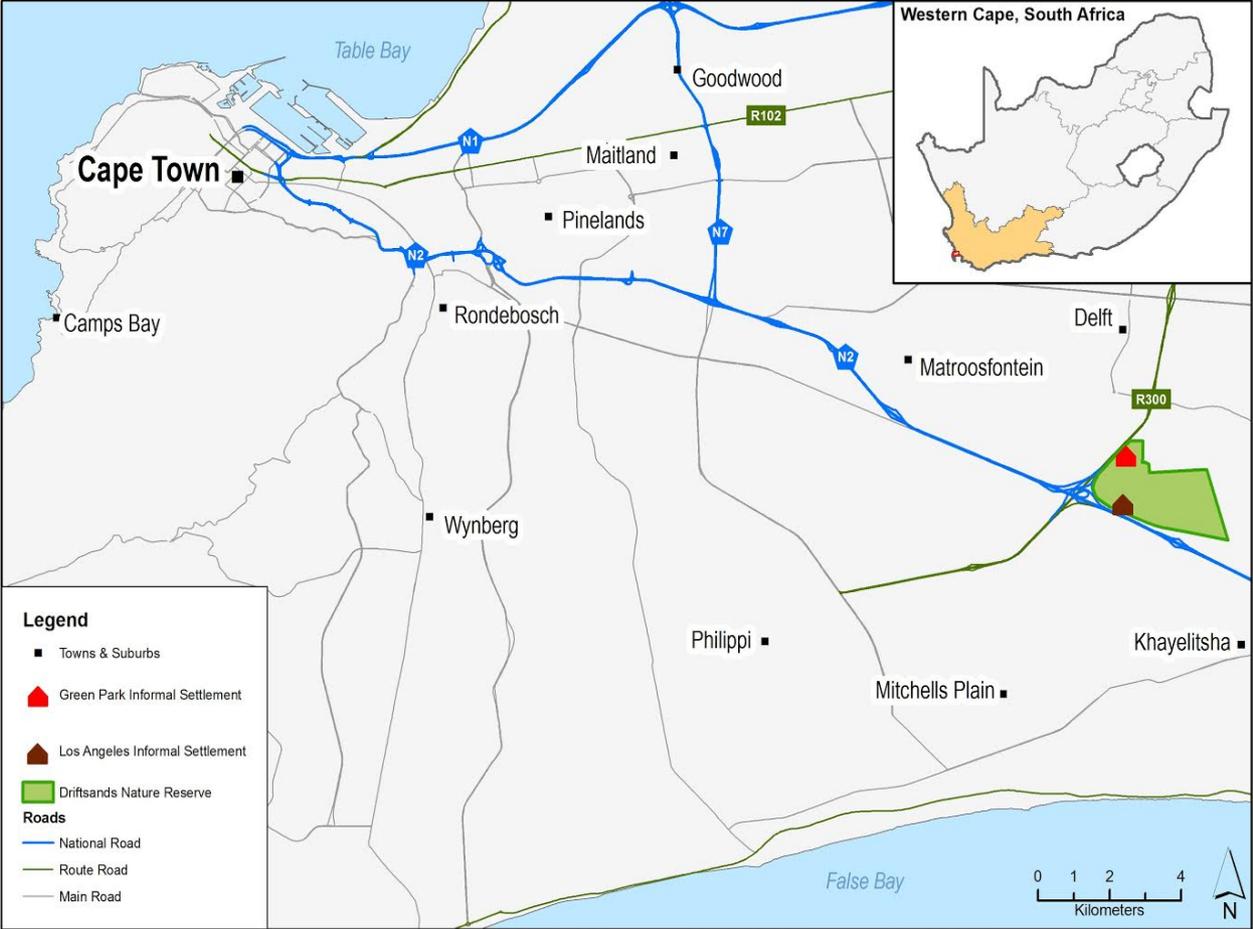


Figure 1.1: Location of Green Park informal settlement. (Source: Eduaction, Durban)

Over the course of the last decade, the lack of basic services and all too frequent flooding have

resulted in a growing number of protests and complaints from the residents of Green Park towards the government, both on the city- and provincial level. It might seem like some of these protests have paid off, as there have been an increase in plans of improving the current situation in Green Park through the formalization of the settlement. The formalization of Green Park includes the construction of mortar-brick housing, electricity and proper water and sanitation service provision. Having slowly started to materialize, important steps have been taken in the governmental chambers of initiating the plans as soon as possible.

In 2014, the CoCT initiated an emergency relief program intended to work as a sustainable interim response to the flooding problem of certain parts of Green Park during the wet winter months. Several large gravel platforms have been constructed to raise the ground level up with the intention that the flood-exposed households could be rebuilt above the water table (Kühne, 2015)<sup>1</sup>. The CoCT have been vocal in labeling the emergency platform project a success<sup>2</sup>, and city officials state that they have been quite pleased with the cooperation between them and the community leadership. Nonetheless, it is interesting to have a closer look at the work being done in and around Green Park. Who were the actors involved; what sort of channels have been used; and seeing that the platforms are only an interim solution, what are the long-term plans? These and other questions tried answered in this study.

### **1.2.1 Study Aim**

The principle aim in this thesis is to investigate how the City of Cape Town has met and worked with the Green Park community in designing and implementing plans of flood mitigation using a new platform technology. It will also examine on how this emergency relief project have been influenced by the long-term plans of formalization, and where these plans are today. The objective will them be to gain a better understanding of how both the ‘formal’ government bodies and the ‘informal’ community leadership, throughout these processes have operated within formal and informal channels to best meet and deal with physical and bureaucratic challenges that arose.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/Pages/CityinterventionsfloodproneGreenPark.aspx> - Downloaded 17.05.2016

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/MediaReleases/Pages/Citypusheshumansettlementsinitiativestoeasewinterflooding.aspx> - Downloaded 19.05.2016

## 1.3 Theoretical Perspectives

The processes of flood mitigation, upgrading and formalization in Green Park involves a wide range of actors from various institutions, governmental fractions and NGOs. These operate and communicate on various scales and through different channels, both formal and informal. To identify and map the different actors as well as gaining a better understanding how they operate within the bureaucratic system I use an urban governance approach as my overreaching theoretical framework. This allows for a deeper understanding of how different management and administrative channels function and operate within the urban system. Moreover, the urban governance perspective can help open the scope for understanding how plans implemented plans of flood mitigation and formalization are experienced and perceived on a local and informal scale. Moreover, it will help in to see how plans conceived and developed in a urban government context will not necessarily be experienced in the same way when implemented and appropriated on a local, informal scale.

At a glance, this thesis aims to describe how a formal actor, represented as the “CoCT” meets and interacts with the informal actor, represented as “the community of Green Park”, and how they together and deal with a concrete problem (flooding). This of course, is a major simplification of a much more complex and intricate process. Still, it shows the need for a proper introduction and operationalization of what is meant by ‘formality’ and formal channels, as opposed to ‘informality’ and informal channels.

The issue of flooding is a central component throughout the study, as it in the case of Green Park plays a direct role in the encounter between the City and the community, as well as being a hindrance to issues such as electrification or sanitation.

### 1.3.1 Research Questions

The aims and objectives outlined will be addressed through the two following research questions:

- i) *How has the City of Cape Town’s implemented plans and policies of flood reduction been perceived and appropriated differently by the various actors involved with the Green Park informal settlement?*

- ii) *What have been the main governance challenges and constraints for the urban authorities implementing plans of flood relief and formalization within the informal settlement of Green Park?*

## 1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters, including this introduction. I have chosen to start by introducing the historical and contextual framework of the thesis. I then introduce my theoretical framework and the methodological research methods, before presenting a thorough empirical introduction to the case itself. The reason for this order is that the terms and concepts introduced in Chapter Two, are used to concretize and operationalize the theoretical framework in Chapter Three and Chapter Five. Moreover, will Chapter Four introduce the different actors involved in the case and the methodological choices I took in the selection of these. The analytical chapters are subsequently presented with the conclusion chapters ending it of. The structure of the thesis is therefore as follows:

**Chapter Two** provides a contextual and historical background for my research and for the area of study.

**Chapter Three** offers the theoretical perspectives and framework for the study. Here I will have a special focus on urban governance theory and try to theorize and conceptualize the concepts of ‘formality’ and ‘informality’, creating the foundation for a theoretically informed discussion of the research questions in the analytical chapters.

**Chapter Four** presents methodological approach as well as how I went about I doing the research process and notably my field work in Cape Town. The chapter also include personal and ethical reflections on my role as a researcher studying potentially vulnerable environments and people

**Chapter Five** offers a comprehensive case introduction to the informal settlement of Green Park. Here, the actors and processes of both the platform intervention and long-term plan in the settlement are introduced, as well as the actors that were involved in these processes.

**Chapter Six** is the first of two analytical chapters. Here I assess the first research question as outlined above. The chapter aims to unravel and explain these differing perceptions the various actors have toward the CoCT's intervention in Green Park.

**Chapter Seven** is the second analytical chapter and assess the second research question. Drawing on the theoretical concepts introduced in Chapter Three. The chapter aims to critically investigate the challenges met by the governing actors doing work within the informal settlement of Green Park as well as assessing the role of the Community Leader in the decision-making process.

**Chapter Eight** contains the summary and reflection, and is where I sum up my major findings. I briefly discuss the thesis' applicability before I offer some concluding remarks.

## 2 Background

To better understand the case of ‘Green Park informal settlement’, we need to place it in a wider historical and contextual setting. As such, this chapter will provide a brief contextual background of the South African history and relevant governmental policies and strategies.

In the context of South Africa, it is impossible to ignore the legacy of the many years of institutional apartheid. By extension, the chapter discuss the importance of understand the important role of South Africa’s new democratic constitution of 1996 which goes far in stating the responsibilities of the state of providing services for its inhabitants.

The challenge of increasingly growing and poorly serviced informal settlements has the later years become a huge challenge for the post-apartheid government. As such, some statistics are presented before briefly discussing the challenges of flooding many of these informal settlements are faced with.

### 2.1 The Apartheid Legacy

It is not possible to properly comprehend the contemporary society and politics in South Africa, without accounting for the country’s century-long history of socio-political control and racial segregation (Huchzermeyer, 2003). Racial segregation in South Africa has roots all the way back to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. Yet it was with the election of the National party in 1948 that the racial segregation was consolidated into a political and formalized system, namely *Apartheid* – the official state policy until the democratic reforms of 1994 (Davis, 2007; Huchzermeyer, 2003).

The system of apartheid, literally meaning ‘separateness’ was based on extensive racial segregation where millions of people who were labeled as “black” and “colored”, were forcefully moved out of the cities and urban areas and into the so-called ‘homelands’ located in remote rural areas, or into large ‘townships’ in the fringes of the city. These politics of ‘clearing out the black spots’ in cities labeled “white”, were official state policy during the apartheid area. The foundations for these policies can be traced back to the early years of colonialization where slogans such as “Segregation for sanitation” were established to medically justify the internalizing and segregation of non-Europeans into separate locations and thus efficiently form the basis of the dehumanization of the black community as “dirty” and the cause of health hazard (Miraftab, 2012). The discourse on sanitation was in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century strongly shaped

by ethnic, racial and class interests, something that directly affected how the South African cities including Cape Town were shaped and planned. This has been a major explanatory factor in the enormous urban inequalities we see in South African cities today, notably within the many informal settlements within and around the city centers (Miraftab, 2012). These informal settlements were originally a response from ‘black’ and ‘colored’ residents refusing to be relocated to the townships and homelands whom started setting up camp in ways of illegal shacks and dwellings on vacant land within and around the major cities. This was done mostly in order to be close to the possible job-opportunities and service provisions that the urban environment could offer (Davis, 2007; Wisner, 2000). These informal settlements were usually extremely dense, had little or no infrastructure or public services like health clinics and schools as well as not being connected to any legal service connections of water, sanitation of electricity leaving its residents highly vulnerable and exposed (Huchzermeyer, 2003).

Today it is more than 20 years since the racist system of apartheid was abolished, and the segregation laws and regulations that came with it have been revoked. Nevertheless, the legacy of the system it is still very much evident in the South African society and urban context. Millions of poor black people are still living in informal settlements and townships where service provision have continued to be dismal, whereas on the national level the socio-economic levels of inequality ranks among the highest in the world (Bouchard, Goncalo, Susienka, & Wilson, 2007; Wisner, 2000). The post-apartheid government are fully aware of these issues and have since the shift to democracy in 1994 introduced a number of different national level-policies and programs aimed at realistically dealing with the growing concern of inequality and informality (Bouchard et al., 2007). However, despite the South African State’s continuing efforts to address the fundamental inequalities in the South African society, the reality is that the geography of apartheid, with its inherent racial segregation across physical as well as social and economic spaces, is still very much evident most municipalities and cities around the country (Taylor, Cartwright, & Sutherland, 2014).

## **2.2 South African Constitution**

South Africa’s first democratic constitution of 1996 was aimed at breaking up the racial structures of the old apartheid regime. The laws and acts previously used for the structural racially segregation within the cities were scrapped and replaced by laws that gave fundamental housing rights for all South African citizens. Section 25 §1 makes clear that “[e]veryone has the right to

have access to adequate housing”. This constitutional right to adequate housing is protected by the state, which must “take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progression realization of this right” (RSA, 1996, p. 26, §2). Efficiently, this means that South African citizens are not only *entitled* to proper, formal housing – the government has the *responsibility* to provide these homes.

The constitution does go a long way in protecting the informal dwellers, stating, “[n]o one may be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished, without an order of court made after considering all the relevant circumstances” (RSA, 1996, p. 26, §3). This article, together with the “Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act” (PIE-act), have made the eviction of unlawful occupiers very difficult. As such, the informal settlers have gained a certain level of rights, leaving them with a much greater sense of security as they would not have to live in constant fear of being evicted (Braathen et al., 2014).

After the democratic transition, three spheres of government were established: the national, the provincial, and the local/ municipal government. The constitution gave considerable power to the local government, listed in section 152 (RSA, 1996). These includes (i) the promotion of social and economic development, (ii) the provision of services as well as, (iii) the promotion of a safe and healthy environment. However, relevant for my case – the constitution is *not* explicit in providing the local authorities with the mandate of managing the environment nor to supply energy. In fact, it lists the ‘environment’ and ‘disaster management’ as a national and provincial responsibility (Taylor et al., 2014). This has resulted in some uncertainty and unwillingness among local level city- and municipal governments as to whether or not to take on the responsibility of disaster-risk reduction and climatic adaption when it potentially could be paid for elsewhere (Taylor et al., 2014). These forms of mixed messages are good examples of what is somewhat complicated challenging bureaucracy.

### **2.2.1 Government Housing Projects**

Building on the citizens’ constitutional rights, the new democratic government’s long-time prestige project was for many years to provide all of its citizens with formal, legal housing. Over two million houses have been built since the 1990s, yet the backlog of households still waiting to be served, is massive and growing. Statistics from Cape Town show that in 2013 almost 400 000 households (or about 1.6 million people) were on the municipal waiting list for governmental supported formal housing (Braathen et al., 2014). These numbers are disputed

yet they clearly illustrates some of the challenges the South African national and municipal government are faced with.

Despite the large numbers on the housing lists, many informal dwellers do prefer to stay where they are rather than to apply and move into the governmental housing opportunities. There are as Aldard (2008) points out, several reasons to this. First of all, because there are a major lack of access of available and affordable land, the government housing opportunities are usually located in the outer periphery of the city, where the government have been able to purchase land. This means that the residents will have to travel longer distances to find job opportunities, have less access to public services, and less access and availability to the possibilities that the urban environment offer. Housing in the periphery would also mean increased transport cost, next to the fact that the former informal dwellers now will have to pay for new expenses such as housing and property taxes, electricity and water bills. These expenses would put serious strains on the often already small sources of income. Paradoxically, the relocation of the informal dwellers could thus ultimately result in increased vulnerability and urban poverty rather than the projected reduction (Aldard, 2008; Braathen et al., 2014; Massey, 2013). These and other challenges have in the past few years led to a growing realization within the South African government that that the promise and of government supported housing for all is not a feasible goal today nor in the nearest future (Cross, 2006). Consequently, there is a need to move away from the traditional perception of informal settlements as a “temporary phenomena” that eventually will be replaced by formal housing (Sutherland, Braathen, Dupont, & Jordhus-Lier, 2016).

As such, a growing number of NGOs, governmental institutions and researches holds that rather than relocating and evicting the informal dwellers from the informal settlement, a better solution will be for the state to upgrade them of them ‘in-situ’ at their current location (Braathen et al., 2014).

### **2.2.2 In-Situ Upgrading**

In-situ upgrading refers to an upgrading approach where the government gives a recognition of the informal settlers’ right to tenure at their current location and the initiation of an upgrading of formalization process there, rather than relocating them elsewhere. One of the main reasons as to why the South African state is gradually moving towards an in-situ approach of upgrading is the 2000 Constitutional court case ruling known as the ‘Grootboom’-ruling. The case came about after Irene Grootboom and members of her community moved away from the ‘intolerable

conditions' in an informal settlement and into an area ear-marked for low-cost formal housing. They were subsequently evicted and were forced to take to seek shelter on a near lying sports field, only using plastic sheeting as cover. Grootboom then applied to a High Court for an order requiring the government's immediate provision of an adequate shelter or housing, pending permanent housing (Huchzermeyer & Karam, 2006). The court ruled in favor of Grootboom, and subsequently found that,

“the national government's long-term plan to deal with informal settlements by delivering formal housing was not an adequate response to the Constitutional right to access to adequate housing by those living under desperate conditions (Graham, 2006, p. 231),”

This ruling meant that the local governments now had both a political mandate and a legal *obligation* to realize informal dwellers right to a safe and proper house, especially in situations where the informal dwellers live in a state of emergency due to challenges of flooding or poor drainage (Graham, 2006).

Despite the clear ruling of the Grootboom-case, many illegal government evictions continue to take place. As such it becomes evident that changes in policy on a governmental and judicial level not necessarily means meaningful changes on the ground and in the everyday practice of the local and city authorizes (Braathen et al., 2014).

Many researchers and policy makers view the government's hesitant recognition of the in-situ upgrading to be step in the right direction as it in many ways is a manifestation of the civil rights for people in vulnerable situations and in informal settlements. Moreover, it is argued that the upgrade of informal settlements in-situ have an instrumental value in itself, as the 'squatting' and the uncontrolled land invasions “seem to ‘undermine the apartheid planning of the city’” (Huchzermeyer, 2003, p. 591). As such, the upgrade of the informal settlements as well as the acknowledgement of their right to be where they are in and around the cities is important in that it challenges and help break up the old structures of the 'apartheid city' (Lemanski & Oldfield, 2009).

## **2.3 Case Context: Cape Town**

Cape Town is the oldest city in South Africa and the main economic hub of Western Cape Province. With its 3.7 million residents it is the second most populous city in the country and it inhabits about 64 % of the Western Cape Province population. (Sutherland & Jordhus-Lier, 2016). The Western Cape Province stand out from remaining provinces in South Africa in that

it is the only one run by the oppositional party, Democratic Alliance (DA)<sup>3</sup>. Although the city have seen many of its residents being lifted out of poverty over the last few decades, an estimated 47 percent of the total city-population still live below the poverty line, and the unemployment-rate were in 2011 close to 25 percent (Braathen et al., 2014). Cape Town is also one of the most sought after destinations for the many migrants moving in from rural areas all over the country and from the neighboring nations, consequently leading the city to have the highest urbanization rate in the country.

Poverty and a wish to improve the lives for themselves and those of their families are the main root causes for the migration and urbanization in most all parts of the world. As many of the migrants moving into Cape Town do not have the funding or opportunity to buy or rent housing within the city, many end up having to reside in informal settlements, often in the outskirts of the urban center.

### **2.3.1 Informal Settlements in Cape Town**

Numbers from the CoCT Five Year, Integrated Development Plan show that there in 2011 were an estimated 20.5 percent of households living in informal dwellings – either in informal backyard structures (7.0%) or in informal settlements (13.5%) (CoCT, 2015b, p. 21). These numbers are however somewhat disputed. For instance did a community survey from 2007 estimate that 84 000 households lived in informal settlements in Cape Town, yet when it was done a counting of shacks in informal settlement using aerial photographs the number was put at 109 000 households CoCT (2014, p. 4). The map below (figure 2.1) illustrates the span of the various informal settlements in Cape Town.

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<sup>3</sup> Numbers prior the South African Local elections of 2016

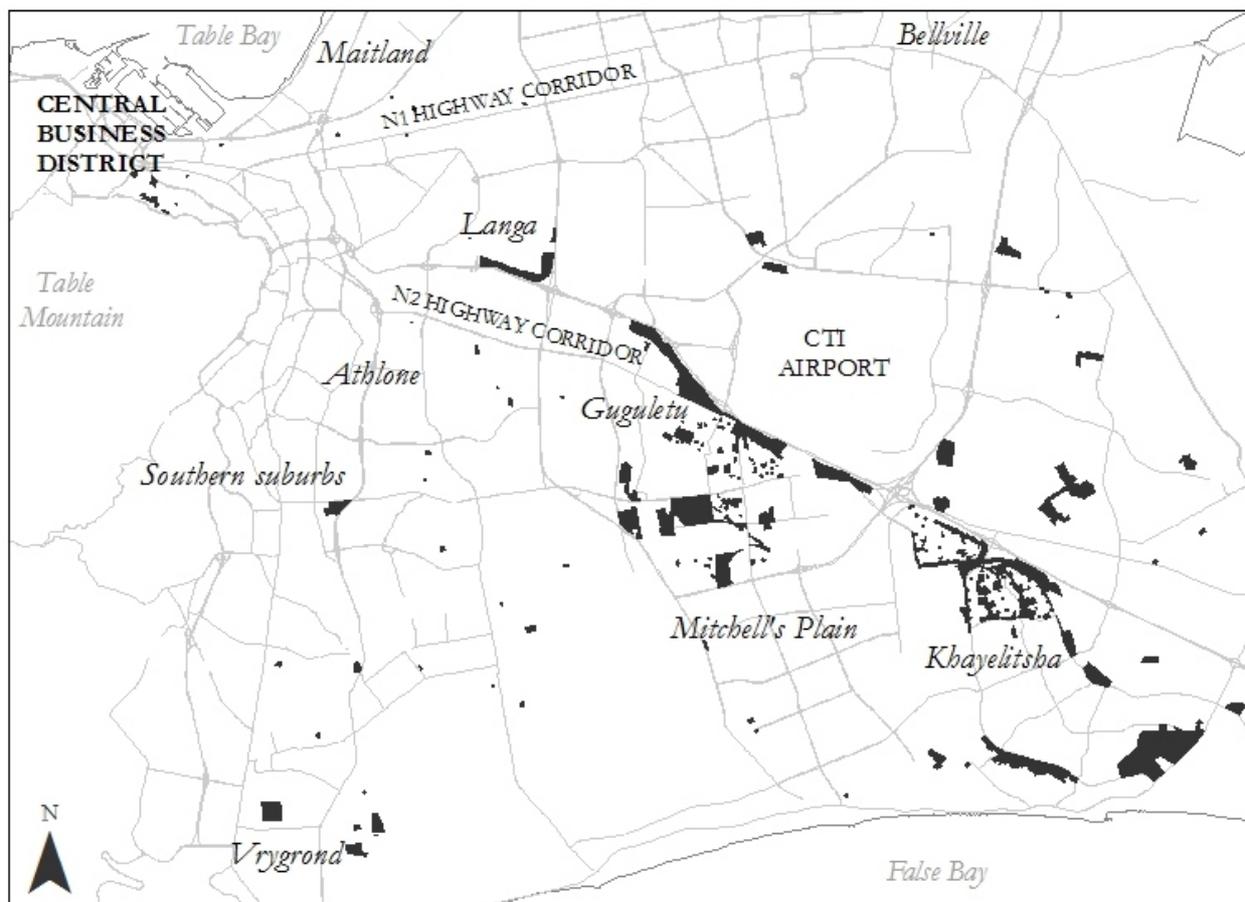


Figure 2.1: Map of informal settlements in Cape Town. (Source: Lier, D.C., 2008)

### 2.3.2 Flooding in Cape Town

Flooding is inherently a natural phenomenon. However, the damages and losses that often follows from such disasters are consequences of the human action and interventions in the geography (Douglas et al., 2008). In cities, it is often the urban poor who are among the most vulnerable to flooding. Shacks and informal dwellings are often poorly constructed with bad material. Consequently, when flood water comes it can cause a great deal of damage to the structure and to the residents belongings, leading the poor into a downward cycle of impoverishment greater for each new disaster that arrives (Alexander, 2000).

Flooding in Cape Town and the surrounding Cape Flats is not new to the city due to its biophysical location. Every year, Cape Town faces intense rainfall during the winter-months from June to August. The rainwater quickly becomes a threat because of the already high groundwater levels and particularly saturated soil types in the area (Ziervogel, Waddell, Smit, & Taylor, 2014). Although much of the city is relatively well supplied with various forms of

storm- and floodwater systems, most informal settlements in the urban periphery – and especially in the large areas of the Cape Flats<sup>4</sup>, have little or no access to these kinds of flood-reduction technology, leaving them much more vulnerable to the flood disasters (Mukheibir & Ziervogel, 2007).

Acknowledging the stressors and challenges that the flood disasters pose for already vulnerable informal dwellers, the CoCT-administration have for the last few years focused much on how to solve these issues. As such, it is in this time possible to identify slight change in the CoCT policy of flood-management in informal settlement. Moving away from only relying on reactive and structural measures of physical control and engineering solutions, the CoCT have increased their focus on non-structural and proactive approaches as a way of reducing the vulnerability (Bouchard et al., 2007). This non-structural approach includes a more efficient and better communication between the various stakeholders, both within the City departments and across governmental/non-governmental cooperation, in addition to larger involvement of the vulnerable communities in the actual mitigation process. Perhaps most notably, the raising of awareness among the informal dwellers of the dangers associated with living in certain flood-prone areas (Bouchard et al., 2007). This latter point is important, as many of the new migrants moving into the urban areas raise unstable, temporary structures in marginal and flood-prone areas, thus leaving many households in danger of flooding. Yet the fact remains that many of these migrants are largely unaware of the potential challenges and dangers that they expose themselves and their households to. This can in parts be explained by the Mediterranean climate of Cape Town. The dry and warm summers tend to create a false sense of security for many newly arrived. Migrants move into land where it is available, often in low-lying areas they believe and perceive as habitable, when it in fact proves to be highly flood-prone and not at all suitable for habiting when the cool and rainy winters begin (Boraine et al., 2006; Bouchard et al., 2007; Ziervogel et al., 2014). As such, the intended plan of working with and informing new migrants to the potential dangers they place themselves in, can help reduce the large number of flood-affected dwellers significantly.

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<sup>4</sup> Cape Flats is the low-lying flat area, southeast of Cape Town's CBD, housing a high proportion of the city's poor townships and informal settlements.

# 3 Theoretical Assumptions

The aim of this chapter is to present some of the theoretical assumptions I will base the analysis of my empirical data on. I have chosen to divide the chapter into three sections, the first of which will focus on the theoretical concept of ‘governance’, and more specifically ‘urban governance’. Here I assess to what effect the turn from ‘government to governance’ have had on a city such as Cape Town’s meeting and dealings with flooding and natural disasters within informal settlements.

In the second section of the chapter, I discuss and operationalize the term ‘informality’ as opposed to ‘formality’. By properly assessing the concept of informality, we are better equipped to answer questions regarding what constitutes the physical informal structures as opposed to the formalized ones or how the informal actors are perceived within a formal system.

In the last section on the chapter, I introduce Michael Lipsky’s (2010) understanding of the “street-level bureaucrat” as a the governmental officer in charge of being the direct link between the state and the local communities. I then draw on Barnes and Prior’s (2009) reading of Lipsky, and their arguments that the role of the street level bureaucrat are changing in line with the local-state’s “extending of the frontline”.

## 3.1 Governance

Since 1980s, ‘governance’, has emerged as an increasingly central term in many of the social sciences, including geographical-, political-, and administrative studies and perhaps especially within the academic, policy and practitioner circles concerned with the management of cities and sub-national entities (Braathen, Dupont, Jordhus-Lier, & Sutherland, 2016; Goodwin, 2009). Despite the common use, ‘governance’ is still a quite contested concept. This is partly due to the fact that there does not exist *one* generally accepted definition of the term. Rather, different social sciences have used various understandings of term depending on the context, concept or issue at hand. For some, governance is an exploratory and analytical tool, used to explain the different processes of governing, urban politics, accountability and democracy. Others again argue that governance is best used as a descriptive term with a focus on concrete institutions, how they operate and fit in within a larger network of actors (Millstein, 2008b; Raco, 2009). Governance is often mentioned when describing the shift away from ‘government’, following the 1980s neoliberal strategy of ‘hollowing out the state’ (Ziervogel

et al., 2014). Government is in this context seen as something characterized by a separation of state and society with clear hierarchical decision-making structures and institutions. Thus, the shift to governance offers a blurring of these public-private lines as well as a greater acceptance of the involvement of other actors and networks outside the state (Kjær, 2004). This can happen through the local government's active inclusion of "citizens and their local knowledge in the development of public policies to solve urban problems" (Rhodes 1996, in, Ziervogel et al., 2014, p. 4). Related to this, Goodwin (2009, p. 594) notes that,

"[g]overnance signifies a change in the meaning of government, referring to a *new* process of governing; or a *changed* condition of ordered rule; or the *new* method by which society is governed".

These new and changed conditions becomes evident in that they transform the terrain in which public officials work, and allows non-state actors to participate alongside the state when formulating and implementing public policies such as managerial and budgetary decision (Barnes & Prior, 2009; Braathen et al., 2014). These non-state actors include private sector organizations as well as "organized constituencies and interests groups acting in the city" (Beall, Crankshaw, & Parnell, 2002, p. 16)

Among many human geographers, the theoretical emphasis on governance have emerged as a useful analytical tool to understand how the contemporary world works. An analytic focus on governance rather than government means stepping away from the singular focus on the actors or the entities that governs and rather focus on the processes of ruling and managing populations and territories (Gupta, Verrest, & Jaffe, 2015). This allows for a more nuanced understanding of the practices of governing drawing attention "to the *how* in addition to the *who* of governance" (Gupta et al., 2015, p. 29. My emphasis).

### **3.1.1 Urban Governance**

The UN-Habitat (2002, p. 9) concept paper, define urban governance as:

"the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, plan and manage the common affairs of the city. [This] includes formal institutions as well as informal arrangements and the social capital of citizens".

'Governance' allows for a specific focus on the relations and roles different actors have when involved in the act of governing any particular area. Many argue that this is becoming more and

more important as the governing of any particular space involves processes which are fast becoming an increasingly complex, differentiated and multi-scalar process, involving an ever growing range of different actors and agencies (Goodwin, 2009).

“Today’s governance takes place in a more polycentric system of actor in which the state is less dominant than before. The multiplicity of actors complicate policy-making since no single actor is legitimate enough to direct societal change. Consensus is no longer given by virtue of legitimacy granted to the state’s actions, but must be socially constructed. This requires alliances, coalitions and compromises” (UN Habitat 2001, in, Devas, 2004, p. 24).

‘Urban governance’ should thus be understood as description of a particular way of understanding the complexities of steering urban development (Haferburg & Huchzermeyer, 2015). Devas (2004) note that it is the relationships and interactions between the wide range of actors that determine what happens in a city and how it is run. Although the City- (or municipal) government normally is seen as the largest and most important actor, it is but one element in a large network. Other actors and institutions include: private sector business and contractors, other government agencies (central; regional), NGOs, political parties and agents, traditional authorities and most importantly, “individual citizens and households, of all income groups, inasmuch as they have any influence of what happens” (Devas, 2004, p. 25).

Many of these relationships are of a *formal* character and take place through dealings such as the systems of representations, elections and political parties (Raco, 2009). Yet, within the conceptualization of urban governance presented here, *informal* relationships between actors can be at least as important as the formal. Devas (2004, p. 26) argues that,

“what actually happens in cities is determined by a multiplicity of informal decisions much more than by the formal decision-making processes of city government. But it is also clear that these relationships are not between equals: differences in political power and influence reflect differences in income, wealth and economic power. Dealings between those with differing power and status often take place on the basis of patron-client relationships, in which the poor may be able to obtain certain benefits but from a position of continued dependence”.

This thesis seek to find out how the ‘*implemented plans and policies of flood reduction been perceived and appropriated differently by the various actors involved*’, as well as to identify and discuss ‘*what have been the main governance challenges and constraints for the urban authorities implementing plans of flood relief and formalization within the informal settlement*’. As such, an urban governance framework is useful as it helps identify the complex interactions

between the many stakeholders, actors and groups that shape the urban development and the various spatial and temporal scales in which they operate and make decisions (Bulkeley et al., 2010; Goodwin, 2009; Gupta et al., 2015).

### **Urban governance in a South African context**

Traditionally, the main focus of urban governance have been grounded in an empirical focus on Western cities and to implement this in an African context has proved difficult. However, in the later years, there have been a growing field of research in African countries which represent a challenge the traditional Eurocentric urban theories (Millstein, 2011).

Urban governance in South Africa emerged with the democratization of the country in the early 1990s and has since become a prominent force in national and regional politics. Growing out of a century long history of racial segregation and apartheid, the urban governance approach is valuable in the South African context as it can be used as a dynamic framework for exploring the contested politics of land, housing and state-civil society relations in expanding cities such as Cape Town (Haferburg & Huchzermeyer, 2015).

With the democratic transition, several comprehensive frameworks emerged which focused especially on political participation and representation at a local level. These new policies were informed by the contemporary integrational debate on governance and put much emphasis on the partnership between the state, capital and the civil society. Millstein (2011) argues that these policies should be seen as a reflection of the neoliberal, global governance agenda of the time.

Yet the democratic transition did also bring with it a substantial transformation of the local governance. The RSA (1998) White Paper, declared for instance, that the local government was to be 'developmental', subsequently giving it the responsibility for the economic and social development of the residents living within its geographical borders. As such, the local government was intended to be highly participatory and to generate "strategic plans providing direction for development" (Todes, 2015, p. 27). Turok (2012) notes that in retrospect these ambitious goals of the Local Government White Paper and other connected legislation should be seen as somewhat idealistic or even overly hopeful. Admittedly, city- and local governments have paid more attention to the developmental agendas, yet implementation of the plans and processes remain uneven and limited from city to city, and is often dependent on particular councilors or officials (Todes, 2015).

### 3.1.2 Collaborative Governance

In cities like Cape Town, South Africa with high levels of inequality and informality, collaborative urban governance becomes particularly important as the CoCT-government cannot tackle the multiple challenges and stressors alone. As such, collaborative governance emphasize the need to involve actors *beyond* the government to ensure that there is multiple actors and institutions which take part in the decision making and the implementation process of the city. This, it is argued, is valuable as various actors bring in a range of different understandings useful for solving and managing complex problems (Ziervogel et al., 2014). The need for collaborative governance translates to the context of flood relief and disaster risk management. The annual flood events found in many informal settlements in Cape Town is a major issue. Many researchers argue that this flood risk could be reduced by moving away from government's hierarchical and centralized approaches and toward a more holistic approach to flooding challenges where a wide range of actors are allowed to work and collaborate across a wide specter (Burris, Kempa, & Shearing, 2008; Van Niekerk, 2006; Ziervogel et al., 2014). Furthermore, Ziervogel et al. (2014, p. 2) holds that the urban and collaborative governance approach becomes particularly important in cities with high level of informality and inequality as,

“the realities of informality need to be understood from multiple perspectives, with input from multiple disciplines and sectors, in order to comprehensively address the factors increasing the vulnerability of people living in informal settlements.”

### 3.1.3 Flood Governance and ‘silo thinking’

Flooding in informal settlements in Cape Town is not a new problem. Yet, the increasing migration into areas previously not settled on have resulted in more frequent cases of it. As discussed in section 2.3.2, informal-dwellers tend to move into the city during the region's dry summer months, setting up camp in areas not suitable for settling when the rainy winter season begin. As a result, many already vulnerable residents suddenly find themselves living in areas with a high exposure to flood risk, but without the resources or capacity to deal with the consequences of it (Ziervogel et al., 2014). As more informal settlements arise within and around Cape Town, the city government faces a growingly complex situation where they as governmental representatives and city officials are tasked to think of new and better ways to deal with and try to solve these issues.

A recurring challenge in Cape Town as well as other South African cities, is the lack of communication between different governmental institutions and actors. Critics argue that the

various departments in the municipal government tend to work as if in silos, not communicating well internally and to only provide public services and citizen contact through conventional, top-down approaches. (Kühne, 2015; Turok, 2012). This type of silo-thinking cause challenges for the various interventions that the CoCT have in local communities, since many informal dwellers fail to differentiate the often complex network of state actors involved in community projects – rather perceiving all government officials to be representatives for *one* unified side of the government (cf. Jordhus-Lier, Braathen, Dupont, & Sutherland, 2015). The importance of coordinating and the integration of the various actors is perhaps especially important interventions of disaster risk management, such as to secure sustainable solutions to flooding (Van Niekerk, 2006). Disaster Risk Management in Cape Town is for instance characterized as,

“a labyrinth of cross-cutting facets that require the participation of a host of sectors and disciplines not only from within the spheres of government (national, provincial and local), but involving the private sector, civil society, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) [...] to name but a few” (Van Niekerk, 2006, p. 96).

In meeting with various high-risk communities across South Africa, several studies show that the local government follow a process of ‘top-down governing’ where government officials steer out a course without consulting with the members the community what they think should be done (Botha & Van Niekerk, 2013; Ziervogel et al., 2014). This type of vertical disconnection between the actors could also be found within the three tires of governing institutions in South Africa: the national, provincial and municipal (local) government. Here, lack of communication is reflected in the vertical lines as “there does not seem to be any form of cooperation between the government departments with regards to disaster prevention” (Botha & Van Niekerk, 2013, p. 7). Accepting that there is a need for change in how cities manage the various environmental risks, Ziervogel et al. (2014) calls for a shift from the top-down, hierarchical system where a national government provides a ‘one-size-fits-all’ model; to a more holistic, decentralized and collaborative response. They consequently argue that this shift is necessary as floods and flooding are best handled when there is an extensive range of horizontal collaboration across different institutions and organizations, being governmental or NGOs, formal or informal. Working across these different actors allows the planners to be more pragmatic and help them understand the complexity of informality and flooding from multiple perspectives (Ziervogel et al., 2014). The informal settlements are in themselves very complex and varies greatly in size and location. The way they are constructed and reasons as to why people choose to live there can also be very different at various settlements. It is therefore important that city

and governmental planners of both the upgrading and the environmental-institutions understand this complexity and take it into account when they construct intervention-plans in the different areas (Smit, 2006).

### 3.1.4 Governance Configuration<sup>5</sup>

Because of the multi-dimensional and multi-scalar nature of urban decision-making, it can be relevant to draw on the concept of ‘governance configuration’ as used in Peyroux, Scott, Baud, and Jameson (2014), and use it as an analytical tool to better understand urban governance. ‘Governance configuration’ holds that the decision-making processes, interventions and outcomes in cities grow out of an ensemble of social and material structures, intimately entangled at a particular time and place.

As such, urban management decisions are dependent various factors. They are for instance enabled or constrained by the existing and available technology, products and infrastructure, thus creating a socio-material configuration. An obvious in the case of this study is the is the CoCT’s introduction of new platform technology in Green Park as a measure for flood adaptation (see Chapter Five).

Urban decision-making and management are furthermore dependent on the coordination and collaboration between the multiple of actors exerting power an influence on the urban governance process. Operating on multiple scales, these actors try in different ways to push their mandated agendas and perceptions through various channels, networks and coalitions. Note that although certain actors’ mandates stems from formal policies, rules and regulations, they can still be subjected to contestations on ground and perhaps, especially in informal areas and settlements. Consequently, the concrete interventions produced in urban governance configuration are not the material expression of various rational decisions in government offices, but rather it should be understood as situation-dependent practices which are never complete and always dependent and relative to the various contexts, the knowledge available or the and the direct interests of the actors charged with implementing them.

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<sup>5</sup> This section and the following, **Section 3.3**, draw on the theoretical framework of a forthcoming article by Gina Ziervogel, David Jordhus-Lier, Dianne Scott and myself.

## 3.2 Conceptualizing and Operationalizing Informality

Over the last half century, we have seen an explosive growth of informal settlements in urban areas, all throughout the globe. Dovey (2012, p. 349) describes it as being “the most pervasive single form of new urban development”. Yet, despite a wide acceptance of the current informal reality, especially in cities in the global south – there are seemingly a lack of theory to describe how urban informality works in itself. ‘Informality’ tend to be understood as “a state of exception from the formal order of urbanization” (Roy, 2005, p. 147), and is thus represented as something that is opposed to ‘formality’ and consequently associated with illegality (Dovey, 2012)

As this thesis is written in a South African context, the operationalization and clarification of the terms informality (and formality) becomes especially important. Ever since the democratic transition of 1994, the new government in South Africa have initiated various projects and plans aimed at breaking up the racist structures of the apartheid city. A large part of this concerns the various cities and municipalities dealings with the growing amount of people residing in informal settlements. All new plans and policies dealing with informal settlements are highly dependent on the various government officials in charge of implementing them on-ground (cf. Lipsky’s (2010) “street level bureaucrats”). As such, how these governmental officials understand and perceive both the informality and the informal dwellers will naturally play a large part how the policies are executed and implemented locally.

By conceptualizing informality, we have a better change of understanding the sometimes seemingly conflicting logics of *formal* plans and processes that are implemented in the *informal* reality which is the informal settlement. Building on this, I investigate the debate that discuss to what degree the formal-informal duality actually exists as two opposing terms, or if the distinction is less evident. Many researchers within a city-planning context advocate that the formal-informal division should not be understood to represent a universal and final distinction where an ‘entirely formal’ governmental process interact with ‘entirely informal’ practices in and related to the informal settlements. Rather, one find that state departments and other formal organizations often can have patterns of informal behavior deviating from their normal formal practice. Similarly, it is possible to identify formal aspects within the informal settlements, for example through the community residents interactions with formal state programs such as Public Grants, or waiting lists to receive formal housing (Bohlin, 2013, p. 20).

Accepting that there are both blurry lines and a large degree of overlap between what is considered formal and what is informal, I hold that it can still be useful to appreciate their analytical distinction, so to better understand the linkages between the two.

### 3.2.1 Defining Informality in the Formal-Informal Continuum

To define ‘informality’ in a clear and meaningful way that makes sense to all is essentially a very difficult task. Informality covers a large specter of meanings and is understood in many different ways in varying settings, contexts and situations (Gilbert, 2004). Nonetheless, if we still were to try, a natural starting point would be to put it up against its natural counterpart, *formality* as the dictionary definition of informality literally is: “the absence of formality”<sup>6</sup>. Generally, we say that the *formal* system consists of the political regime, government and official institutions which are in turn controlled by formal laws, rules and regulations. Thus, if we accept the abovementioned dictionary definition, *informality* would be the absence of all this. The weakness with this definition is that we yet again define informality as what it is *not*, rather than what actually it is (Huchzermeyer, 2011).

McFarlane (2012, p. 90) writes that informality can be seen to occupy a contradictory, but never fully externalized space as it is,

“often viewed as a product of urban modernity and economic liberalization – assumed to be the domain of the “formal” – but at the same time appears to lack the products of those projects”.

Generally, in the urban planning context, *formality* is understood as something that operates within the formal planning regulations and the rules of law whereas *informality* on the other hand is usually thought to be something that operates outside the law and these systems (Dupont, Jordhus-Lier, Sutherland, & Braathen, 2016). Building on this, informality is often conceptualized as a spatial categorization, as something that is materialized through its place in the urban geography (McFarlane, 2012). A “slum” would for instance be categorized as informal as it does not follow the official and formal building regulations or because its owner lack the proper right to tenure. This distinguish it from for instance, houses in the suburbs, which

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/informality> - retrieved 15.02.2016

with street numbers and flowery facades, are though to operate well within the perceived formality.

The formal-informal relation can also be understood as a description of particular groups, e.g. informal labor as opposed to formal labor, as workers being left outside the world of formality typically will lack the proper work contracts and social security cover in their workplace. Or even that they work and live in a hazardous environment and/or lack proper services such as clean water and toilets (Gilbert, 2004).

To illustrate the informal-formal distinction, McFarlane (2012) put forth a series of dichotomies: the structured versus the unstructured; the predictable versus the unpredictable; or the rule based versus the unruly. Obviously, it can be argued that in certain contexts the distinction is more clear-cut than in others, e.g. in economic terminology where we usually identify two distinct sectors: a formal one which is regulated and taxed; and an informal one, characterized by being unregulated and untaxed (Huchzermeyer, 2011). Yet this conceptualization of the formal-informal duality in economic literature are under scrutiny by various academics who argue that it is unproductive to see the formal and informal as two fragmented spheres and furthermore that drawing a clear line between the two realms becomes increasingly impossible (Dick & Rimmer, 1980; Huchzermeyer, 2011; Sorkin, 2014). Rather than viewing informality as a separate sector from the formal we should see it as “a series of transactions that connect different economies and spaces to one another” (Roy, 2005, p. 148). It is argued that the formal-informal urban relation is but an “epistemological demarcation put to work in different ways and contexts” – a categorization that help us more easily understand how the world works (McFarlane, 2012, p. 91). As such, we say that, informality and formality operates and exists in a “meshwork” of practices and processes. McFarlane (2012, p. 101) argues that,

“[...] from this perspective, rather than viewing informality and formality as fixed categories, or as mutually exclusive, the two appear as lines of changing practice and movement, taking place not above or in advance of urban life, but within its unfolding”

### **People as ‘informal’**

Although the definitions above gives us a fairly good understanding of what the informal activities are and how informality is spatially manifested, they are less convincing in the argument of how to best categorize the people within the geography that live and engage in this formal-informal trajectory. Sorkin (2014) assert that people living in informal settlements, cannot possibly exist entirely outside the routines of formality. Many, he argues – may have a job in both

the formal and the informal sector, or they may work in formal jobs in formal houses during the working hours, but take up residents in informal settlements (Gilbert, 2004). As such, we can argue that the formal-informal relation – rather than being parts of two different and separate spheres it must be viewed in a temporal context as people constantly move between formal and informal spaces. This is not only the residents or workers residing in informal settlements, but also public officials, activists and other volunteers (McFarlane, 2012).

### **Planning in Informality**

The relationship between informality and planners is, perhaps naturally – a complicated one. “On the one hand, informal spaces have been perceived as unplannable; on the other hand, there has been a series of attempts to improve and integrate such spaces” (Roy, 2005, p. 150). This is especially evident in South African politics where there have been extensive political and governmental will to improve and upgrade informal settlements. These spaces of informality are often perceived in one of two ways. Either as dismal concentrations of poverty filled with criminal activities, filth, unruliness and deprivation (Dupont et al., 2016); or they are seen as alternative and autonomous urban orders, patched together through the improvisation as entrepreneurship of the urban poor (Roy, 2012). Still, both these views of the informal city are perceived as being outside the formal system, as an “other” than the planned and formal city (Roy, 2012, p. 1). Not only is the informal viewed as being illegitimate in a juridical context – but also visually, socially and spatially illegitimate (McFarlane, 2012). Often, governments and city authorities understand the informality of the poor as something representing a negative aspect of what is or at least should be the “urban life”. Rather than acknowledging the informality’s presence in urban space, it is seen as reflecting lack of development and progress – as “a cancerous sores on the beautiful body of the city”, in other words something that needs to be eradicated (AlSayyad, 2004, pp. 18-19; Dupont et al., 2016). The informal dwellers would naturally have a different view of their own status. They have to tackle the challenge of not being properly recognized or supported by the city government. However, other people living in informality may wish to defend their “informal status” as it is a mean to create their own economic, political and social space within the city. For these informal dwellers, the informality becomes a way of exercising flexibility and freedom in the city. Many do also choose to move back into the shacks even after they receive formal housing as a way of keeping this freedom (Dupont et al., 2016).

### 3.3 Street-Level Bureaucrat

The implementation of policies and practices on ground are as mentioned (with reference to the different governance configurations), very much dependent on the actual actors and persons charged with promoting them. As such, when discussing the governing of informality and informal settlements, it can be useful to draw on Michael Lipsky's concept of the "street-level bureaucrat", a term introduced and analyzed in his classical analysis from 1980.

Lipsky (2010, p. 4 (*30<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition*)), describe the street-level bureaucrat as "those men and women who, in their face-to-face encounters with citizens, 'represent' government to the people". In other words, through their work and follow-up 'on-ground', the street-level bureaucrats become the "foot soldiers" of the city governments. The success or failure of urban service delivery and the implementation of various governmental policies and regulations will then often rest on the street-level bureaucrats handling of these (Ross & Levine, 2015).

Barnes and Prior (2009) argue that the street level bureaucrat's tasks and the world of public services and policies have changed substantially since 1980, not least because of the new forms of governance and actor involvement. As such, they assert that whereas the main constraints and challenges for the street level bureaucrat previously included the lack of resources, conflicting role expectations and client accountability, they now have to account for a growing involvement of the citizens themselves as new mechanisms of community participation and consultation have emerged. By tasking citizens with responsibilities which previously had been undertaken by the state, the government redrew the formal-informal divide by "extending the front line of the local state" (Barnes & Prior, 2009, p. 34). A consequence of this is a transformation of the way in which public officials work. Moreover, it has in line with the neoliberal shift from government to governance, created new identities for citizens and residents who need to combine an apparent increase in power with an increase in responsibilities such as service-delivery and self-governing (Barnes & Prior, 2009).

Barnes and Prior wrote from a British context. Nevertheless, I argue that that it is legitimate to transfer the concept of 'extending the front-line' onto a South African context as well. Having to continuously work in the intersection between the formal and informal, the street-level bureaucrats have a major influence on the implementation of governmental policies and adaptive measures in informal areas. And in line with Barnes and Prior's (2009) arguments it is possible to identify a change the street-level bureaucrats working task, as the CoCT's have increasingly started to involve more actors in the urban-decision making, and holding the community and citizens themselves increasingly responsible for their own self-governing and

service provision. This is perhaps especially evident in informal areas where street level bureaucrats see the need to involve the local community leaderships to a larger degree so to be able to implement different programs and policies (Ross & Levine, 2015). Other non-state actors are also increasingly being involved, notably various NGOs whom the City use to provide extra relief and support for residents in informal settlements in and around the city. As such, the consequence of the local state's 'extending of the front-line' in Cape Town, have thus been that citizens, local communities, private contractors, NGOs and other non-state actors are more often tasked with responsibilities which hitherto have been undertaken by the state. Subsequently, I argue that the formal-informal divide are being both redrawn and blurred, and that new channels of decision-making, both formal and informal, emerge and develop across different the scales and networks or urban decision-making.

### **3.4 Summary**

In this chapter I introduce my theoretical framework as well as the theoretical concepts applied to best understand the CoCT interventions of flood protective measures and formalization in Green Park. The chapter has discussed how the application of the urban governance concept allows for an analysis of the potentials and challenges of the involvement of multiple actors and institutions in policy-making and implementation. It has operationalized the informality concept in a South African urban context, and emphasized the role of street-level bureaucrats and their importance to policy-implementation on the ground. Lastly it introduces the concept of 'extending the front line' of the local state to illustrate a larger involvement of non-state actors in the the urban decision-making processes.

## 4 Methodology and Methods

In this chapter I present the methods chosen in my study as well as an account of the methodological choices taken before, during and after my field work in Cape Town. The chapter starts with a general introduction of qualitative research method and the in-depth interviews. I then account for my choice of these methods as well as a critically reflect on how the informants were selected, the construction of the interview guide, which types of questions were asked and which ethical considerations need be taken. Throughout the chapter I place a special emphasis on my own role as researcher and the importance of critical reflexivity.

Social sciences are special in the way that the researcher is both an observer and a participant in the environment that he studies. In qualitative research, this dual role of the researcher becomes even more evident as the researcher is in close contact with the persons and phenomenon studied. Of course, the ideal for the researcher is to be absolutely objective throughout the process, from the data collection to the analysis. However, since it is impossible to study social phenomenon in a vacuum, this is not possible. We all bring in our own personal history, interests and perspectives into the research, and this will, knowingly or not, affect how we as researchers choose and analyze the different phenomenon and themes (Dowling, 2010). As such, it becomes extremely important for the researcher to be aware of his or her own role when doing research, and to reflect and be critical of the potential affect this can have on the data and the analysis of this.

### 4.1 The Qualitative Method

There is no ‘one right way’ of doing qualitative research. Different qualitative studies will differ depending on the researcher’s overarching goal for the study; the view on epistemology and ontology; or the projected participants and audience of the study (Snape & Spencer, 2003). By studying things in their natural setting we are attempting to “make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Snape & Spencer, 2003, p. 3). This differs from the quantitative approach that will emphasize prevalence and numbers rather than meaning (Thagaard, 2009). While the quantitative methods often have a linear process with a structured design the qualitative method work within a more flexible and cyclical process in which the analysis and interpretation of the data material is a continuous from start to finish. This gives the researcher a flexibility to change strategy during the process and jump back and

forth between theory, methodology and data (Thagaard, 2009). Consequently, the outcome of qualitative analysis becomes analytical descriptions, rather than the statistical generalizations found in quantitative methods (Wethal, 2011). Key elements in qualitative method such as in-depth interviews, observation and thorough analysis will usually involve a quite close contact between the researcher and the informants. This means that it is particularly important to consider the influence of the researcher's perspective.

#### **4.1.1 The 'Case Study'**

A 'case study' usually refers to a research that investigates one or a few selected cases in considerable depth. This is often with the aim to generalize across a larger set of units, and to translate phenomenon into a bigger context (Gerring, 2004; Thagaard, 2009). A reason for choosing this approach is that that it allows us to understand social terms and phenomenon that normally would be hard to measure or define precisely. It is for instance hard to measure and understand terms such as 'informality' and 'formality' in statistical, quantitative research as there are always a danger of "conceptual stretching" where many cases and terms are lumped together to get a bigger sampling when they in fact are very different (George & Bennett, 2005). In a qualitative case study method, we can avoid this as in-depth knowledge collected on a few or even a single case can be useful to achieve a good conceptual validity, as well as offer good opportunities to develop new hypotheses and an increased capacity for addressing casual complexity (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 19).

For many years, the qualitative case study method was not accepted as 'proper science', and although this has to a large extent changed since the 1960s and 1970s there are still many who would claim that the method is both noncumulative and nonscientific. The critics argue that though the case study might make interesting contributions to knowledge, it lacks a basis for a more systematic comparison and generalization (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 68). The adherents of the qualitative case study reject this notion and put forth certain requirements that can be followed to make the findings more generalizable. They argue that the researcher, first of all, must clearly identify the universe and phenomenon that is studied. Secondly, the researcher needs an appropriate research objective and research strategy. Lastly, the research must

employ variables for theoretical interest for the purpose of explanation (George & Bennett, 2005).

#### **4.1.2 Case Relevance and Selection**

My main aim for this study has not been to give a general assessment of how the City of Cape Town deal with challenges in all informal settlements on a broad and generalizable scale. Rather, I have chosen to focus in depth on a single case where they have actively intervened. My case is restricted geographically and contextually to the CoCT's meeting with and handling of flood mitigation, formalization, electrification and upgrading in the informal settlement of Green Park (see map, figure 1.1. pg. 3).

My selection of this case was done for several reasons. First of all, the topic intrigued and interested me, not least because of its relevance to the current urban reality in many cities around the world. The informal development in sub-Saharan Africa have overtaken the formal development, resulting in the majority of the sub-Saharan urban population residing in various forms of informality. Millions more are still moving into the cities with hopes for jobs and better lives for themselves and their families (Huchzermeyer & Karam, 2006). City planning in the 'global south' need to account for a larger informal population, and studies and research can provide important reflections and contribution as to how do deal with this growth. My hope is that this study of one of the many informal settlements in South Africa, could add some valid contributions to the vast research field of informal settlement relations and governance. Accepting of course that a master thesis from the other side of the world would obviously have a limited impact on the world of research, it was a huge motivation for me to be a part of the CLIMWAYS project, whose influence is far superior to mine. The CLIMWAYS project is a consortium of researchers from the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR), the University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Cape Town and the University of Oslo. The project's focus center around the institutional constraints on water resource management and urban climate change adaption in the cities of Cape Town and Durban. Taking part in the CLIMWAYS project was helpful in that it offered access to data and documents relevant to my own case that would not have been otherwise available.

I initially heard of the Green Park case by one of my CLIMWAYS colleagues who in an interview with a CoCT official was informed of the work that the CoCT currently were doing in that settlement. As my knowledge of the case grew I found it to be intriguing as it was a

quite illustrative example of the many challenges that can arise in the meeting and communication between what is perceived as something ‘formal’ and something ‘informal’. Moreover, the case illustrated the physical intervention of the CoCT in the informal settlement’s geography, through the construction of large gravel platforms as flood protective measures. This type of platform technology was a largely untested one, making it even more interesting to see how it had been perceived and appropriated by the different actors involved. Lastly, I argue that the case of Green Park is a strong and illustrative example of the complex network of actors involved in such processes, as well as a good example of the for many often frustratingly slow wheels of bureaucracy.

Qualitative research focusing on a small number of cases in depth, can often be concerned with “giving voice”, and “tell the stories” of marginalized groups in the society, with the goal of expressing their needs and wants to a society that perhaps is ignorant or misunderstood (Ragin & Amoroso, 2011, p. 46). Although this study does not actively try to give voice to the people living in informality in general and in Green Park in particular, it is concerned with trying to highlight some of the communicative challenges and constrains informal dwellers have in meeting with formal actors.

## **4.2 Identifying and Finding Informants**

My fieldwork was conducted in Cape Town over the course of seven weeks, from early August to late September, 2015. Below, I introduce my informants as well as account for the methodological choices taken with regards to the selection of these.

### **4.2.1 Introduction of Informants**

While on field work, I conducted 15 in-depth interviews with 16 different informants, 12 men and 4 women<sup>7</sup>. Of these five were residents from Green Park, including the current community leader and members from former community leadership. I did five interviews with various officials connected to the CoCT: Three with officials from the Directorate of Human Settlement; one was with the local Ward Councilor (the locally elected political CoCT representative); and the last one was with the Regional Coordinator in charge of Human Settlements in the eastern region of Cape Town, (including Green Park). I also conducted interviews with two people

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<sup>7</sup> List of informants, Appendix I

working in an NGO; a joint interview with two officials from the Cape Provincial government; one with the Conservation Manager of the Driftsands Nature Reserve and finally one with an official from the national electricity service, ESKOM. All of my informants had been on site in Green Park and all have, to various degrees, been involved with either the flood securing, upgrading or formalization of the settlement. As shown, my informants are from various institutions, firms, bureaucratic and political levels within government, and community and community leadership. Having such a wide selection of informants has been useful in getting a better understanding of the various roles, perceptions and ideas of the different actors and institutions, as well as identifying the conflicting logics between the informants.

#### **4.2.2 Preparation and Initial Meeting**

Before travelling into South Africa, I had read up on much of the literature discussing various topics such as informal settlements, formalization, flood mitigation as well as the formal/informal divide. Additionally, I had through previous readings and classes acquired a fairly good knowledge of the South African current politics and historical context. But my knowledge of Green Park was however still quite limited. This was partly due to the fact that there was not much information available directly describing the case other than a few mentions on the CoCT official webpage, and a general description of the planned emergency relief, platform-intervention from 2013. Consequently, I did not make any preliminary conclusions prior to departure, nor had I contacted any of the informants requiring interviews.

The seemingly lack of information and informants on the Green Park case was not a great worry prior to departure, as I through my participation in the CLIMWAYS project had had several contacts I knew could introduce me to people with connections to the case, including two people I prior to my arrival had assumed would be key-informants. Notably the CoCT official #1, who were the CoCT Project Manager for the short-term platform project in Green Park, and the Community Leader in the Green Park settlement. I was especially interested to speak to these two as they in many respects represented respectively the ‘formal city’ and the ‘informal Green Park’.

On the day after my arrival in Cape Town, I had a meeting with some of CLIMWAYS South African team members who provided me with the contact information of several informants, including the two abovementioned informants. In the meeting I was also introduced to Brooke Kühne, a student at the UCT who was writing her honors-degree using the platforms in Green Park as a case (Kühne, 2015). Brooke was already quite familiar with Green Park and

had a good relationship with the Community Leader. The next day she agreed to take me out to Green Park where she subsequently introduced me to the Community Leader who gave us a quick tour of the settlement. This first trip out to the settlement was extremely useful in that it provided me with a much clearer image of the actual situation in settlement, the challenges that they faced and what had, and had not been done in the area. It also gave me an opportunity to arrange for an interview with the Community Leader in Green Park.

### **4.2.3 The ‘gatekeeper’**

Thagaard (2009, p. 67), writes that when conducting research in informal areas and environments, a good strategy might be to establish contact with persons that are central or have a strong position in the community or area. These people can be identified as “gatekeepers” as they would have the authority to open or block the access to an environment. In my case, I hold that the current community leader in the settlement (hereafter referred to as the Community Leader), could be described as the gatekeeper into Green Park, as he held a position in which he could potentially block my site visits to the community. While I do not believe that he could hinder me in speaking to others in Green Park, his acceptance of me as a researcher was highly appreciated as it made the visits much easier. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) note that it is important for the researcher not to be perceived just as a representative for the gatekeeper, but rather as someone that is able to think and act for themselves. In my study this was especially important as there are especially once fraction of the community that do not agree with all the choices made by the Community Leader (cf. 5.2.3). As a result, I was careful not to be perceived as taking any sides, trying to be neutral and as open as possible when speaking and interviewing the various factions within the settlement. I found this ‘neutrality’ to be even more valid when I ensured that the Community Leader, or in fact any others – did not ‘sit in’ on my interview, as I viewed it as probable that this could have a direct influence on what was being said.

In three of the interviews, I had to use a translator as the interviewees preferred do the interview in isiXhosa, one of the eleven official South African languages. The Community Leader offered his assistance in this task, however I viewed this as being too much of an involvement from his side, wishing rather to bring in my own, “neutral” translator. Upon giving my reply, I was afraid that it would be seen as disrespectful or overly suspicious. I was therefore a bit surprised when discovering that he had no problems seeing my dilemma. He even jokingly

referred to a Rowan Atkinson-skit where the translator translates what he wants rather than what were actually being said by the interviewer and the respondent.

#### **4.2.4 Selection of Informants**

In this study, my aim have been to find out how certain processes work, as well as establishing, “what actors do in a case, why they behave as they do, and what produces change both in actors and in the contexts in which they are located” (Bradshaw & Stratford, 2010, p. 71). From this we can describe the study as being one of ‘intensive research’. Baxter (2010), writes that the intensive research allows the researcher to dig deep into the case using relatively few respondents, in order to explore and explain a certain phenomenon and the contextual influences of it. Seeing that it is an in depth approach, *who* you choose as your respondents becomes very important. To find my informants I decided to avail myself of a mix of what is called a ‘strategic selection’ and an ‘convenience sample’. This meant that I tried to find informants who had the qualifications and characteristics that were relevant to my research questions, and that was available and willing to speak to me (Thagaard, 2009).

#### **‘Snowball strategy’**

As I had little prior knowledge of what eventually proved to be a quite complex case, my first interview with the Community Leader became very important, as it laid the foundation for my general understanding of the case. Moreover, the interview proved useful as it helped me ‘get going’, with the recruiting of informants. Using what is Thagaard (2009, p. 56) describes as a “snowball strategy”, I received many names of people that I could contact as well as a preliminary understanding of who was who in the complex net of actors in both the city, province, NGOs and community itself. Like a snowball rolling down a hill (a not so common sight in Cape Town), my contacts and informants quickly grew larger as the time passed on resulting in most of my interviews being conducted towards the end of my fieldwork. I hold this to be an advantage as it gave me the chance to adapt and familiarize myself with the language, the place as well as the case itself. The challenge with the snowball approach is that the selection of informants may be from the same network and environment, risking the exclusion of important informants (Thagaard, 2009). Although I can never completely get away from this assumption, I feel that this risk was significantly reduced as the same question was posed to all my informants, all from different environments. Towards the end of my field work, I tended to get the

same, familiar names from my interviews, suggesting that I had reached, or was close to reach a point of saturation in the data-collection, meaning the point in the data-gathering process “when no new information or insights are being generated” (Hay, 2010, p. 386).

### **4.3 The Qualitative Research Interview**

In this study, I chose to use in-depth, qualitative research interviews as my main strategy of collecting data. Ragin and Amoroso (2011), describes the in-depth interview as something characterized by the building of relationships and exploration of ideas with the individuals studied. Here the researcher use the interviews as a way of collecting knowledge about individuals’ personal experiences and their reflections around these (Thagaard, 2009). The in-depth interview is often described as a form of conversation, or more specifically “a conversation with a meaning” (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003, p. 138). This ‘meaning’ is literal in the sense that the informant offers answers to the questions posed, but it also offers a meaning in the way that informant can tell the researcher when the questions are misplaced, or give comments on the structure of the interview. This feedback can be used to improve and adapt the setting and content of the interview while conducting the data collection. The interview thus becomes a dynamic tool when facing the empirical data (Dunn, 2010).

Patton (2002) identifies three of the basic approaches to qualitative data collection: (i) the unstructured conversational interview; (ii) the standardized and structured interview; and (iii) the semi-structured interview approach. For my study, I found both the unstructured interview and the standardized, structured interview not to be suitable. Although the former would increase the salience and relevance of all my questions, I found it too unsystematic and too “free”, risking to quickly fall off topic and discussing things irrelevant to my study. The standardized structured interview would on the other hand admittedly allow me to increase the comparability of all my responses as well as reducing my own bias and effect on the interview situation (Patton, 2002). However, because my respondents have very different relations to the case, a consequent comparison would be difficult to achieve, and also unnecessary. Following this, I decided the ‘middle way’, choosing a semi-structured approach.

Semi-structured interviews employ an interview guide, with questions that are “content-focused and deal with the issues of areas judged by the researcher to be relevant to the research question” (Dunn, 2010). One of the main advantages with the semi-structured interview approach, is that it gives the researcher quite a bit of flexibility to decide how best to use the

limited time available in the interview situation. Here, the interview guide provides topics and subjects areas that the interviewer is free to explore when fitting, establishing a more conversational style, yet at the same time staying within certain predetermined borders. As such, the semi-structured interview, gives the informant the possibility to more freely answer the questions in their own words, focusing on what is important and relevant for them within the context that the researcher put forth (Dunn, 2010; Patton, 2002). A potential challenge is that the “interviewer flexibility in sequencing and wording the questions can result in substantially different responses from different perspectives, thus reducing the comparability of responses” (Patton, 2002, p. 349). Yet, again – seeing that my informants had very differing roles and relations to Green Park, I held that the comparability of their responses were of less importance.

### **4.3.1 The Interview Guide**

The interview guide<sup>8</sup> is a general list of themes and issues that the researcher wants to cover in an interview, and is often associated with semi-structured forms of interviewing (Dunn, 2010). Initially I had created my interview guide ordered almost as a script, but as I began interviewing I soon discovered that conducting the interviews in such a way felt both unnatural and repetitive, and the answers I got on one question would often cover several of the following questions as well. Accepting this, I chose to detach myself to a larger degree from the interview guide, and rather use it as a tool to structure and focus my interviews when that was needed. This methodological choice allowed me to be more flexible and follow the ‘natural’ direction and flow of the conversations while at the same redirect the discussion to the themes that had not been discussed, or to build on information that the informant provided. This detachment from the interview guide became easier as I got more familiar with the interview setting and the themes studied.

Dunn (2010, p. 105) notes that the “[i]nterview design should be dynamic throughout the research”. This allowed me to continuously develop and adapt the interview guide. Some of the questions were for instance soon discovered to be unimportant, whereas others needed to be specified or rephrased. I quickly realized that there was little use in asking the all same questions to each informant because of the abovementioned differing in roles and connections to the case. The interview guide was therefore adapted before each interview in a way that was appropriate to each informant and the role of the informant.

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix II for exemplified interview guide

### 4.3.2 Questions

The questions posed were of varying arts. Some of the questions were what Patton (2002, p. 350) describes as “opinion and values questions”. Such as: “what would you say is the way forward for Green Park”, and “how would you describe the city’s relationship with the community?” These and similar questions asked directly for the personal opinion, values or expectation of the informant, and did therefore not have a ‘right’ or a ‘wrong’ answer. Consequently, the answers given should be understood as the informants own interpretation of the situation rather than an objective truth. The challenge in asking these question is that the respondents personal interpretation of the world around him or her, is dynamic and can change much depending on the context. As such, it is possible to argue that the informants would have given a different answer if the questions were asked a week earlier. Other questions posed were of a much more descriptive or a storytelling-form (Dunn, 2010). Here, I tried to inquire of what the informant knew (and did not know) about certain processes: “When was the first time you heard about the plans of building platforms?” or “who were involved in the planning of the platforms?” Essentially, my responsibility as a researcher and interviewer was to,

“pose questions that make it clear to the interviewee what is being asked. [...] Unclear questions can make the person being interviewed feel uncomfortable, ignorant, confused or hostile” (Patton, 2002, p. 361).

The actual sequencing of the questions during the interview is necessary to account for. Rubin and Rubin (2005) suggest that the researcher should introduce himself and repeat the purpose of the research before starting on the interview. All the informants had prior to the interview received a letter of introduction on mail, or a introduction per phone by me. However, by introducing my research questions and overreaching goals for the study a second time in the interview setting allowed me to clarify what I wanted to find out from that specific interview. In the ‘chit chat’ before the interviews I discovered that talking about the weather almost always worked to create a relaxing interview setting. Moreover, it allowed me to jokingly (and perhaps slightly exaggerating) talk of *all the snow we got in Norway*, and that I despite this, was freezing more in Cape Town than back home (it must be noted that this line worked better in rainy August than the warmer September). After the ‘soft start’, I gradually asked tougher questions that required the informant to reflect over his or her position, or potential challenges and mistakes they faced in their relation to the case. Towards the end I posed, as Thagaard (2009), suggests, easier and more open questions before ending and thanking for the interview.

### **4.3.3 Interview Location**

The interview setting in itself can also have played in on the responses I got. This assumption is supported by Thagaard (2009), who argue that by creating a trusting environment in the interview setting, the informant may be willing to open up more and give better answers to the topics that I am interested in. This can be done by for instance conducting the interviews in an environment where the interviewee feels safe. In my case, most of the interviews (nine) were done at the informants' workplace, either in their office or a separate meeting-room with no disturbance, three interviews were conducted in the home of the informants and the final three were conducted in the Green Park community hall. I was quite happy with this solution. It gave us peace and quiet to conduct the interview, and I did not feel like an intruder 'summiting' them to a pre-determined place chosen by me. Having rented a car I was flexible to meet the informant at their choosing and on a personal note I have to admit that I did enjoy the (occasional life threatening) challenge of driving on the left side of the road as well.

### **4.3.4 Ensuring Rigor**

Bradshaw and Stratford (2010) notes that to collect, interpret and represent other peoples' experiences and feelings is not something that should be taken lightly, and we as researchers, have a responsibility both towards our informants as well as to our researcher colleagues. The respect and responsibility to our colleagues and to the researching world means that the data we collect must be trustworthy and possible to evaluate and even re-test. Our responsibility toward our informants on the other hand, require the study to respect and accept the informants as autonomous human subjects that enters the research voluntarily and adequately informed (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Ragin & Amoroso, 2011). To ensure the informed consent, I had all my informants sign a 'Letter of consent' prior the interviews, which documented that they had been informed of the study details and that they had agreed to take part in the research (see Appendix III). The letter stated that data material collected would be kept confidential and not to be shared with people outside the CLIMWAYS team. It also said that the participation in the study was voluntary and the participant would have the opportunity to withdraw at any time if they wished and have the data they had shared deleted.

### **Audio recording of interviews**

When using audio recording of the interviews it is important to be aware of the potential affect that this can have on the interview setting. It is for instance a danger that the informant becomes too self-aware and afraid to give “wrong answers” that could be used against him or her later. The recorder can also serve as a reminder of the formal situation of the interview and in that way inhibit the informants answers (Dunn, 2010; Hesselberg, 1998).

The length of my interviews varied from about 40 minutes to two hours depending on the interview setting and informant. Generally, the interviews lasted for about one hour. It would have been quite difficult to remember all details and comments that were said during this time. Moreover, I considered the alternative of extensive notetaking during the interview as being a poor option, as me writing page up and page down would only be a hinder to the flow of the interview. It would also have made it more difficult for me to properly concentrate on the respondents answers, and to ask good follow-up questions where they were needed (Dunn, 2010). With this in mind, my choice to use a tape-recorder was relatively easy. Before each interview, I specifically asked the informants for permission to record the session, which was accepted by all of the informants. In one case I was asked to pause the recording temporarily as the informant had to answer a call, however other than that my experience was that the tape recorder was soon forgotten during the interview and did not affect the answers I got to any large extent.

### **Problematic terminology**

Before conducting my first interview with the Community Leader in Green Park, I was unsure what were the proper terminology when referring to the housing structures in the community (‘shacks’, ‘informal structures’, ‘informal dwellings’) and the well as the community itself (‘informal settlement’, ‘slum’, ‘illegal dwelling’). This might seem as a small problem, but it was important to me to use the proper terminology as I wanted to be clear in my questioning so to get the best possible answers.

Secondly, I did not want to be perceived as someone that was indifferent to the culture and proper terms, not knowing what he was asking and talking about. Although, note that this ‘nativity’ was also useful at times, as discussed in the next section.

Lastly, I was worried that by using wrong terms I could risk to offend the interviewees and thereby endanger the whole interview. Thagaard (2009) writes that even the smallest mistakes can risk breaking the trust between the informant and interviewer. For me, my first two

or three interviews therefore became quite useful, not only in that they provided me with a good introduction to the case, but also in that they gave me an opportunity to listen and take note of the terminology my informants used. Being more familiarized with the terminology, I dared to be more direct in my questioning in the later interviews as opposed to the first.

## **4.4 Data Analysis**

An important methodological question is the status we give the collected data from the qualitative research interviews, and to what extent we can rely on them. The interpretative nature of in-depth interviews in qualitative method makes it important for the researcher to discuss the strengths, weaknesses and the validity of the collected data (Mansvelt & Berg, 2010). Having an hermeneutic approach to the interviews and interpretation of the data, I accept a fixed truth does not exist as phenomena are interpreted and understood differently depending on the values, experiences, attitudes and ideas that we inhabit (Thagaard, 2009). This means that the data provided by the informant should be understood as the informant's individual interpretation of the phenomenon or situation discussed (Bradshaw & Stratford, 2010; Thagaard, 2009).

### **4.4.1 Analytical Approach to Data**

I find that the process of data analysis is not something which is occurring in isolation after all data are collected. Rather it is a continuous process, starting with the initial data collection and lasting throughout the whole writing process. New information, perceptions and observations constantly shape and influence my understanding of what is studied.

By having a quite open and not fully informed approach to the data collection, I have been able to “construct ‘theories’ grounded in the data themselves” rather than attempting to push my empirical findings into already established theoretical boxes and frameworks (Charmaz, 2006, p. 2). Note that I do not characterize my research as grounded theory, as the usage of this methodology has strong guidelines to which I have not followed. Yet, certain aspects of the grounded theory approach have been useful in the analysis of my data, nonetheless. Notably, grounded theory's inductive approach that holds that theory is supposed to be developed through the constant analysis of the data with the theoretical preconceptions are set aside, allowing the data to “speak for themselves” (Clark, 2007, p. 428).

My approach into the field has thus been inductive in that the theoretical perspectives I have used have been established based on analysis of the data. As such, I have to a large extent

gone from data to theory, rather than the deductive approach, where research is based on hypotheses from already established theories (Thagaard, 2009, p. 189).

#### **4.4.2 Transcribing and Coding the Data**

The analysis of the data in this thesis started already whilst in the field. Through observations in the field and discussions and conversations with fellow CLIMWAYS-colleagues and others with knowledge of the case and topic, my initial perceptions and understandings were challenged and further developed.

After the interviews, I transcribed all the collected data from the recorded sound files, using the software HyperTranscribe. I chose to transcribe all my interviews in full, only omitting what was completely unrelated to my questions, in addition to sounds and half-uttered words. Nor did I focus much on the way and feelings in which the words of the informants were being said. I do not think that these choices affected my data in any large way as I after each interview jotted down thoughts, reflections and observations from the interview session, including the general mood in the interview, where it had taken place and other things that would not necessarily be evident on the recoded tapes.

While on fieldwork, I tried to transcribe as much as possible of the interviews immediately after they finished as I then had the whole session fresh in mind, as suggested by Valentine (2005). This strategy became more difficult towards the end of the fieldwork as the numbers of interviews went up. Nevertheless, I found the transcription process to be very valuable for my further analyzation and processing of the collected data. Listening to the hour-long recordings allowed me to discover new aspects of the case that I had not understood or taken notice of during the interviews. As such, transcribing whilst on fieldwork was especially useful as my enhanced understanding of what I studied allowed me to adjust, specify and improve my interview guides and questioning for the later interviews.

Coding of collected data is meant to help organize, analyze and reduce the often massive amount of empirical data collected in the research (Cope, 2010). As such, after finishing transcribing the interviews, I went on to code the data. Inspired by “First Cycle coding” as described by Saldaña (2009, p. 3), all interviews were printed out on paper and read thoroughly while meticulously highlighting different facts, formulations, and quotes that were of interest to the case and to my research questions. Using different color highlighters, I was able to systematize

the data in to major themes, notably: flooding, electrification, formalization and governance/actor network. The basic coding helped me to get a proper overview of the data, as well as a good idea of the various informants diverging and converging opinions and perceptions.

## **4.5 Reliability**

### **4.5.1 Objectivity and Subjectivity**

The concept of ‘objectivity’ in qualitative research methods is something which is often emphasized in geographical discussions and literature. Dowling (2010) writes that objectivity could be described as having two components. The first relates the researcher’s personal involvement in the case and with the participants in the study. The second component refers to “the researcher’s independence from the object of research” (Dowling, 2010, p. 35). This means that there ideally should be no interactive connection between the researcher and the process of collecting and analyzing the data.

Naturally, both these two components of objectivity are difficult, if not impossible to achieve. When collecting and interpreting social information using a qualitative method of in-depth interviewing, there will always be a degree of personal interaction between the researcher and the informant. Societal norms, cultural experience and perceived power structures will influence our interactions as well as the personal histories and perspectives that we take with us into to our research. All this efficiently renders the ideal of objectivity impossible (Legard et al., 2003). Accepting the difficulty of reaching objectivity I tried, as Dowling (2010) notes, to give special emphasis to my own subjectivity in the social interactions with my informants and the interpretation of the data collected.

### **4.5.2 Insider/Outsider**

Dowling (2010) write, that in an interview session, a researcher will always be both an insider and an outsider at the same time. The fact that I had lived both in Cape Town and in other African countries previously, was often a great advantage as I felt quite accustomed with the language, accents and general feel for the city. Unsurprisingly I did feel mostly like an outsider nonetheless. Having travelled around half the world to observe and write about a process, not directly affecting me in any way, did of course reinforce my role as an outsider in the eyes of my informants.

Being an outsider in the study context does not need to be a disadvantage. In fact it can be a large benefit to the researcher as the informants potentially would make an extra effort to describe feelings, processes and events (Dowling, 2010). It is of course difficult to be sure whether or not this played a part in my data collection, but several of my informants expressed a humorous fascination of my long journey from Norway to research something that was close to their hearts. This may have helped to create a more relaxed atmosphere in the interviews making the conversation flowing more freely. Furthermore, my image as an outsider allowed me to “play dumb” when touching upon subjects an insider would have been expected to know, as for instance the subject of terminology as discussed before. It is important to note that my role as an outsider was not a fixed one and that it did vary depending on the context and people I spoke to. This notion is supported by Dowling (2010) when she notes that different characteristics such as socio-economic status, gender, racial and ethnic affiliation and age can be overlapping, meaning that a researcher will never completely be an insider or an outsider, but rather drift between the two, depending of the context.

### **4.5.3 ‘Elite interviews’**

In all my interviews, I chose to present myself to my informants as a university student rather than a researcher. This may have helped in relaxing the interview setting in a way that the interviewees did not have any great concerns of sharing information with me seeing that I was ‘just a foreign student’. In one instance however, my student-identity might have played out negatively as I on my initial contact with a high ranking official within the CoCT, received a “no”, when asking to do an interview with him. Because I viewed this informant’s participation as quite important, I attempted a second time to arrange a meeting, noting in the e-mail that my supervising *professor* from Norway (who was in Cape Town at that time) also would want to join in. I promptly received a “yes” from the CoCT-offices.

The interview I had with the high ranking officer in the CoCT as well as two to three others, could be described as being, ‘elite interviews’ as they in line with Smith’s (2006) description were with actors in high public or political positions, used to exert power without their authorities being questioned. As such, the researcher is said to ‘study up’. An assumption in qualitative research literature have been that the power and authority that the ‘elite informants’ inhabit in their professional life or in other contexts would always be directly transferred onto the interview space (Markusen, 1994; Schoenberger, 1991; Smith, 2006). As such, the elites

are seen as skillful in creating an asymmetrical interview relation where they become the dominant part and can influence the interview in ways where they are viewed in a positive light (Vetthus, 2015). These assumptions are however under much scrutiny, as researchers reject the notion that power in one context, necessarily will be transferred to another (Markusen, 1994; Smith, 2006).

I did not find the assumptions of the elite interview, to be valid in my own case either. My own experience was that I was as much in control in these interview situations, as I were in the ones where I could be perceived to “study down”. Furthermore, I felt comfortable asking more critical question without feeling the need to be extra cautions.

## **4.6 Ethical Considerations**

Any research should be guided by the principle that the involved participants should not be worse off in any sense after their participation in the study (Denscombe, 2003). Consequently, the concern of the informants should be of a higher priority than the final research product (Dowling, 2010). Accepting this, the researcher’s ethical considerations becomes vital. These include questions of “how researchers *ought* to behave, the role of research in the pursuit of social change, and whether and how research methods are just” (Dowling, 2010, pp. 27-28).

Before commencing my research in Cape Town, the study had to be reported and approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). The project was approved, and I have subsequently followed the NSD guidelines for ethical research.

Yet it is important to note as Dowling (2010, p. 30), does that “[o]ur engagement with ethical behavior does not end when we submit our research proposal to an ethics committee”. Rather, the ethical considerations need be an continuous and dynamic process throughout the duration of the research (Dowling, 2010, p. 30).

### **4.6.1 Applicability and Reciprocity**

A major part of my data collection took place within the informal settlement of Green Park. A natural consequence of this was that I often came in a position where I met and interviewed residents living in a poor and vulnerable context. Subsequently, I felt an extra responsibility to give much thought to the ethical considerations in the data collection, making sure that my research objectives and presence in the settlement, not in any way caused a form damage or distress for the informants.

A major hesitation prior to going in to the field, was that my research and findings would most likely be of limited direct use and applicability for my informants. To avoid the feeling of ‘research tourism’, or being seen as “just another bloke getting a degree off our backs” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 273), I was careful sincerely thank the respondent for taking the time off to speak with me. I also promised to send him or her a copy of my thesis, when completed. Nevertheless, my initial worry and bad conscience of not being relevant enough, was soon proven groundless. My informants were both welcoming and helpful, all seeming happy and interested in sharing their knowledge with me.

As researchers we are all dependent on the information which our informants provide us with. As such, many argue that it would be appropriate to reciprocate, to ‘give something back’. Either a cash payment, a gift or even knowledge in way of the research’s key findings (Grossman, 2011; Legard et al., 2003).

This was a difficult choice to make. Especially as several of my informants lived in what was very vulnerable situations. In addition, most of these were unemployed or not able to work, thus not having an income apart from the little they got from various social security schemes. Despite this, I decided on not to reciprocate any of my informants with neither cash payments or gifts. This choice was done as I was afraid that a “payment” of sorts could potentially create a very different relationship between me and the informant. The reward at the end of the interview could mean that the power dynamics would change and the informant felt a need to tell me what they believed was what I wanted to hear, rather what were the factual reality. Moreover, as an ‘outsider’ there is much I do not know about the context and culture where I study. How big should a cash gift be to be enough, and when does it become too big – reinforcing me in a role as ‘the rich white guy studying the poor’? And to whom do I give the money or gift to? Does the high-ranking officer in the CoCT receive the same amount as the informal dweller living in a shack?

By paying for interviews only to the people living in the informal settlement, I felt that it would contribute to an additional polarization of the informal dwellers and create an unnecessary distinction between them and the rest of my informants. The wish to treating my informants in an equal way thus became an important argument for me to choose not to ‘pay’ for my interviews. I will however, as mentioned above, send my thesis and/or key findings to the my informants, if they so wish to read it.

## 4.6.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

In this study I seek to understand a specific planning process and intervention at a specific geographical case location, being Green Park. In order to properly answer my research questions and ideas, I needed to identify and map as much of the actor-network that I can. The danger of doing so is that the indemnification of persons in the study may cause harm of embarrassment to the informants. To avoid this, Thagaard (2009, p. 27) describes what is called “the principle of confidentiality”. This principle hold that the researcher keep the collected data material confidential. Moreover, the researcher must ensure that the data material is conveyed and presented in such a way that it will not cause harm or displeasure for the respondent.

In some cases it is argued that the qualitative studies’ principle of confidentiality is not enough. Rather, it is argued that the cases and the informants should be completely anonymized where anything that could mean the identification of these is changed or omitted in the final text. Being names, professions, or addresses found (Hesselberg, 1998; Punch, 1994; Thagaard, 2009). The argument of taking these measures of anonymity is that the ‘cloak of confidentiality’ might be for nothing as *insiders* and persons familiar of the case easily could identify and locate the individuals involved, or perhaps even worse, they might claim to be able to identify the informants, when they in fact have pointed out the wrong person (Punch, 1994). The complete anonymization of all my informants would also mean a total anonymization of the case itself. This would have been practically impossible, as it is the many distinct features of the Green Park informal settlement’s location, history, topography and ownership which makes it interesting for my study. Anonymizing and/or omitting this would then mean that it is not possible to properly present the process of formalization and flood mitigation.

I concluded that the choice of not anonymizing the case of Green Park was acceptable, as the CoCT’s implemented and projected projects in the settlement are labeled as a part of official City projects available for all to read about online. Moreover, my main focus in the case was more on the governance process itself rather than on the individual involved. Nevertheless, to secure a certain confidentiality, especially for outsiders, I refer consistently to my informants by their professional title or their position in relation to the case, rather than by their actual names. Nonetheless, I am aware of the risk that insiders or knowledge about the events described in this study will still be able to identify the informants. As such, I have been careful in

how I have presented my material and findings in the text, so that it does not backfire on my informants.

## 4.7 Summary

In this chapter I have accounted for and discussed my methodological choices as well as the different methods employed. I have further discussed the reason for selecting the case in question as well as the strategies employed to locate and select the informants relevant to this case. My main method of data collection have been qualitative, semi-structured research interviews. Through these interviews, I have gained valuable insight into how the relevant actors perceive and understand the various implemented and planned interventions in the informal settlement of Green Park. Working within an informal settlement and in meeting with people living in poverty, the ethical considerations taken becomes extra important. As such, note that I have throughout the research process given much thought to ensure that that the choices made during the research process will not cause any harm to my informants.

I accept that all the methodological and analytical choices taken in this study is influenced by my own subjectivity. Similarly, the answers, stories and descriptions collected from my informants are shaped and communicated through *their* individual perceptions and understandings. This have demanded a careful focus on how I analyze the data collected and which analytical tools I have applied, both prior, during and after the data collection.

# 5 Long-term struggle for short-term action in Green Park

As in most all new research projects, I had little initial knowledge of the case in question prior to the research and interview process. Although Green Park is one of the oldest informal settlements in Cape Town, there were relatively little information available online other than some demographic material and various different city reports and notices. As my knowledge of the Green Park case grew, so did the complexity of it. The settlements history, the location of it, the residents living there, their daily challenges, the actors involved and the funding available are just some of the factors that come into play when acting and planning for the future of the settlement.

As such, the aim of this chapter is to give a detailed introduction of the case in point as a greater understanding of the Green Park case's complexity will allow for better answers to the posed research questions in Chapter Two.

Green Park is but one of many informal settlements that under the jurisdiction of the CoCT. As a way of offering a better contextual background I start the chapter by giving a brief introduction of the CoCT's administrative and political structure. Subsequently, I present the settlement itself. Starting with some statistical and demographical facts, I continue with a brief historical review of Green Park with an extra focus on the struggle for leadership within the settlement. The Green Parks location within the provincially owned, Driftsands Nature Reserve has major political and institutional implications regarding what the CoCT is allowed to do. This is presented in more detail.

The final sections of the chapter deals with the two identified governmental plans of intervention in Green Park: the "long-term" plan of formalizing the whole of Green Park, and the "short-term" project of emergency relief through the building of platforms, as well as the potential electrification of the settlement.

## 5.1 City of Cape Town

The City of Cape Town's bureaucratic and political map is at times quite difficult to get a proper and correct overview of. With its over 3.7 million residents<sup>9</sup>, Cape Town is among the top ten

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<sup>9</sup> [https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/stats/Documents/2011%20Census/2011\\_Census\\_Cape\\_Town\\_Profile.pdf](https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/stats/Documents/2011%20Census/2011_Census_Cape_Town_Profile.pdf)  
(downloaded 26.07.2016)

largest cities on the African continent. Its administrative and political offices and depots house over 22 000 staff members who work in a wide range of disciplines. In the 2015/2016 review of the *Five-Year Integrated Development Plan*, the CoCT is described as a “macro-organisation” (CoCT, 2015b, p. 120). However, the same report offers only a very basic organizational map of the City’s 12 administrative directorates and the large number of different departments and offices with various responsibilities. Due to restructuring, refinancing, and name changes, the organizational map of the different directorates, department and offices tend to change from time to time, making it difficult to at all times have a precise overview of the whole city-administration.

The political structure of the CoCT on the other hand is in many aspects more stable, in so that there are less restructuring of the different levels. Yet obviously, the different elections would lead to large changes of personnel every fourth year or so.

The residents and leadership of the informal settlement of Green Park have like most other informal settlements in Cape Town continuous dealings and interactions with the various directorates within the City administration. For instance the Directorate of Safety & Security’s department of Disaster Risk Management have been central in providing immediate relief after disasters such as fire and flooding. The Directorate of Utility Services are in charge of providing the settlement with adequate water-access as well as proper sanitation whereas the Compliance & Auxiliary Services Directorate are the ones tasked with running the National Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), a program offering a wide range of working opportunities for the large unemployed population in the City. These examples above are just some of the wide range of governmental agents and actors engaging in one way with work in Green Park. Nevertheless, the overall responsibility for the development and implementation of informal settlement policies in Cape Town lies within the Human Settlement Directorate (Jordhus-Lier & Aasen, 2016). The Human Settlement Directorate will be the main governmental body of interest in this thesis. This is because both the two major CoCT interventions in Green Park; (i) the ‘short-term’ project of constructing large gravel platforms an emergency flooding relief in Green Park, and (ii) the proposed, ‘long-term’ the project of formalizing the Green Park area with proper housing and full service provision are Human settlements-projects. I give a more detailed description of the two projects later in this chapter.

**Figure 5.1** below, provides a rough overview of the political and administrative structure in the CoCT, with a particular focus on the Human Settlements Directorate. The figure is only meant to give a general indication of the decision-making channels in the City with regards

to the topics covered in this thesis, and should therefore not be used in other contexts. The different CoCT informants are also marked in the figure to help the understanding of their role in the case.

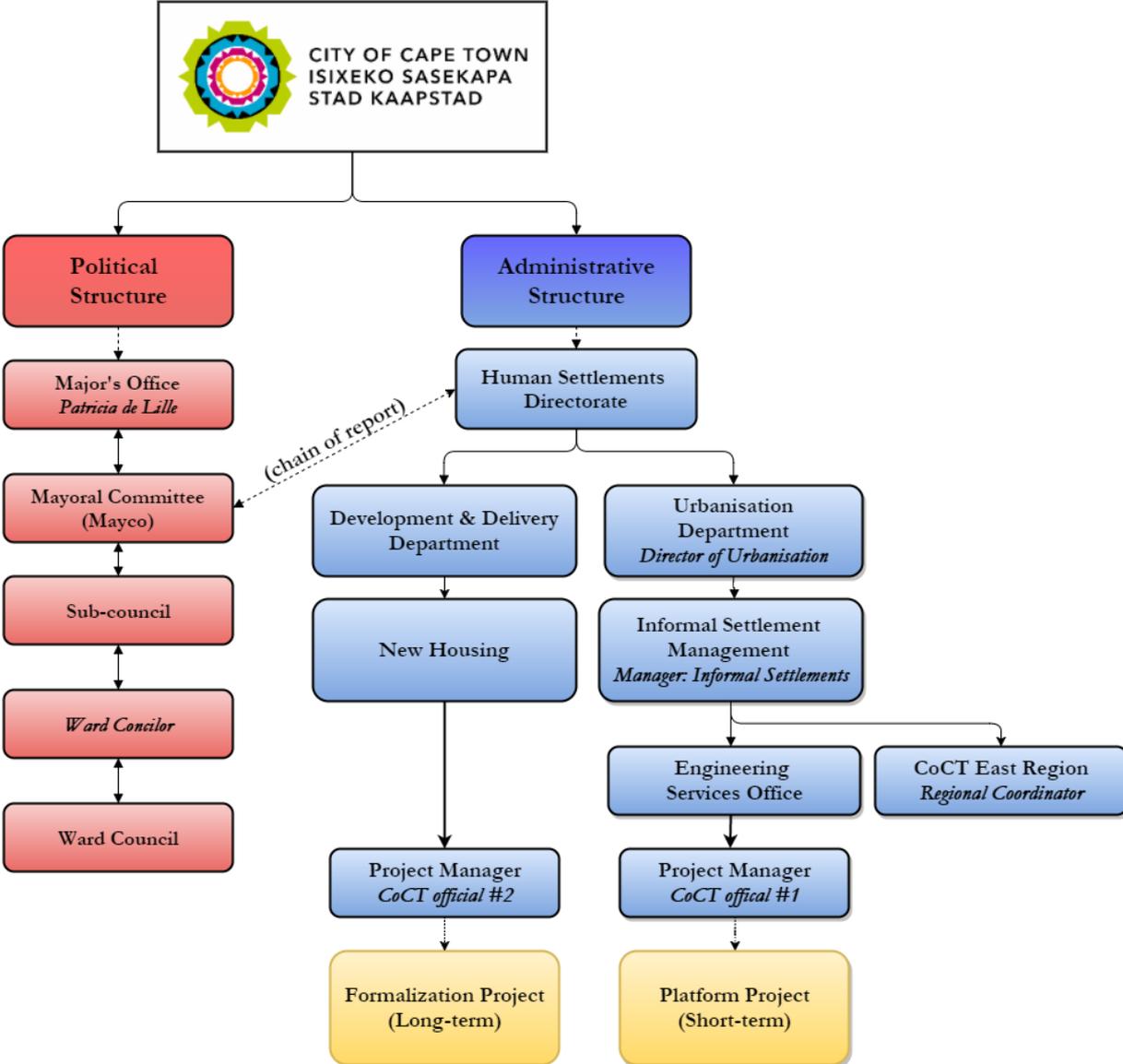


Figure 5.1: City of Cape Town, administrative and political structure illustration

### 5.1.1 Administrative Structure

The overall vision of the Human Settlements Directorate is to,

“contribute to and lead the City of Cape Town’s development of sustainable integrated human settlements by improving the overall living and built environment of communities in Cape Town, [...] placing a specific focus on improving the livelihood of the poor.” (CoCT, 2014, p. 4)

The Human Settlement Directorate consists of five different departments. The focus in this thesis have been respectively on the Department of Development & Delivery and the Department of Urbanisation (CoCT, 2014). Generally, we can say that the responsibility of the Development and & Delivery and the underlying New Housing offices is to provide proper and formal housing to the informal areas in line with the national housing plan (CoCT, 2015a). The Urbanisation Department, led by the ‘Urbanisation Director’, are on the other hand tasked with ensuring the wellbeing of the many residents living in informal settlements including the upgrading of these. Informal Settlement Management (ISM) is a sub-section within the Urbanization Department. The ISM are the in charge of the planning and realization of the different upgrading and relief projects in the informal areas. The Regional Coordinator’s office are furthermore tasked with the day-to-day interaction with informal dwellers in the geographic area of responsibility. The platform-project in Green Park (the “short-term project”) was planned, designed and implemented within the ISM, notably with the help and technical expertise from ISM’s Engineering Office.

### **5.1.2 Political Structure**

As in all democratic local government institutions, the CoCT consists of an administrative side and a political side. The political actors are elected officers led by the Mayor, Patricia de Lille on the very top, and the ward councilors on the bottom. As a way of efficiently manage service delivery, the CoCT are divided into 111 geographic areas called wards. Each ward is led by a ward councilor and a ward committee which is elected by the registered voters in the geographic area<sup>10</sup>. The primary function for the ward councilor and the ward committee is to be a formal communication channel between the community and the sub-council and Mayco council, and look after the interests of all the residents in their ward regardless of their political affiliation or if they are South African citizens or not (DPLG, 2005). The 111 wards are divided into 24 sub-councils whose responsibility it is to supervise the spending of CoCT ward allocations and make recommendations on any matter of the area it represents to the City’s Mayoral Committee (Mayco)<sup>11</sup>. Lastly, Mayco are the CoCT local cabinet made up by a group of 11 councilors appointed by the Mayor. Each councilor function as the Executive Director of one of the 11 different directorates within the CoCT<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/subcouncils/Pages/Wards.aspx> - Downloaded 10.08.2016

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/subcouncils/Pages/Home.aspx> - Downloaded 10.08.2016

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/mayor/Pages/Mayco.aspx> - Downloaded 10.08.2016

## **Ward system**

From around 2002, the administrative and political side of Cape Town experienced some major changes, as much of the political power became centralized through the Executive Mayoral system, and at a sub-city level, the ward councilors and ward committees have gradually increased their influence, becoming the state's main legitimate representatives on ground level (Millstein, 2008a). The ward committees were introduced in Cape Town on January 1, 2005 and were designed to bring governance closer to the people as well as offering participatory mechanisms of local democratic governance. Led by a ward-councilor, the ward committee is meant to function as,

“the formal communication channel between the community and the council, [...] [being] the formal channel in which communities can lodge their complaints” (DPLG, 2005).

The ward-committees main function is to be the communication channel for the entire community residing within the respective ward. Urban governance research done in different developing countries have shown that representation through ‘wards’ may have been a factor in increasing the voice of the urban poor as it would encourage local representation and accountability (Millstein, 2008a).

## **5.2 Case introduction: Green Park informal settlement**

Green Park is one of the oldest informal settlements in Cape Town, with the first people moving into the area just around the democratic transition of 1994. The settlement is located in the northwestern corner of the Driftsands Nature Reserve, adjacent to the large township, Delft, about 25 minutes outside of the Cape Town CBD.

Figures from 2006 show that Green Park occupies around 30 hectares of the 658 hectare nature reserve (CoCT, 2006a). However, we can assume that the area have grown some since then (Daraghma, 2009). The settlement consists of 268 different households with a total population of about 745 people (CORC, FEDUP, & ISN, 2014). Green Park differ from many other informal settlements in Cape Town in that it is quite spacious with a relatively low population density. The spacious environment has as its name implies, allowed several of the households to grow vegetables and plants in their own backyards as a form of subsistence farming (see figure 5.2).



*Figure 5.3: Subsistence farming in Green Park. Photo: Andreas Saaghus, August 2015*

Green Park has never been connected to any form of formal connections to the electrical grid. Granted, over the years there have been some illegal electrical connections but due to the settlement's quite isolated location, such connections have been difficult to achieve (CORC et al., 2014). As to the water-connections, there are several joint water-taps located around within the settlement. The water-taps have been introduced in the later years in line with the CoCT goal of water provision via one tap per 25 families within 200 meters (CoCT, 2014). The toilet-facilities in the community are secured through the provision of a shared or private 'porter-potty' to the individual households. The 'porter-potties' are portable, chemical toilets which is common in service areas where water-borne toilets cannot be installed. Officials from the Utility Services Directorate in the CoCT are responsible for emptying these twice a week.

### **5.2.1 History of Green Park and the Driftsands Nature Reserve**

The Driftsands has since the early 1970s been identified as an important area of nature conservation, and in 1983 it was officially proclaimed a Provincial Nature Reserve. Daraghma (2009) argues that aside from the conservational arguments of protecting the Cape Flats Dune

Strandveld vegetation, the proclamation served a political point as well. Being located between the three townships of Khayelitsha, Mfuleni and Belhar, Driftsands efficiently created a physical barrier, separating these and future townships from each other, preventing tensions between those who supported the apartheid government and those opposed to it. By laying an official claim to the land as a 'Nature Reserve' rather than earmarking it for low-income housing, the Cape Town city-government avoided further land invasions by African and colored communities into the area as well as securing a buffer zone between the white settlements and the cluster of 'non-white' townships in the Cape Flats (Daraghma, 2009). The Nature Reserve was throughout the 1980s under strict control by the government and there were no people residing there until the 1990s, when a 'wave' of refugees arrived surrounding townships. The majority of these first settlers originally lived in Crossroad, a contested township and squatter camp in the outskirts of Cape Town. In 1986, Crossroads experienced large riots after the apartheid governments started relocating people away from the area. The confrontations in Crossroad split many of the residents into different fractions in the years following the riots (Daraghma, 2009). The former appointed mayor of the Black Local Authority of Crossroad, Johnson Ngxobongwana was together with many of his supporters, chased away from the township after his supposed connections and support of the Apartheid government became known<sup>13</sup>. Unbeknownst to most people, Ngxobongwana had an 'unofficial' sponsorship from the apartheid government and the security forces, which he had used to eliminate his rivals during the struggles<sup>14</sup>. More than 100 families, all supporters of Ngxobongwana fled to Driftsands and settled in Sikhumbule, a township adjacent to the Los Angeles Informal Settlement (see figure 1.1). They resided in Sikhumbule for about four years, but some of the conflict continued as Ngxobongwana's connections to the apartheid regime did not go well along with the ANC-dominant residents in Sikhumbule (Daraghma, 2009). The conflict peaked in 1994 when Ngxobongwana decided that he would officially join the National Party. "That was when the trouble started" (GP resident #1, interview 16.09.15). Being chased away from yet another area, the Ngxobongwana-supporters decided to establish their own informal settlement previous unsettled in the north-east corner of the Nature Reserve – thus founding Green Park. In my interviews, I have found that most of the founders of Green Park were elders who reported that they had grown tired of the wars and conflicts in Crossroads and Sikhumbule (GP resident #3, Interview 16.09.15). Green Park then offered a fresh start in a literally 'green' environment of the Nature

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.sahistory.org.za/place/crossroads-township> – Downloaded 22.02.2016

<sup>14</sup> <http://africanhistory.about.com/od/apartheid/p/crossroads.htm> – Downloaded 23.02.2016

Reserve. The squatting within the nature-reserve naturally became a somewhat ‘hot potato’ for the CoCT and the Cape Nature. The environmentalist lobby wanted to demolish the new settlement and evict the dwellers, arguing for the need of conservation. However, the CoCT had no other place to transfer the residents to if evicted. This combined with Ngxobongwana contacts in the departments, notably with the then provincial MEC of Housing, Gerald Morkel who intervened and allowed them to stay (Community Leader, interview, 14.08.15). For the residents to be allowed to stay, certain terms were negotiated – notably that the settlement would stay at a given distance far away from surrounding townships and that no new shacks would be erected. Despite the agreement with the CoCT and Cape Nature, the Green Park continued to grow as more and more people moved in from the nearby townships of Delft and Khayelitsha, eventually also coming in from the Province of Eastern Cape where many had families. Johnson Ngxobongwana himself moved back to “the villages” in Eastern Cape in 2000.

Some argue that the Green Park residents’ former connection to the National Party and the subsequent lack of will to link up with the ANC after the dissolution of the National Party in 1997 resulted in a skepticism from the then ANC run City-government to intervene in settlement as they would have been expected to help the “ANC faithful” areas and informal settlement first (Daraghma, 2009).

### **5.2.2 Leadership in Green Park**

The current community leader (hereby referred to as the “Community Leader”) moved to Green Park in 1998 from the township of Langa, a large and densely populated area located closer to the Cape Town CBD. The Community Leader explained that he first heard of Green Park after taking part in a research project with the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation that studied the history of Crossroads. He then noted that he “grew fond” of the area and that he was generally curious to learn more about the settlement (Community Leader, interview, 14.08.15). His arrival and eventual rise to power came as a surprise to some of the other residents living in Green Park. When asking a long-time resident of the settlement about the Community Leaders arrival, he replied:

“He came here as a person doing research, just like you. And now all of a sudden – we see that he has become a resident here in the area. Who brought him here, we are not sure.” (Interview, GP resident #2, 16.09.15.).

In personal communication, the Community Leader explained that he established a friendship

with the former leader of the community, Mr. Ngxobongwana, over the grounds of possible familial connections in Eastern Cape, as well as both being of a Xhosa origin. This relationship, he explains, allowed him to settle and exert influence within the settlement. The Community Leader has been a central leader-figure in Green Park since the early 2000s. In 2004 he started what was called the Concerned Residents Association, which challenged the then leadership's cautious attitude toward the government and the CoCT, rather calling for a more direct and demanding approach toward the CoCT (Community Leader, interview, 14.08.15). Although being in charge of different groupings within the community, it was only in 2014 that he was "officially" elected as the *chairperson* of Green Park – though he refers to himself "as the community leader" (Community Leader, interview, 14.08.15).

It should be noted that being an "elected chairperson" or a "community leader" within an informal settlement does not mean that the elected person becomes a 'formally acknowledged' part of the local and municipal government. Moreover, it might be difficult to identify a legitimate representative for the community as the leadership may be claimed by several different groupings (Drivdal, 2014). The ISM Manager at CoCT (interview, 07.09.15) acknowledges as much when discussing the challenges that the CoCT faces when starting new projects in informal settlements:

"We don't know who to talk to. We just do not know. Because every second [resident] wants to be a leader in the informal settlement. So today, you talk to Mr. X. You explain to him everything, only tomorrow for someone else to come and say: 'no, no, no you should not talk to that guy - I am the leader!'"

As a way of avoiding these questions of legitimacy in Green Park, the CoCT had to establish a Project Steering Committee (PSC), as is in accordance with the national policies for upgrading and housing projects in informal settlements. The main function of a PSC is to "play a vital role as liaison between the community and the developer" (CoCT, 2006b, p. 2). In Green Park, the function of the PSC was to represent the community as a whole in all their dealings with the CoCT for the duration of the various interventions (Kühne, 2015). The election of a PSC is overseen and secured by a CoCT official and all residents in the community over the legal age are eligible to cast their vote. In the 2014 PSC-election in Green Park, eight people were elected into the PSC, including the Community Leader. The CoCT official #1 (interview, 15.09.15) noted that him being elected was "fortunate" as the City then could justify "approaching him all the time". The Community Leader were consequently named as the PSC Chairperson, giving him power of relaying information both from the community to the CoCT and *vice versa*.

### **5.2.3 Main factions within the Green Park community**

Over the last few years, community dynamics in Green Park have largely been shaped by two main factions fighting for leadership positions. Obviously, seeing that the settlement is quite small, the distinction is not a clear-cut one that includes all residents in the settlement. Nevertheless, as a way of simplification and accepting that people's allegiance to these two factions are not clear-cut, we can identify two factions which I have labeled as the "Crossroad Generation" and the "Second Generation". The former group is composed of the supporters of Johnson Ngxobongwana and the National Party. They were the first settlers and founders of Green Park, and argue that this should give them the right to lead in the settlement and decide the road ahead. The latter, "Second Generation" group are comprised of people who settled in Green Park at a later date. Many of these came from different townships in and around Cape Town as well as from Province of Eastern-Cape. The Crossroad Generation and Ngxobongwana held leadership positions in Green Park for many years. But after Ngxobongwana's departure in 2000 the power balance slowly started to shift. Today there are indications that would suggest that the Crossroad Generation have lost some of their former influence within the community, slowly becoming outnumbered as more and more new residents move in. Moreover, the growing influence of the Community Leader need also be considered a factor of the power-shift. From the mid-2000s he emerged as the leader of the Second Generation in the settlement.

The disagreements between the different factions in Green Park has never resulted in any form of large violent confrontations or made it unbearable for either of the two factions. However it, has created an environment where certain members of the community feel bypassed or left without a voice. With his growing influence, the Community Leader have received more and more critique from his adversaries. A recurring accusation has been that he has helped bring in a number of new residents into GP, selling them plots that he did not own. This, the critiques argue – has been done despite the "gentleman's agreement" from 1994 that the Crossroad Generation-leadership made with the CoCT and the Cape Nature, which allowed them to stay in Green Park on the condition that no new residents moved in.

"We have to remember that this is a nature reserve and we cannot overpopulate the area. Yet we see people getting settled in to the area, and the [Community Leader] is the cause of bringing these in". (GP resident #2, interview: 17.04.15).

The fear among several of the Crossroad generation is that these disagreements will escalate into a larger conflict as time passes on:

“Since [Community Leader] came here, he started selling plots to people - plots that don’t even belong to him. There are lots of people that have just come in. Those are the things that we think are holding us back from the development of this area. These are the things that we foresee will bring conflict. Conflict that we left behind in Crossroads.” (GP resident #3, interview: 16.09.15).

Even though some of these accusations are repeated in interviews with certain of the government- and NGO-officials, there have been no juridical process to label them as false or true. Moreover, when asked about these accusations, the Community Leader and others in the Second Generation rejected them as false and groundless. According to the Community Leader himself, Green Park is a peaceful community where most all have a wish of going in the same direction, and that only certain members from the Crossroad Generation are unhappy with losing power,

“When I look back at the time when they were leading [the Crossroad Generation], and the time now when we are leading, you can see there is a difference. Something is happening now. When they led, nothing was happening.” (GP resident #4, interview, 19.09.2015).

Regardless of whether or not the critique toward the Second Generation and Community Leader is true, it does show that the Green Park community is not necessarily as united and frictionless as the Community Leader claim it is. Moreover, this also stand in stark contrast to the picture painted by a CoCT official speaking of Green Park:

“it is not community dynamics at all [...] It is one of the best community dynamics that I’ve seen. [...] He [The Community Leader] is the leadership chairperson and they all listen to him and he organizes everyone and has the last word” (CoCT Official, Jordhus-Lier interview, August 2014)<sup>15</sup>

If these power dynamics were as central as we see, it would also call into question the CoCT’s usage of the Community Leader as the only “gatekeeper” into Green Park and communicator to the settlement.

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<sup>15</sup> This interview was conducted by David Jordhus-Lier for the CLIMWAYS project. The informant is a planner working within the Human Settlements Directorate.

## 5.3 Flooding in Green Park

Located right next to a wetland, the residents in Green Park have regularly been exposed to floods and unsanitary stagnant water, in and around their homes. Most of the informal dwellings in Green Park are constructed with materials such as corrugated iron, scrap metal, plastic or planks, and are often referred to as ‘shacks’<sup>16</sup>. The standard of the dwellings varies from relatively large ones with two or more rooms and woodwork or linoleum carpets on the floor to one-roomed structures with only hard-packed soils and plastics as flooring. Naturally, in housing situations like this, flooding is a huge challenge. In the wet winter months from June to August, the flooding usually comes either as ‘flash floods’ where water runs fast through the area after heavy rain; or up through the ground as the adjacent wetland become saturated, leading houses to be flooded from within. Generally, the latter type of flooding is more difficult to deal with seeing it is not possible to control the torrents in the same way as one would with the ‘flash floods’.

### 5.3.1 Platforms

The recurring flooding in Green Park has laid limitations to the everyday activities and possibilities of the residents in the settlement. In previous years, the problem of flooding in the settlement was handled when officials from the Department of Disaster Risk Management at the CoCT arrived in Green Park, pumping water and providing milling and sheets for the residents. Though somewhat helpful considering the worst of the flooding, these interventions did not offer a sustainable solution to the challenges in Green Park, especially since the Disaster Risk Management often were unable to come with immediate response. Finally, in 2014, after much pressure and protests from a number of actors, the CoCT deemed the conditions that residents in Green Park had to live under were unacceptable, and subsequently began what I have labeled the “short-term” project which is the construction of platforms as a flood relief measure. The planning and construction of these platforms are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

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<sup>16</sup> Note that for some ‘shacks’ will have negative connotations or be of a derogatory art.

## **5.4 Consequences of the location within the Driftsands Nature Reserve**

The physical location of the Green Park informal settlement within the borders of Driftsands Nature Reserve is important to emphasize as it has had large political and bureaucratic implications of what have been done in the settlement. Driftsands Nature Reserve is owned by the Province of Western Cape and is run and maintained by the provincial conservation institution, CapeNature. As all other nature reserves in South Africa, Driftsands is protected under the Protected Areas Act of 2003 (Republic of South Africa, 2004, p. 34). The act states that any change or activities started within a nature reserve must be approved and given the 'Power of Attorney' from the nature reserve's management authority. However, while the land that the Green Park dwellers reside on is a *provincial* responsibility, the wellbeing and basic service provision for the residents is *municipal* responsibility (RSA, 1996). As such, every time the CoCT wish to introduce any form of work or activities to improve the living conditions for the Green Park resident, they have to get the proper approval from Province and CapeNature as they are the owners and custodians of the land which the change will take place.

This need for a provincial approval on all City-projects within Green Park is not sustainable in the long run as it puts yet another layer of bureaucracy and regulation on an already often slow-going process. As such, the CoCT and Province have since 2006 been negotiating a deal where piece of land which holds the informal settlement of Green Park will be transferred from Province to the CoCT. The hope is that this that by transferring the land, the CoCT can initiate more substantial plans of upgrading and formalization in the settlement.

### **5.4.1 Deproclamation and transfer of Green Park**

The land cannot be formally 'transferred' to the CoCT before the selected area have been 'deproclaimed' as a nature reserve, thereby not falling under the Protected Areas Act of 2003. However, the process of deproclaiming the area have already lasted for close to 10 years and is still not completed. For the land to be deproclaimed, the custodians of the nature reserve, CapeNature must also give their final approval. There have however been some disagreements as to where to draw up the new borders of the reserve as CapeNature have been hesitant to "give up" land to the City. This is mostly due to the fact that the Driftsands Nature Reserve is one of the few places where the endangered vegetation type Cape Flats Dune Strandveld grow. This unique vegetation type is endemic to the coastal areas of Cape Town and Cape Flats and thrives

in wetlands and close to rivers such as the Kuils River which runs through the Driftsands Nature Reserve (CapeNature, 2011). The environmentalists (colloquially referred to as the “greenies” city officials in interviews), allude to the fact that the biggest threat to the Dune Strandveld is the continuous urban sprawl of illegal settlements within the protected areas of the vegetation. In an informational pamphlet, CapeNature (2011, p. 2) note that,

“[a] large portion of the Driftsands Nature Reserve has, for example, been illegally settled on and the vegetation is already degraded. Dumping and other illegal activities have to be controlled”.

The extract gives a clear indication to CapeNature’s concern toward the informal settlements within the borders of the nature reserve. At the same time, they are very much aware of the fact that dwellers living inside the nature reserve cannot simply be evicted from the area where they have stayed for over 20 years, without a proper plan of where to relocate them. There have also been a growing realization that the informal dwellers within Driftsands are not going to disappear but rather grow. Accepting this, CapeNature argued that it was necessary to transfer the Green Park community out of the nature reserve and thereby securing that no new informal structures would arise, as there new were seemingly more and more people were moving in. Speaking of the informal dwellers in the nature reserve, the Conservation Manager in Driftsands (interview, 19.08.15) noted “people will get married, they get better jobs and they move out [of Driftsands]. But their structures remain”. This was a worry as CapeNature already had invested a lot in educating and informing residents of the importance of conserving and protecting the environment. New residents would then mean that they would have to start their informational campaigns all over again, exhausting the resources available. He then continued to discuss the prospect of a formalized Green Park:

“These areas are going to be formalized and that is what we want because it brings with it stability. [...] That development is going to bring all sorts of things that this community currently does not have access to. Hopefully that will sort of mitigate some of the pressures that the reserve is getting as a result of the areas being in the state that they are at the moment. [...] So we are for the development, hence we have said yes to the development. We have not objected to the plans. It is just where you draw the line – whether it makes sense to us.” (Conservation Manager, interview, 19.08.15).

My findings suggest that the deproclamation and transferal of Green Park is not far away. In his interview, the Conservation Manager ensured that the City, Province and CapeNature had reached a compromise on the border issue and that the plans for starting building fences on the

boarders of the nature reserve was already underway. The fences have an important conservational benefit as they will prevent further dwellings being raised within the new borders of nature reserve. Speaking with the Provincial Official (interview, 11.09.15) responsible of the Green Park case, she noted that the only thing that remained before the area was to be deproclaimed as a nature reserve and subsequently transferred to the CoCT, was for the documents to be signed by the Western Cape Premier, Helen Zille<sup>17</sup>.

## **5.5 ‘Long-term’ plan: Formalization**

Formal housing has been promised resident in Green Park for many years. Already in 2006, the CoCT initiated a project group to work on the ‘Driftsands Human Settlement Project’ (DHSP) which encompasses the two informal settlements of Green Park and Los Angeles as well as some of the settlements lying just outside the nature reserve. According to the Project Manager of the DHSP, CoCT official #2 (interview, 14.09.15), the project, if realized, will encompass over 3000 housing opportunities, made up of mortar brick housing, fully serviced with infrastructure, electricity, water, sanitation and lastly, the security of tenure for the residents. It is important to note that the plans of formalizing Green Park and the surrounding areas are only in the in the early planning stages and still far from being realized on-ground. They are in this thesis therefore referred to as the CoCT’s ‘long-term’ plan for the Green Park.

“You know if you want to build 3000 housing opportunities in a nature reserve – then it is a complicated process” (City official #2, interview, 14.09.15).

The quote above is from the interview with the Project Manager of the City’s long-term plan, and illustrates clearly the slow-going process of housing bureaucracy in the city. The planning for a formalization initially started in 2006, when the CCA Environmental – a local firm of environmental consultants, were appointed by the CoCT to do an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the projected DHSP. An EIA is a report that outlines and measure the anticipated effects a proposed project will have on the environment. As Green Park is located in a Nature Reserve, an EIA needed to be undertaken in order to comply with the regulations promulgated in the Environmental Conservation Act of 1989, no. 73 (CCA Environmental (Pty) Ltd, 2010). The EIA was quite complex as it accounted for how formalization would affect both the biophysical and the socio-economic environment in Driftsands.

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<sup>17</sup> Note that in the time of writing, Green Park is yet to be transferred to the CoCT (September 2016).

The EIA report found that the proposed DHSP development plan offered a good solution to the current situation. Firstly, it supported a number of the basic human rights listed in the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution, such as "...the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health and human dignity" (CCA Environmental (Pty) Ltd, 2010, p. 18). The report found that the provision of housing, services and community facility to the informal settlements within the nature reserve would be fundamental in achieving the constitutional basic rights. As to the affects that the DHSP would potentially have on the environment, the EIA found that,

"the proposed development would also create an opportunity to protect and conserve the remainder of the Driftsands Nature Reserve for future generations, which represents a significant social benefit [...] In addition, creation of employment and business opportunities during the construction phases is likely to represent a significant positive impact" (CCA Environmental (Pty) Ltd, 2010, p. 18).

The report did however point to two potential risks associated with the proposed development. Firstly, as with all formalization projects, there would be a risk of an uncontrolled influx of people into the area developed as they search for serviced land and housing opportunities. This could potentially result in conflict with the current residents of Green Park and Los Angeles informal settlement. Secondly, as the poverty and unemployment rate in the informal areas in questions are quite high, the residents may not be able to pay for the houses and services provided by the CoCT. This may result in houses being rented out, the construction of backyard dwellings on the property or in the worst case – the establishment of new informal settlements within the nature reserve (CCA Environmental (Pty) Ltd, 2010; CORC et al., 2014).

Despite these risks, the overall conclusion from the EIA was that the proposed formalization project is something that would result in high positive social benefit. At the same time, the report emphasize that the realization of such an extensive formalization project (assuming that all necessary approvals are obtained), will take years before being realized, resulting in the residents having to continue to live in challenging circumstances while waiting for the long-term plans to be initiated. As a way of dealing with this dilemma, the EIA recommended that the CoCT,

"consider temporary electrification of both Green Park and Los Angeles in the interim, as well as repair the existing access roads. The provision of temporary electrification would create a more humane and dignified living environment until such time as the project is implemented (assuming it is approved)" (CCA Environmental (Pty) Ltd, 2010, p. 19).

These arguments for a short-term relief, while waiting for the long-term solution becomes highly relevant if put into a timeframe. Already in 2001, CapeNature went to Province with a request to have the residents in Green Park accommodated elsewhere. This request did not go through and the case was handed over to the city who in 2006, as previously mentioned – initiated the EIA process. The report came out in 2010 yet in 2015, five years later, the land has still not been transferred and the formalization is far from being implemented (CoCT official 2, interview, 14.09.15; Province official, interview, 11.09.15). The recurring argument within the CoCT when asked of seemingly continuous delays, has been that they have just enforced the official city policy and that the directives and politics that come with it takes time.

“I mean if you look at the time-frame you would probably ask yourself how long have you been working on this and you might think – ‘nah..’ [...] It has taken a long time, but at the same time it needed to be a very solid and a sound environmental impact assessment process that we needed to follow. That was a requirement. [...] So I definitely see it as a success. [...] It might not seem like it. When you look at it, you might get the impression that it’s been dragging along. But it is for a reason. It is a very complicated process.” (City official #2, interview, 14.09.15)

Finally, in 2014 an emergency relief was introduced in Green Park intended to try to deal with the immediate challenges the residents in the community faced, as stipulated in the EIA report. In the section below I account for the CoCT’ ‘short-term’ plans.

## **5.6 ‘Short-Term’ plan: Platforms**

### **5.6.1 Introducing platforms as a flood protective measure**

Flooding is and have been a recurring problem for the residents living in Green Park for many years. Prior to 2014, no major intervention had been made to sustainably relieve the residents in the longer term, yet the CoCT did provide the residents with various forms of emergency relief. The Disaster Risk Reduction department in the CoCT have for instance been in charge of pumping out water in the most exposed areas and provided sand and milling as ways of lifting the levels inside the structure and to put around the sides of the structures to avoid water running through. Moreover, there have been several relocations of residents within the settlement in an attempt to get the most exposed households away from the flood. However, the CoCT Eastern Regional Office who are in charge of the day-to-day communication with the residents in Green Park, have over the last few years reported that no matter where they move

households within the settlement, they would experience flooding at the new place a later stage. The Regional Coordinator noted that, “[y]ear after year we found that, ‘ey, the people that we relocated last year is this year now also affected by flooding” (interview, 21.09.15).

The worsened conditions have led the residents in the settlement to become more vocal against the CoCT and Province – demanding action for a more sustainable solution to the problem of flooding. The protests and demands did become especially evident as the community started mobilizing under the leadership of the current community leader around 2013 (Regional Coordinator, interview, 21.09.15).

In the CoCT offices, City officials were aware of the challenges that the Green Park community faced and their constitutional right “to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being” (§24 a) and, “the right to have access to adequate housing” (§26.1) (RSA, 1996). However, failing to reach a deal with the Western Cape Province and CapeNature concerning the question of land-ownership, the CoCT noted that there was little that they were able to do on site without the ownership of the land. This explanation was not well received by the new leadership in Green Park, (the ‘Second Generation’), who around 2013 felt that they were being overlooked and demanded action rather than empty promises. The Community Leader, a well-connected man in the political sphere, used or threatened to use his contacts in the politics and the media as a way of gaining public attention of the current situation in Green Park and ‘shame’ the CoCT into action. At one point, he told CoCT officials that if they did not initiate any flood protective measures within a certain period he would “bury” Green Park,

“[they were] going to have a mourning period and to do a mock funeral and invite the press over like three nights, Friday, Saturday, Sunday. And they were going to have a coffin there and then [the Community Leader] was going to put in Green Park in there and light all these candles and so on.” (NGO informant #1, interview, 19.08.15).

In February 2013, the Community Leader and a group of his neighbors did a 30 km protest march from Green Park to the CoCT Civic Centre in order to show “how frustrated Green Park residents were with their living conditions, including regular winter floods” (Cape Argus, 02.12.2013). The fact that the Community Leader did the walk despite having to use crutches (a result of a gunshot in the 1980s), resulted in much coverage in the media as well as increased pressure on the CoCT to provide *something* to the residents in the settlement (Community Leader, personal communication, 12.09.15).

Early in 2014, following the activism and inquiries from the Green Park residents to the CoCT, the then director of Urbanisation within the Informal Settlement Directorate agreed to meet with the leadership in Green Park to hear their plight. This research suggest that this specific meeting was especially important in getting the short-term project up and running *despite* the long-term challenges outlined above. Several of the informants argue that the Urbanisation Director personally played a vital role in pushing the short-term relief of Green Park forward. The Regional coordinator (interview, 21.09.15) laid additional importance to the role of the then Director of Urbanisation:

“I think that actually kind of ignited the whole. So yes. There may of course have been other factors, but I think that the main thing that really kind of lit up the fire for this whole platform-thing to take place was that meeting with [the Director of Urbanisation]”.

Seeing that the current situation in Green Park was seen as being unsustainable, the Urbanisation Director gave the go-ahead to initiate a relief program while the residents were waiting for the long-term formalization to commence. Officials from the ISM’s Engineering Services Office were appointed to come up with an actual flood mitigation strategy. After several field visits and meetings with the community and community leadership, the engineering planning group decided on launching an ‘Emergency Relief Project’ where large gravel platforms would be constructed to raise the ground level in the flood-exposed areas of the settlement, thus offering an interim relief for the households in Green Park.

### **5.6.2 Planning and preparing for platforms**

Before anything could be done to relieve the residents in Green Park of the flooding, there were a number of boxes that needed to be ticked off. First of all, the Engineering Department’s project group needed to get the ‘Power of Attorney’ from the Province of Western Cape and Cape Nature as they are respectively the owners and custodians of the land. Secondly, because the project would take place within a wetland, the CoCT also had to get a ‘water-use license’ which is issued by the National Department of Water Affairs (DWA). This is done as a measure of protecting South Africa’s scarce water resources which are under increasing pressure. Finally, seeing that Green Park is located within a provincial Nature Reserve, all applications to the

DWA would have to go through the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA). The involvement of different department and directorates on both national, provincial and municipal level highlight some of the difficulty to get projects approved in line with the legislation.

After continuous pressure and work from the Engineering Office and the leadership in the Human Settlement directorate, all of the required licenses and go-aheads were eventually given. Yet, the NGO informant #1 (interview, 19.08.15) points out the somewhat ironic fact that the project was an *emergency* response for flood mitigation, yet, “it had already been 8 months and they were still filing paperwork with DWA and so on – so they [CoCT] were under a lot of pressure from the residents”.

After several field visits and meeting with the local community and community leadership in Green Park, in January 2015 it was decided to construct large gravel platforms raising the ground-level of the most flood-vulnerable areas in the settlement. The hope was that the platforms would offer a more sustainable solution to the risk of flooding than the previous ad hoc solutions that the Disaster Risk Department had been used. When the platform project first started there were plans to build six platforms, however due to funding restrictions and various challenges with the community dynamics, the number of platforms was reduced to three. The three large gravel platforms were constructed in such a way that they raised the ground level of the flooded areas so that the dwellings could be re-raised and built above the water table and thereby avoid water coming up through the ground floor. The material that was used is called G5. G5 is a hard, almost concrete-like substance which becomes extremely hard when compacted. This is useful as the flood water will not be able to sip up through the floor, nor allowing rain to sink through. To avoid large ponds of stagnant water on the platforms after rainfall, all platforms are constricted with a small inclination toward the one side – leading the rain- and excess water to run down off the edge. On the largest of the three platforms there have been installed small trenches in which the water is supposed to run through, exemplified in figure 5.4, below. The challenge here is that the trench often are not being cleaned of dirt and garbage leading it to not properly function as the water stagnates.



*Figure 5.4*  
Platform trench  
Photo: Andreas Saaghus  
(August 2015).

Before the construction could begin, a proper layout of the settlement had to be done as a way of seeing which areas and households were most exposed to the flooding, and who needed to be relocated onto the platforms. In the initial layout, 78 households were identified as needing to relocate onto the projected *six* platforms, yet since this was scaled down to three, the CoCT engineering group had a major problem as, “we still had the same number of people affected. So we had less space and more families to accommodate” (Regional Coordinator, interview, 21.09.15).

To be able to accommodate all 78 households on the three platforms the engineering group decided that these would be substantially larger than in Green Park compared to other informal settlements where the technology of platforms had been tried out. Note here that the platform project in Green Park was within the CoCT labeled as a “pilot-project”, meaning that it was a very new project. Because the platform technology as a flood mitigation strategy was

largely untested within the CoCT, it meant that there was a major lack of knowledge and foresight as to the possible challenges that the platforms of this size could face (Kühne, 2015). NGO informant #1 played a large consulting role in the initial drawing phase of the platforms as well as the re-blocking<sup>18</sup> of these. In interviews he expressed his concern to how the engineering office in CoCT had chosen to approach the challenges of flooding in Green Park, as well as to the way in which they had constructed the platforms.

“The advantage there was that the platforms [in the informal settlement of Flamingo<sup>19</sup>] were not the size of the kind of platforms that you have in Green Park, which is like half a football stadium - absolutely mad!” (NGO informant #1, interview, 19.05.15).

Because of the large size the platforms, especially Platform A (see, **figure 5.5**), it takes considerably more time for the rainwater to run off. Kühne (2015) writes that the water often collects in different depressions due to the residents digging holes on the platform surface. The digging was done so that the sediment which is collected could be put up against the sides of the structures on the platforms so to prevent water entering from the floor under the sides of the structures. Action like these reflect the often poor understanding and knowledge of how the platforms work, as well as the inappropriate buildings strategies that residents use. Moreover

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<sup>18</sup>‘Re-blocking’ refers to the reconfiguration and the reposition of a cluster of shacks with an intention of increasing the availability for the provision of basic services by creating better access to the streets. The idea is that this will create a safer-living environment for residents in informal settlements. (<https://im-pactdesignhub.org/2015/02/24/re-blocking-in-cape-towns-informal-settlements/>) – Downloaded 12.01.16

<sup>19</sup> Informal settlement in the outskirts of Cape Town where the NGO, CORC used similar platform technology, but platforms here were much smaller than the ones in Green Park.

they show lack of proper City monitoring and service provision and a general lack of communication and guidance between the different actors. This is discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Seven.

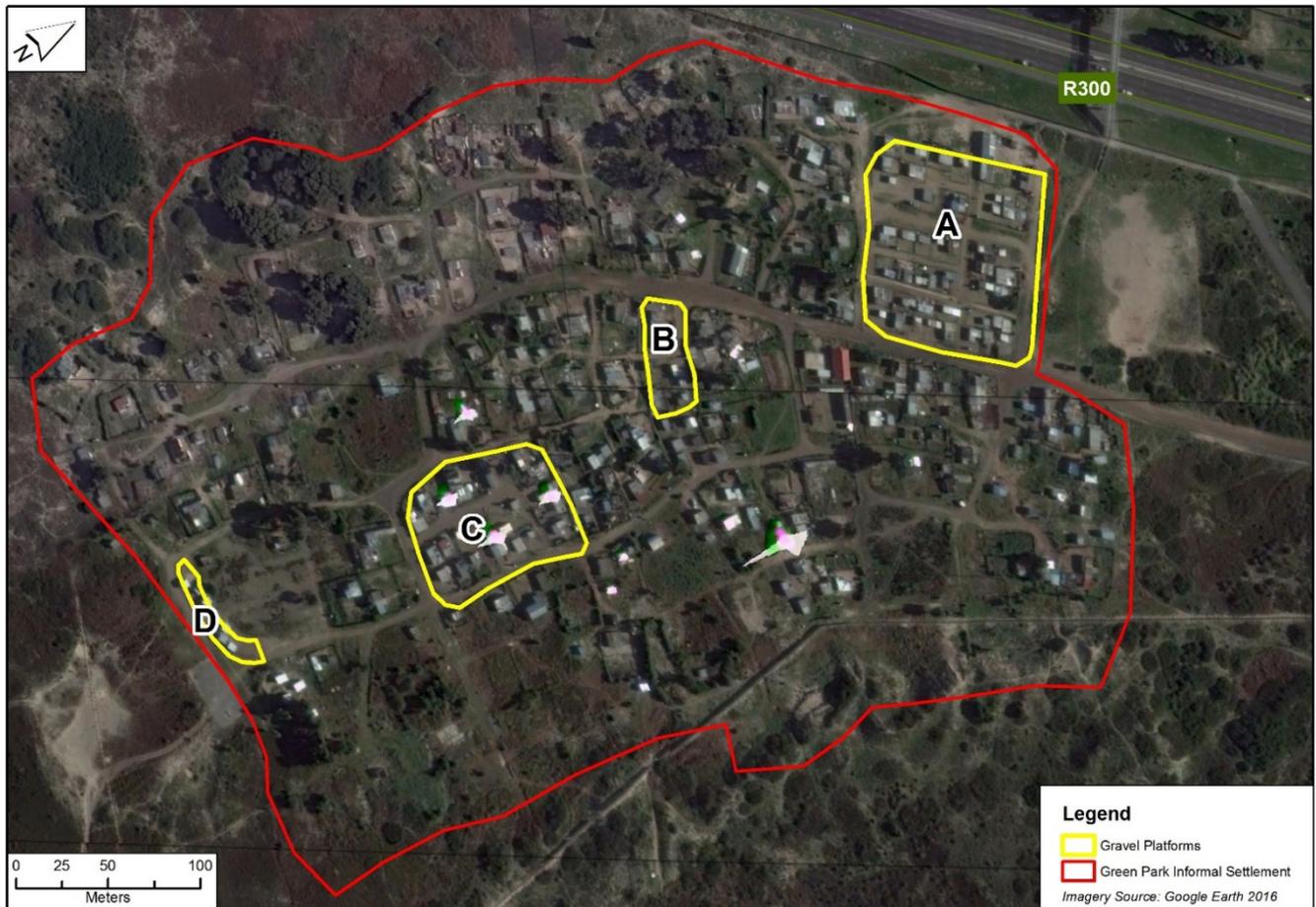


Figure 5.5: Gravel platform in Green Park, A-D.. Source Eduktion, Durban

### 5.6.3 Constructing platforms

The physical construction of the platforms started in February 2015. Using the drawings and layouts from the engineering group, private contractors raised the platforms. The construction of the platform was largely done by heavy machinery, meaning that it was not a particularly labor intensive process. Nevertheless, some local labor were used for various tasks such as digging ditches alongside the roads for draining purposes or to help secure the platforms with bricks, as shown in figure 5.6.



*Figure 5.6: Picture of finished platform (C), Green Park. Photo: Brooke Kühne, April 2015*

Because the platforms were placed on ground where there already were housing, these structures had to be taken down and the material would be stored away until the platforms were finished. As way of providing the relocated households with a temporary home during the construction phase, the CoCT constructed a small platform called, a ‘temporary relocation area’ (TRA), depicted as “Platform C” in **figure 5.5**. The idea was that the relocated residents could move onto the TRA while waiting for the large platforms to be finalized. Yet in fact, no households chose to move onto the TRA despite the standing offer to do so. The Community Leader explained that a large portion of the residents were reluctant to move onto the TRA. This was mainly because it was located all the way in back of the settlement; but also because many did not understand or believe that it would be just a temporary space, thinking they would not be allowed to move back as soon as the other platforms were finished (Kühne, 2015). Also, because the construction of the platforms only took about two weeks from start to finish, most of the relocated families chose to stay with neighbors or relatives (Scott & Mahlanza, 2015). Despite not being used as intended, the Community Leader hopes that the TRA-platform can be used as a social development and business area. He even jokingly refers to the area as “Green

Park's Waterfront<sup>20</sup> (personal communication, 12.09.15). The hope is that this area could potentially become a generator for income for the community.

#### **5.6.4 Relocating Residents**

Despite the seemingly positive benefits that the platforms would offer in terms of flood-relief, many of the residents in Green Park were very hesitant to move up on to them. The Community Leader notes that there were different reasons for this. Some were skeptical to the platforms because the hard surface of the G5 meant that it would not be possible to grow a garden, reducing the opportunities to be somewhat self-sufficient with food. Others were worried they would not be able to move back into the settlement if they agreed to move away for the duration of the construction work. In this lies the general skepticism and distrust of the government and CoCT, who granted had done very little in Green Park in previous years. One resident voiced his concern with the platform in that they were “not introduced to the community in a rightful way. It just came, it was done and the community was not properly approached” (GP resident #2, interview, 16.09.15).

The reluctance to move onto the platforms among several of the households posed a big challenge for the city's realization of the platform project. Forced removal of the refusing households was not an alternative as it would have been both difficult and time consuming. Moreover, the protective measures of informal settlements stipulated in the constitution and the PIE-act, would have made such an intervention bordering illegal (see section 2.2). Nevertheless, it was in the interest of the CoCT to ‘be on the same team’ with the GP-residents, as it would have been practically impossible to do anything in the community without the local support.

To give the residents an incentive to move onto the platforms despite their hesitation, the CoCT and the community leadership brought forward the electrification agenda. The community had previously been informed that Green Park could not be electrified as long as they were vulnerable to flooding, but if the flooding vulnerability was reduced then it would be possible to be connected to the electrical grid. The argument from the CoCT and the community leadership then became: ‘the faster people moved onto the platforms, the faster the settlement would be electrified’. As the issue of electricity for a majority of the GP-residents is the most pressing need, most all of flood-affected residents chose to move onto the platforms despite their previous hesitations.

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<sup>20</sup> The name ‘Waterfront’ is a reference to the recently developed high-end shopping area of the Cape Town harbor.

Interestingly, when speaking to the Project Manager of the platform project, CoCT official #1 (interview 15.09.15) she noted that from the CoCT's standpoint, electrification of Green Park was seen as an entirely separate project and that the whole 'platform project' was purely a flood relief measure. Her comments would suggest that the Green Park-residents' perception that the construction of the platforms will lead to electricity is not necessarily correct, arguably making the community accept the platforms on the wrong grounds. I discuss this claim further in the next chapter.

The three platforms were finalized just before the winter of 2015, and the households that were to move onto the platforms were assigned different plots on the platform to set up their structures. Today the engineering group and most all of the CoCT officials proclaim that the platform project has been a major success. Yet in the community, many are not as enthusiastic. On the question of whether or not the platforms are working, a resident living on them replied:

“Well, it is working like, people are in a better place. But the challenge is when it rains, the surface is too hard so it is difficult to protect oneself from the water. Especially for the disabled” (Interview, GP resident# 4, 17.09.15).

The problem of flash flooding coming into the housing structures alludes to the fact that the CoCT did not have sufficient funding to provide proper top-structures to the people located on the platforms. This is discussed further later in the chapter.

### **5.6.5 Funding for Platforms**

The platform project is officially labeled as an 'interim emergency relief'. This means that the money provided does not come from the Integrated Development Plan's (IDP) budget, the plan for how the CoCT intend to use their budget for the next five years. Funding for the platform project came instead from the Department of Environment, whose council first had to pass a resolution to approve the funding plans (Scott & Mahlanza, 2015). The project was eventually given ZAR4 million from the CoCT. This was the maximum amount that could be given before the project would have to go through a tender process, which again would mean additional time spent before the construction of the platforms could take place. Avoiding this, the CoCT was able to respond to the issues of flooding at a much faster rate. The Project Manager, CoCT official #1, explained that:

“I think the only reason to why this has gone faster is because of the term tenure. We did not have to go to tenure so the procurement process was not there. [...] Also we did not appoint a consultant team to do design and all of that. I just call for everything myself and try to get everything going as soon as possible” (interview, 15.09.15).

The problem of not going through a tender process was of course that the budget was quite limited. The ZAR4 million had to cover both the planning and construction of the platforms, as well as help relocating and restructuring the different households moving away from the area and later onto the platforms. The major consequence of the small budget was as previously mentioned the reduction of the number of platforms from six to three (excluding the TRA).

### **5.6.6 Top-structures on the platforms**

The funding available did not include the provision of new top-structures for the relocated residents. This meant that the households that were projected to be moved onto the platforms had to dismantle their current shacks and dwellings so that this could be moved and rebuilt onto their allocated plots on the platforms. For many this was a challenge as their dwellings throughout the years had been affected by the regular winter floods as well as poor maintenance. As a result many dwellings are dilapidated or in such a poor state that it would not be possible to raise them again if dismantled. Obviously, this became an issue when they were to be relocated. Admittedly, the CoCT did offer each household five corrugated sheets and one plastic sail however, this was not nearly enough to build a proper dwelling.

NGO informant #1 (interview, 19.08.15) noted that the CoCT’s unilateral focus on building platforms for flood mitigation was a problematic, as: “you do not have any good solution for actual housing and top-structures - you are just giving them a platform”.

To try to deal avoid the issue of ‘only giving a platform’, the Director of Urbanisation suggested that the Green Park community should speak with the Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC), which is an NGO that the CoCT have been collaborating with on settlement upgrading for almost 15 years. CORC is affiliated to Slum Dwellers International and emphasizes community-driven in-situ approaches. Initially, CORC wanted to launch a full-scale ‘re-blocking’ (see 5.6.2) of Green Park, however the CoCT insisted on keeping ambitions to a minimum.

“[CORC] immediately came up with fancy re-blocking layout for the whole of Green Park, but we said that we are not going to do that. We are only going to deal with the emergency, people who are flooded. We are not going to re-block because of the new development coming. Because that will be wasteful expenditure to go and do work there that is not necessary for flood mitigation – humanitarian flood mitigation. That will be wasteful expenditure.” (ISM manager, interview, 07.09.15)

Eventually, CORC made a deal with the community leadership in which they would offer subsidized top-structures and technical support to the residents that were to move onto the platforms, on the condition that each of the households themselves payed about 10 - 20 % of the total cost. CORC’s principles of ‘self-help’ when building the top-structures met a mixed response in the Green Park community:

“The plan was to for everyone that was on a platform who wants new material, they could save their 10 % and be able to contribute. Their 20% in fact. One, communities they don’t believe in the notion of ‘why should be pay for those structures, why should we be saving when municipalities will relocate us and give us shacks for free?’. And we were saying, ‘we are not the municipality. You can have that conversation with the municipality and tell them to stop on doing the platforms until they are ready to provide you with a shack to go on top of it. OR, you could be relieved from the flooding and take what is there and start contributing’” (NGO informant #2, interview, 11.09.15)

In the end, some community members agreed to invest in the CORC structures and a small number of these houses were raised on the platform. However, after a short while issues arose as to whom were entitled to receive these top-structures. A wish from many in Green Park was that the CORC structures would be offered to all residents in the settlement regardless of whether they were living on a platform or not. The Community Leader (interview, 14.08.15) noted “...now you had a situation where the people that most wanted the structures were people living outside the platforms”. Seeing that CORC had a limited budget going into Green Park, they did not have the opportunity to go beyond the original deal of only providing structures to the households that due to their location in flooded areas had to move onto the platforms.

“the thing is - we are not in the business of providing subsidized structures. We are in the business of providing support to communities. And the resources are so many and the needs are like the size of an elephant.” (NGO informant #1, interview, 19.08.15).

Due to the growing disagreements with the community and community leadership, CORC eventually decided to pull out prior to the finalization of the original project. As a consequence there are just a handful of CORC structures on the platforms today.

## 5.7 Electrification of Green Park

A major point in the case of Green Park is the discussion of whether or not it will be electrified, and when this potential electrification will take place. As previously mentioned, Green Park has never been connected to any form of formal or illegal electrical grids, which for the residents is a major concern. The lack of lighting have resulted in criminals and ‘gangsters’ from neighboring townships and settlements using Green Park as a refuge place when hiding out from police or rivaling groups. As such, the electrification of the settlement is the number one priority within the community and community leadership. An electrified settlement would offer a far greater sense of security for the residents; be of help in the daily life; and increase the possibility of starting various forms of businesses and livelihoods within the settlement.

Despite the strong community engagement, the electrification has been long coming due to a number of constraints both on the physical and on a bureaucratic level. Green Park is by the CoCT and Eskom (the national energy provider), identified to be located below a 50-year flood line and too close to a wetland. A natural consequence of this is as we have seen in the previous section, that large portions of the settlement is in danger of being flooded every winter. As such, the Eskom official in charge of the planning and coordination of the electrification of Green Park, stated that,

“We are planning to electrify the area, but we could not electrify it as it is because some of the shacks lies in wetlands. By [our] standards, we cannot electrify people that are in wetlands” (interview 10.09.15).

By introducing the large gravel platforms in the flood exposed areas of the informal settlement, the CoCT reduced the damages and dangers caused by flooding. Creating a flood-free environment on the platforms would seemingly pave the way for Green Park to be electrified, at least in the interim.

However, the electrification of the settlement have proven difficult to implement due to policy and bureaucratic constraints. It is the National Department of Energy (DoE) that would fund a potential electrification of Green Park, and as such their policies must be adhered. The DoE’s policy guidelines on the electrification of ‘unproclaimed areas’ state that electrification-funding will only be provided if the municipality (CoCT) can confirm that the informal settlement in question, “has not been identified for upgrading or redevelopment within three years or to be relocated the next three years” (DoE, 2015, p. 9). This policy is in place to avoid ‘wasteful expenditure’ as a formalization of an already electrified informal settlement would

mean substantial changes to the physical structure and design of the area resulting in a need to do the electrification “all over again” (Eskom official, interview, 10.09.15). The CoCT official #2 (interview, 14.09.15) explained: “so that is always the constraints that you have and the reason as to why they do not always want to give electricity to the informal areas”.

The DoE policy creates a dilemma for the proposed electrification of Green Park as long-term plans of consolidating, upgrading and formalizing the existing settlement *do* exist. Of course, these plans have been on the table at the CoCT ever since 2006, yet a date for when the actual formalization will be initiated has not yet been set due to the pending requests of deproclaiming and transferring the land. This uncertainty have led the CoCT and Eskom to be hesitant in investing too much in the Green Park. At the same time, officials from both institutions accept the fact that the proposed formalization will in all probability *not* be initiated and finalized for many years, which of course would mean that the Green Park dwellers would have to face many more winters in a flooded and un-electrified environment. As such, CoCT official #2 (interview, 14.09.15) notes,

“The problem that you have is that there might be policy constraints in terms of Department of Energy, but the reality is that [the CoCT] has a social responsibility. They [Green Park] need electricity. So you have to balance that in”.

Coming atop the Green Park residents growing pressure, the acknowledgement of the CoCT’s social responsibility, and the unambiguous recommendations from the EIA conclusion, led the Human Settlements Directorate to promise to install formal electricity in the Green Park, even if only in the interim before the large scale formalization process begin. Interestingly, the Eskom official responsible for the electrification of Green Park sees this go-ahead from the CoCT and Human Settlements as more or less a confirmation that they were not going to do initiate any of the projected long-term plans for quite some time.

“Once the CoCT agrees with us that we can go ahead to electrify the area – that means that they do not have any plans in terms of moving [the residents] in the next four (*sic*) years. [...] They are not going to relocate them for the next four years” (Eskom official, interview, 10.09.15).

## 5.8 Summary

In this chapter I have sought to unravel and explain the complexity of the case of Green Park by assessing the empirical data collected and the main processes and interventions initiated or planned to be initiated in Green Park by the CoCT, notably the “short-term” plan of constructing

platforms as a flood protective mitigation strategy, and the “long-term” plan of formalizing the whole of Green Park with formal housing and proper service provision and infrastructure. The chapter also highlights the Green Park residents’ wish and hope to have the settlement connected to an electrical grid. Their fundamental wish for electricity is central in this study, as this is found to be vital in guiding the residents’ perceptions and understanding of the abovementioned long-term and short-term processes. The chapter’s thorough review of the empirical data collected is done to facilitate a better foundation to analyze and answer my two research questions in the succeeding analytical chapters.

## 6 Conflicting Perceptions

A question that I repeated in almost all my interviews with my informants were whether or not they regarded the short-term emergency relief program in Green Park to be a success. The answers received were quite interesting as they suggested a major dissonance between the various actors' perception of what the short-term platform project represented.

For instance, when asked if the platform-project should be regarded as a success or not, the CoCT official #1 (15.09.15) replied,

“Yes. I would say yes, definitely. We have definitely made a difference”.

The official's definite positive answer to the question was echoed in all of my interviews within the CoCT's political and administrative sphere, clearly illustrating the CoCT's perception and appropriation of the implemented project in Green Park. However, when posing the same question to residents in Green Park living both on and off the platform, the answer was not nearly as definite:

“No. Or, well. It [the platform] is working and it's not working.” (GP resident #4, 17.09.15).

From the two different replies above, we can identify what seems to be a disconnection between the way that the 'formal' actors within the government and the 'informal' actors', i.e. the residents of Green Park, perceive the newly constructed platforms in the settlement and what overall function these are supposed to fill.

### Chapter Aim

The aim of this chapter is to provide answer to my first research question, *‘How has the City of Cape Town's implemented plans and policies of flood reduction been perceived and appropriated differently by the various actors involved with the Green Park informal settlement? By unraveling the various actors' perception and thoughts of the platforms in Green Park, we can get a better idea of the differing and conflicting agendas. Moreover, it can illustrate how the various actors navigated and exerted influence within and over the complex system of governing in the way of pushing and promoting their agendas.*

Though acknowledging that the platform project in Green Park involves a large number of different actors, I choose in this chapter to mainly focus on the perceptions and opinions of

the Green Park community and the CoCT. Obviously, to suggest that the whole macro organization that is the CoCT administration have *one* shared perception of the platform-project will arguably be an exaggeration or a crude generalization. The same will of course go for the whole Green Park community consisting of over 800 households. As such, the various perceptions and understandings presented below should not be read as definite truths, but rather as an identification of general trends in the different actors.

## 6.1 What Constitutes Success?

As we have seen, the CoCT labels the short-term platform project in Green Park as a success, whereas residents actually living onto the platforms have been more skeptical. To better understand this disjunction of perceptions, I argue that we need to start by operationalize what constitutes a “success”. In the dictionary, success is defined as, “[t]he accomplishment of an aim or a purpose”<sup>21</sup>. Accepting this definition in the context of the flood protective platforms in Green Park thus mean that the potential success (or lack thereof) of the platform project is dependent on whether or not the construction of these helped reach the overall aim in which they were constructed for. Obviously, everyone can agree that the platforms constructed in Green Park were raised as a measure to reduce the residents’ vulnerability to the flooding in the area. Of this there is a widespread acceptance both in the CoCT and within the community. However, the findings in this study would suggest that the disjunction between the community and the CoCT becomes evident when discussing the purpose of the platforms *beyond* their function as flood-relief. I elaborate below.

From the CoCT point of view, the sole purpose for initiation the platform-program was to reduce vulnerability to flooding for the residents in Green Park, albeit only in the interim. This goal was in most aspects achieved, as the project managed to relocate all the households living in flood vulnerable areas, that wanted to move onto a platform. As the initial purpose was reached, the project could be classified as ‘a success’.

As noted above, the community in Green Park accepts and appreciates the fact that the platforms constructed have essentially reduced their vulnerability to floods. One resident noted that the hard surface on the platforms prevent underground water coming up and into the dwellings. “There where we were before, it was always wet underneath. You were always in water. So [with the platforms] it is just a better way” (GP resident #4, interview, 17.09.15). However,

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/success> (retrieved 01.09.15).

I suggest that despite this appreciation, the residents would not agree with the CoCT in labeling the platform-project an unambiguously success – plainly because, from a community standpoint, the platforms have not ‘accomplished its aim and purpose’. Although reducing flooding is an important part of the purpose, I argue that the residents in the community see the platforms just as much as a way of receiving electricity as well as a stepping stone toward formal housing. Thus, as neither the electrification of Green Park, nor the formalization process of it have begun, the project can from the community point of view not be seen as a complete success

## **6.2 Devising the Platforms at a City Level**

The idea of constructing platforms as an emergency flood relief came after a CoCT walkabout in the settlement. The ISM manager explained the course of events,

“We had a call from [the Community Leader] of Green Park. He asked us, please come and look at the flooding in Green Park. We went out there and looked at it. And when I was looking around I could see that there are places where you can build a platform [...]. So that is why we said, OK let’s create a stable platform for the people with a slope towards the low-lying areas where there is always flood in any case, so the water will reach it eventually, but now we can make it a stable site for the people to rebuild the site, and that is what we did. [...] I think it worked quite well”. (ISM Manager, interview, 07.09.15)

### **6.2.1 CoCT Representation**

The ISM Manager (interview, 07.09.15), stressed that the platforms constructed in Green Park was done so purely as a way of humanitarian relief. On the question of whether or not flood management was something commonly dealt with within the ISM office, he noted,

“[f]looding in other areas, like if a farmers land is flooded – [that] is not a problem of mine. But if an informal settlement is flooded – then it is our [ISM office] problem. So when you look at overall flooding management and stormwater management – that was not on our mind. It was purely to get people out of the water” (ISM Manager, interview, 07.09.15)

In other words, from a CoCT perspective, the construction of the platforms in Green Park should not be seen as a form of adaptive measures to climate change or general flood management. Rather, the platforms represented a more pragmatic and technical, mitigation solution to

the issue of flooding in Green Park, and was therefore in all aspects seen as being a project of “purely flood relief” (CoCT official #2, interview, 14.09.15).

The platforms constructed in Green Park were also interesting for especially the Human Settlement Directorate as it, if proven successful, could be used as a flood mitigation strategy in other informal settlements within and around Cape Town (Kühne, 2015). Of course, these types of platforms had never been tested out at such a scale before, thus being labeled as a ‘pilot project’ within the CoCT. This implicitly means that there are still a limited knowledge and know-how of the potential consequences and effects in which the platforms would or could have. The CoCT official #1 admitted as much, noting that,

“this being a pilot projects there were aspects that were not as great. I think in future we can definitely look to try and improve them somehow. But for now I think it’s a definite improvement than what they have been living in before.” (interview, 15.09.15)

### **6.3 Long-Term Planning affecting Short-Term Action**

To understand the CoCT’s perception of the *short-term* platform-project, it is necessary to see it in the context of the *long-term* formalization project. The long-term formalization project and the short-term platform emergency relief are, as previously noted, two non-connected, but parallel processes of CoCT involvement in Green Park. Though both projects report to the same directorate (Human Settlements), the two are as illustrated in figure 5.1, run by different departments and offices, respectively the ISM office at the Development & Delivery Department and the office of New Housing at the Urbanisation Department.

The plans of formalization have yet to be implemented in Green Park. This is mainly because the area has still not been deproclaimed as a nature reserve and transferred to the CoCT. What is more, a formalization of the projected size in Driftsands, requires extensive planning and because of its location within a nature reserve, solid environmental foundations. “When you look at it, you might get the impression that it has been dragging along – but it is for a reason. It is a very complicated process” (CoCT official #2, interview, 14.09.15).

As such, the process of planning and regulation processes have mostly taken place within the offices of New Housing and the Western Cape Province in the Cape Town CBD.

This have been somewhat of a challenge as the community received little information or opportunities to participate in the process. CoCT official #2 (interview, 14.09.15), explains:

“[B]ecause we [New Housing] talk about the housing project, we can see progress in terms of the process that we follow and implementation of the planning and the Environmental Impact Assessment – and we understand it but the community perception is they only perceive progress once you are on site. If you are on site they say: ‘OK – now something is happening; now they are busy with the project’”.

The residents’ grievances with the CoCT could in many aspects be justified. Prior to 2013, when the short-term platform project was first brought up, nothing much had changed in the settlement since the first talks of formalization in 2006. Although the CoCT and Provincial officials were working on the project within their offices, the progress was not evident on ground, within the settlement. This of course, led to a growing disgruntlement in the community toward the CoCT and especially toward the officials working on the formalization plan. The residents demanded that something would happened other than what was perceived as the empty promises of formalization. “We have been promised for a long time, and we did not want only promises” (Community Leader, interview, 14.08.15).

The introduction of the ISM’s short-term platform project came at a convenient time for New Housing. What the short-term project offered besides the obvious emergency flood relief for the residents, was a certain leeway and respite for the officials within the New Housing, as the residents in Green Park ‘saw progress’ with the growing presence of CoCT street-level bureaucrats interacting and working on site to plan and construct the platforms. This was from a CoCT point of view vital as it kept the residents in Green Park “focused” and “patient” for the long-term project to come (CoCT official #2, interview, 14.09.15).

Yet, despite the platforms being ‘convenient’ when they were introduced, my findings suggests that the reason as to why it took so long for the CoCT to intervene with an emergency relief in Green Park (remember they had been flooding for over a decade before the platforms came), was in fact due to the projected long-term plans of formalization. These plans were, according the Regional Coordinator, “overshadowing everything else that had to take place in Green Park” (interview, 21.09.15) – including providing interim flood relief for the residents living in water. Let me explain.

As the land of Green Park had yet to be deproclaimed and transferred to the CoCT, the subsequent uncertainty of *when* or even *if* the area would be transferred played a major part in explaining why the short-term emergency relief program was realized only in 2014, and not

before. Albeit not implemented, the long-term plans of formalization have been presented, approved and budgeted, and will according to the CoCT official #2 (interview, 14.05.15) be implemented as soon as the deproclamation and transferal-processes goes through. This has reduced the funding possibilities and governmental will for short-term intervention and relief to Green Park as the complete formalizing of the settlement (together with the adjacent Los Angeles informal settlement) with mortar and brick housing, proper service provision, electricity and improved infrastructure means enormous expenditures for the CoCT, as with all formalization processes in informal settlements. Consequently, the CoCT is very careful not to spend money in ways that then could be regarded as ‘wasteful expenditure’. This means that from an economic perspective, the CoCT was quite skeptical to invest funds into the short-term project of building interim platforms or to provide the community with interim electrical connections, as all of this would have to be removed and redone as soon as the formalization process begun – creating wasteful expenditure. Moreover, the introduction of short-term intervention is even hindered by national policies which states clearly, as noted in section 0, that if there do exist plans of formalizing a specific area within the next three years– no temporary measures can be initiated as to avoid wasted expenditure on often already strained budgets (DoE, 2015).

“There was an approved development that was always there. So when people were asking for this and that, the City cannot come in [to Green Park] and spend millions of money that tomorrow is going to be completely dug out and become wasted when the actual development takes place.” (Regional Coordinator, interview, 07.09.15)

From this, we can conclude that for many years the long-term plan of formalization hampered and stood in the way of short-term action, notably flood protective measures.

Short-term intervention did eventually come, but only after much pressure and a realization that the current situation in Green Park was not sustainable. The process of deproclamation and transferring of the land had already dragged on for close to a decade, and even if the land transferred that same year, it would still mean several more years of planning and regulating before the actual construction of the formal housing in the areas would begin. Accepting this the CoCT searched to find a compromise that could relieve some of the immediate challenges in the settlements, and at the same time keep the expenses of interventions as low as possible so to avoid the wasted expenditure. CoCT official #2 summed up the need for

an informal, short-term relief in the Green Park settlement, despite the challenge of wasted expenditure, below:

“The [short-term] informal relief was – well, I think it was done because of two reasons. The fact that we realized that people are going to wait some time. They are going to face a few more winters before they will be able to sit in a proper house. So we [CoCT] realized that there is really a need. We will have the continuous plight of people coming here, you know. And obviously there are people with kids that being affected year after year and we could not just ignore that.” (Interview, 14.09.15).

The CoCT decision to intervene in Green Park in the short-term, should be seen in connection with a change in CoCT policies. The Mayor of Cape Town, Patricia De Lille, have over the course of the last few years paved the way by allowing upgrading and interim-relief in areas already lined up for formal development – as was the case in Green Park. The Regional Coordinator, noted that,

“I think that actually changed the whole view of the city. Saying, look – ‘you are lined up for development but you are still going to sit here, so we will look after you’” (Regional Coordinator interview, 07.09.15).

In short, I argue that the introduction of the platforms in Green Park became a decent compromise solution for the CoCT as it offered short-term relief to the flooding in Green Park, while at the time did not stand in the way for the projected long-term plans of formalization.

## **6.4 Appropriating the Platforms at the Local Level**

The interview with the Community Leader provided some insight in the Green Park community’s frustration with the CoCT and the seemingly lack of a cohesive plan for ensuring the Green Park residents’ with their constitutional rights, including adequate housing and a safe living environment (RSA, 1996). The Community Leader shared his frustration:

“In 2006 you [CoCT] said that the area [Green Park] is going to be developed. You also spoke of these platforms in 2014, [saying] it is only an interim towards a bigger project. So for me, if you speak that language you need to actually hurry up. Because in 2006 you said that Green Park was going to be developed into a township, and now you are talking about an interim. Why did you say that the area is going to be developed, and then now you are talking about the interim?” (interview, 14.08.15)

### **6.4.1 Platforms as a Promise of Electricity**

Despite being one of the oldest informal settlements in Cape Town, Green Park does not have, and have never had any form of electrical connection. As such, the promise of electricity have been the principle need for the residents living in Green Park for over two decades.

“The way forward now is to get electricity then we can see what else will happen. But the major issue is electricity, because it is dark in here. And then lots of people that do bad stuff from other areas, run into GP and hide. So for us it will be much better with electricity”. (GP resident #4, interview, 17.09.15).

In her thesis, Kühne (2015, p. 10) notes that residents in Green Park, “acknowledge that the [platform-] project is an attempt to alleviate the affected households from flooding disasters, however, they seem to believe this was done primarily to encourage the electricity installation process”. Speaking to both the community leadership and certain people living on the platforms, I too got this impression. Asking the dwellers on the platforms what was the point with the platforms, a common response that the platforms’ primary function was to get the people out of the water so that the electrification process could begin. In other words, for them, the platforms became a representation of the CoCT’s work to bring in electricity into the settlement. Thus quite different from the CoCT perception, stating that the platforms were ‘purely flood relief’.

This research suggests that the Green Park-residents’ idea that the main function of the platforms was to lay the foundation for the electrification of the settlement, was not something that ‘came out of nowhere’. Rather, I suggest that this perception have been promoted (intentionally or not) by the CoCT officials in communication with the residents. This was for instance evident when speaking with GP resident #4 (interview, 17.09.15), she noted that:

“They told us that they can’t install electricity because Green Park is in a wetland. [...]. So they need to fix that first before they can arrange for electricity. So that is how the platform-thing came up.”

### **6.4.2 Confusing Governmental Roles**

Whereas the CoCT draw a clear line between the implemented, short-term flooding relief, and the projected, but not yet implemented long-term housing program, many of the residents living in Green Park view these two projects as interconnected – that the one will lead to the other. Moreover, as is common for many informal dwellers, residents often fail to differentiate between the complex network of governmental actors, expecting all officials to be representative

for government as a whole (cf. Jordhus-Lier et al., 2015). This became especially evident in Green Park as residents failed to differentiate between city officials from New Housing and from ISM as two separate entities, but rather viewing them as coming from the same institution, working toward a main overreaching goal of electrification and formalization. As such, the ISM engineers designing the platforms had a hard time explaining to the Green Park residents that they were only tasked with offering the community an interim solution to reduce the vulnerability to flooding, and that their presence had nothing to do with the long-term plans of housing and formalization. Of course, because the long-term project of formalization had started already in 2006, the office of New Housing had already established a form of relationship with the community and the leadership in Green Park. Yet, when asked whether or not this existing relationship had been helpful for the officials working on the short-term platform plan, the Project Manager, CoCT official #1 (interview, 15.09.15) replied:

“No. It has actually made it worse. You see the expectation here when we first started – the moment when the community see city officials - they assume that we all work for one unit. And I of course was not from New Housing. So the only thing I could give was a temporary measure, [but] they expected housing. So when I first came there I had to convince everybody, and sort of make the project credible as such. It was a bit of a battle in the beginning”.

To “make the project credible” within the community is crucial for the success of the project, and a strategy used by the ISM Project Manager was to arrange many community meetings so to inform the community as much as possible on what was going on. Many of the informants did point to the fact that without this form of communication the project would have been very difficult to implement.

“[T]o be honest with you, in the last five years that I have worked, there are only two or three projects that I’ve seen that the city actually sits down with the community and explaining a lot the dimensions of the problem. And I am going to tell you that [the Project Manager] did a great job at that. We had meeting every week or other week and she was really being true to the highest possible degree, trying to be transparent”. (NGO informant #1, interview, 19.09.15).

### **6.4.3 Reactions to the platforms from the residents**

Despite being initially skeptical of moving onto the platforms, many of the residents living on them today holds that there are a number of advantages to living there. First of all, the problem of flooding coming from beneath and into the homes is gone, due to the hard surface of the G5. Secondly, as a small-scale re-blocking had been done on the platforms, households were much

more structured with easier access for cars and pedestrians. This is visible on platform A, in figure 5.5. Lastly, because the ground was leveled and so hard, people felt safer, not fearing snakes and rodents that could would dig their way up through the ground. Yet the effects of the platforms have not been all positive. For instance, despite the inclination on the platform they are not very successful in preventing flash floods after rain. Moreover, the hard ground results in large water puddles on the platforms as the water do not run through, as well as making it impossible to plant anything on the hard surface. Something that many of the residents are very much dependent on as a source of food and income. Others expressed frustration with their plot sizes being much smaller than before, due to the high number of households moving onto the platforms.

It must be noted that there are also those within the Green Park settlement who plainly dismiss the notion of the platforms, arguing that: “I want proper upgrading”, and that the platforms’ way of gradual upgrading “is not addressing any of the real issues.” (GP resident #1, 16.09.15). They would argue that the only way forward for Green Park is through formalization. Yet when confronted with the facts that formalization cannot happen without deproclamation and transferal of said land, several of the informants in Green Park shrugged, saying that they had not heard of those process, or that they did not view it as important (GP resident #1-3, interview, 16.09.15; GP resident #4, 17.09.15).

“We are used to that kind of promises. Next year we have been living here for 22 years. So we are used to the promises... Especially now when there are a local election coming. They will raise up and say that you will get it tomorrow and such. But then after the elections – gone. Forgotten. So these promises is nothing new” (GP resident #2, interview, 16.09.15).

## **6.5 ‘Carrot and Stick’**

When the platform project was first introduced to the Green Park community, many of the residents were skeptical to move onto them. For many, this was because they feared they would not be able to move to their homes after first being be relocated to the TRAs in the back of the settlement. One resident noted that he did not have faith in the platform project as it was only seen as “gradual upgrading, not addressing any of the real issues”, such as better infrastructure, proper service provision (GP resident #1, interview, 16.09.15). The consequence of the skepticism was that several households refused to move, so to make place for the platforms. This, of course became a major issue as the CoCT and ISM office only had a limited budget, as well as

a growing pressure of finalizing the platforms before the wet winter season started, and the challenges of flooding returned.

Based on my findings, I argue that the CoCT actively used what I call a ‘carrot and a stick’ approach, to ensure the relocation of the residents. The “carrot” in this idiom should be understood as the promise of electricity, with the CoCT saying that the only way for Green Park to be electrified is through the building of the platforms, as these offered a solution to the flooding challenge in the settlement. Subsequently, the “stick”, was by way of a social pressure, the threat that by not moving aside for the platform, the settlement could never get a formal connection.

“It was kind of made to seem like if you [the residents] don’t do this [the platforms] you will be jeopardizing the electrification of the whole settlement and the long-term housing development plan” (NGO informant #1, interview, 19.08.15).

Fearing that refusing to move onto the platforms would delay the electrification process even more, most all of the residents identified as vulnerable to floods chose to move up onto the platforms (albeit a few households preferred staying put because of a wish to continue to grow their garden). This decision was supported additionally by the Green Park leadership who was vocal in communicating to the residents that the ones that moved up on the platforms would get electrified first.

“When they were advertising the platforms [...] – because people were resisting – they told them that you are going to get a platform so it is going to give you access to electricity. That is how it was advertised. That is how they managed to recruit people to go to the platforms” (GP resident #2, interview, 16.09.15).

Of course, the unforeseen consequence of this strategy was that the CoCT and the Green Park leadership, now had – from a community standpoint – created a direct link between the construction of the platforms and the electrification of the settlement, “confirming” that acceptance of the one would then lead to the other. Thus by ‘selling in’ the platforms as an almost guaranteed way of receiving electricity, they created a new problem for themselves as, “the many other people that were not in flooding [now] wanted to move up on the platforms so that they could get the electricity first” (NGO informant #2, interview, 11.09.15).

The strategy also strengthened the residents’ assumption that the CoCT’s overall purpose for building the platforms was to facilitate for the electrification. As such, in the larger

picture, flooding was not a problem in itself, rather it was something which stood in the way of getting electricity. NGO informant #1 offers an interesting view on this topic,

“I am not sure if they actually had a concrete plan in place to fulfill those promises. They were using this as a ploy to get this project off the ground and show some results - and [the ISM office] rightfully so was under a lot of pressure. In the bigger picture, perhaps I did not feel that the city were doing anything wrong. I mean they were using some clever means to manipulate some facts and so on. But I think the intention were good to get the people out of the flooding” (NGO informant #1, interview, 19.08.15).

## 6.6 Summary

This chapter has sought to answer the question of how the CoCT's implemented plans and policies of flood reduction in Green Park have been perceived and understood by the different actors involved with the project. The major finding in this chapter is the fundamentally different perceptions between the CoCT and the Green Park residents on what the large gravel platforms constructed in the settlement are supposed to represent. City officials explained that the platforms in Green Park were introduced purely as interim measures for flood relief, implemented while waiting for the long-term upgrading. Yet, residents in Green Park saw the platforms as representing the first phase of an electrification of the settlement, as well as a build-up for the final formalization of the area that had been on the agenda since around 2006.

The chapter suggests that these conflicting opinions could partly be explained by the community residents mixing of the governmental roles and projects, often viewing all officials to be representatives for the government as a whole. This, I argue, became especially challenging as the community residents failed to differentiate between the city officials from New Housing, charged with the long-term formalization of the area, and the city officials from ISM who were in charge the short-term project of flood emergency relief through platforms.

However, the chapter also finds that the CoCT to a large extent (and the Green Park community leadership to a lesser extent), were aware of the residents' conflicting perceptions but that they cleverly managed to “use” this confusion in a way which allowed them to get initiated the platform project on despite the initial skepticism which existed among certain groups in the settlement.

Lastly, this chapter illustrates that the perceived success or failure of the short-term platforms project does not depend on whether the platforms worked as a *flood relief* or not. As shown, many of the residents moving onto the platform relatively satisfied with these as flood-water no longer would seep up through the ground floor. Yet, because the platforms from the

start came to represent ‘something more’ for the residents, notably the electrification of Green Park, it would never be regarded as a complete success, leaving many within the Green Park community dissatisfied with the CoCT.

## 7 Governing informality

The goal of this chapter is to answer the second research questions: *What have been the main governance challenges and constraints for the urban authorities implementing plans of flood relief and formalization within the informal settlement of Green Park?* By adopting and drawing on the analytical framework of urban governance and governance configurations presented in Chapter Three, this chapter attempts to identify the complexity of the urban decision-making process in informal settlements. In the case of Green Park, this decision-making process is further complicated due to the settlements location within a nature reserve.

Following this, I identify the structural and institutional challenges the CoCT have had in their interaction with Green Park. I use the concept of vertical and horizontal disconnections to illustrate these challenges in the governance structure. I subsequently argue that the CoCT's flood protective measures and interventions in Green Park have been constrained and complicated by various forms of 'knowledge gaps', notably with regards to the physical construction of top-structures on the complete platforms, and the communication of this information.

In the chapter's last section, I link the institutional challenges and constraints of the platform project to the street-level bureaucrats that are interacting with the Green Park community and thus operates with and within the formal-informal divide. I argue that we in the CoCT's dealings with Green Park can identify a change in city policy where local actors, such as the Community Leader, have been given a much larger role in the urban-decision making, by the CoCT's street-level bureaucrats. I subsequently link this to what Barnes & Prior (2009) identify as the local state pushing the frontline of governing. This shift in the frontline is evident in the Community Leader's usage of informal channels of governing and communication to initiate the realization of projects on ground.

### 7.1 Actor Complexity

The City of Cape Town's involvement in the Informal Settlement of Green Park is as we have learned not a case of one, seemingly *formal* actor's intervention with another, seemingly *informal* actor. Rather, it is in line with the previously described shift from government to governance, a prime example of a case taking place within complex network of actors and stakeholders, operating at various levels and spheres, promoting different agendas and wishes. The actors include local NGOs, (notably CORC and Slum Dwellers International), community

leadership and factions, private contractors, the whole range of governmental spheres through national, provincial and municipal stakeholders, as well as state-sponsored organizations such as Eskom and CapeNature. Lastly, policies and directorates from the political system in at all governmental levels starting with the Ward councilor also plays in. Figure 7.1, below illustrates some of this complexity, as well as drawing linkages of actors interventions with each other across the actor network.

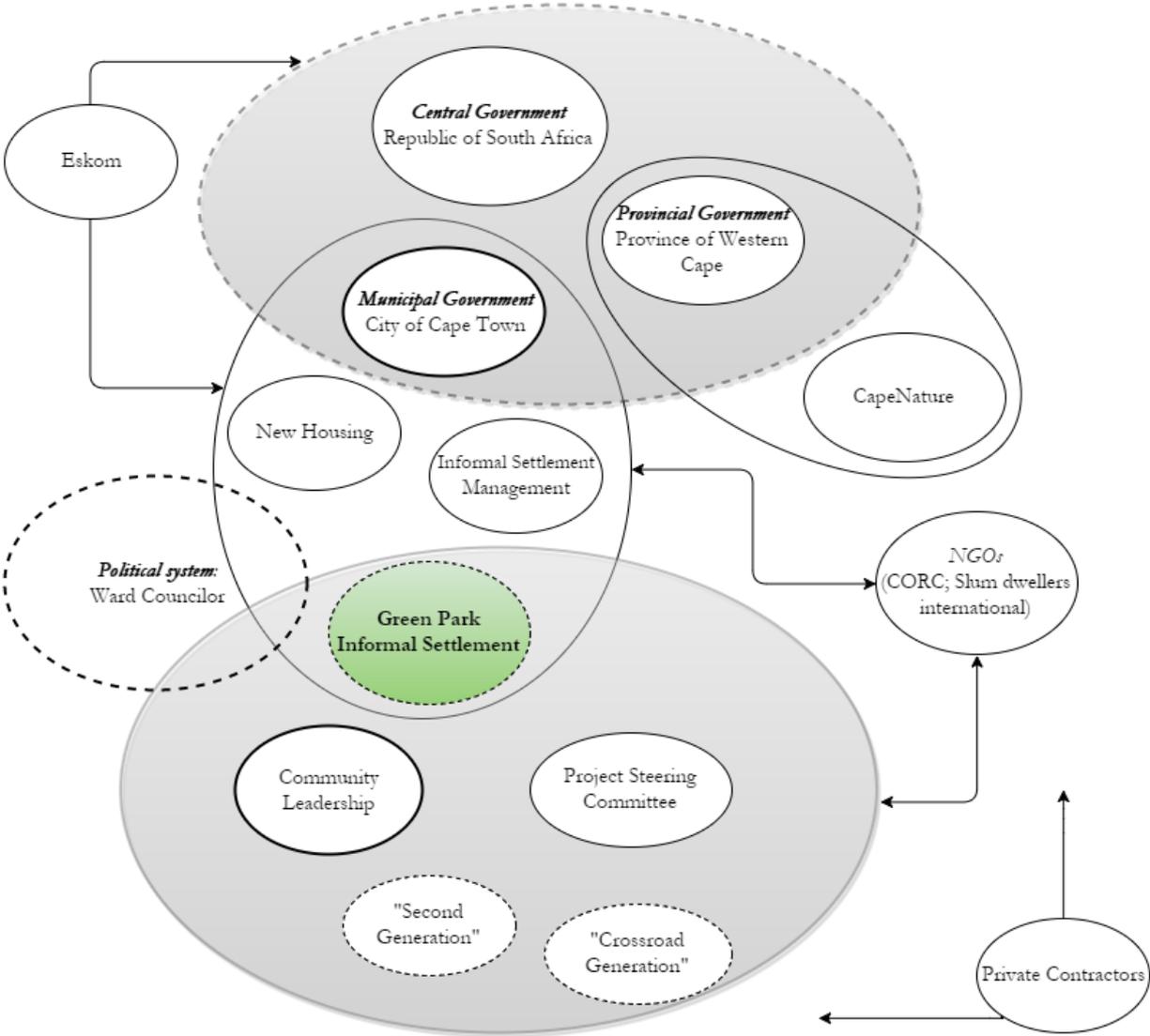


Figure 7.1: Actors and institutions of urban governance. Source: Adapted from Devas (2004: 25)

The many actors play different roles. New Housing management are for instance in charge of the long-term formalization project of Green Park and the surrounding areas, whereas Informal Settlements Management are the ones pushing and running the short-term platform

agenda. The ward councilor is through his or her political mandate, in charge of relaying information to the residents as well as to represent them within the CoCT.

## **7.2 ‘The Dreaded Red Tape’**

This research would suggest that one of the major challenges the CoCT’s intervention in Green Park has been the lack of communication and collaboration between the various actors involved at different levels inside the governance network. I identify these challenges in communication to be either a ‘horizontal disconnection’, meaning lack of communication or collaboration between actors operating on the same “level” of governance, well exemplified in the ‘silo-thinking’ of departments within the CoCT as discussed in section 3.1.3. Or, they are described as ‘vertical disconnections’, referring to the cross scalar relationship between the different actors, notably between officials in the City and the informal dwellers, but also across the different spheres of government, e.g. province-municipality. Obviously, the system of governance is much more complex than the horizontal and vertical lines would suggest, and many of the actor-relationships does not fit into either horizontal or vertical lines. As much is evident from figure 7.1. Nevertheless, this simplification of the governance structure is still useful as way of clarifying the various actors’ roles within the decision-making process. My findings suggest, as we will see below, that both vertical and horizontal disconnections have played a major part in the challenges that both the long-term and short-term projects in Green Park met.

### **7.2.1 Horizontal disconnections**

Much of the urban governance and collaborative governance theories used in this thesis center around the need to include a widespread range of actors both within and beyond the government when governing cities with large informal areas (Todes, 2015; Van Niekerk, 2006). In areas exposed to natural hazards, such as flooding, researchers like Ziervogel et al. (2014, p. 4) argue that these collaborative principles becomes all more important. They stress that there is a growing need to recognize that various forms of disasters cannot be addressed top-down, and in silos, but rather that,

“effective local governance is seen when local government tries to link different line ministries and sectors, working together with civil society, the private sector and at-risk communities”.

As such, I hold that an increased collaborative governance across sectors, both within and outside the state, is necessary for when translating the flood protective measures on city level and in national policies, into practice on ground.

Although the said theoretical assumptions are quite clear, it is not necessarily the reality in practice. The horizontal disconnections within the CoCT administration are, as mentioned, characterized by the different departments and directorates tendency to operate as in ‘silos’, with low levels of cooperation and communication between them. As much is admitted by the Project Manager in Green Park, CoCT official #1,

“at the moment we work in silos. For instance, say I install a service over here - but New Housing is coming along in two months time, but I don’t consult New Housing - I just go in and install my services. When they come along they are just going to come in and rip everything out again and say why did you not consult with us? [...]. By speaking with one voice we can definitely do better! But it is an uphill battle, because of the legislation.” (interview, 15.09.15).

The Project Manager’s reflection on the CoCT administration current position is echoed in both literature as well as in interviews with other informants (Turok, 2012; Ziervogel et al., 2014). For instance, by NGO informant #1 (interview, 19.08.16), who offered a quite hard critique of the CoCT in general and the Human Settlements Department in particular,

“I think every municipality in South Africa, not only Cape Town, is suffering from a lack of coordination between the departments. Nobody in Human Settlements actually wants to talk to Environmental Affairs or Disaster Risk Management [...] Nobody wants to be engaged with any other departments. [...] And also remember that like in South Africa - if you look at the housing paradigm [The Directorate of] Human Settlement is the center of the universe of every municipality in this country. That is the only thing that makes the Municipality run – and the only thing that elects you in office. So, they are very dictatorial and they decide. So [Department of] Disaster Risk can pitter-patter around in the corner. Department of Water and Sanitation can do whatever they want in the corner - but Human Settlements calls the shot.” (NGO informant #1, interview, 19.08.15)

This horizontal disconnection between different departments within the CoCT and the strong position of the Human Settlements Directorate have had serious consequences for the implementation of projects and flood adaptive measures on ground and within the informal settlements. For instance, in her study of the Green Park informal settlement, Brooke Kühne (2015) notes that several officials from the Department of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) expressed their frustration of not being involved and consulted in the ISM’s platform project. One official argued that if the engineering office at the ISM would had involved the DRM more in the planning process, they could have used their expertise to better educate and prepare the

residents relocating onto the platforms of how best to deal with the floods. The consequence was thus that the DRM department were involved at a much later meaning that they were only able to help the resident cope with the challenges of flooding, rather than contributing in the adaptation measures to it (Kühne, 2015).

### **7.2.2 Vertical disconnection**

The vertical disconnections between various actors within the network depicted in Figure 7.1 can also help explain both the practical and institutional that the CoCT met in Green Park. The obvious issue here is of course the question of ownership of the land. As discussed in Chapter Five, the land which Green Park is located on is officially owned and maintained by the Province of Western Cape, whereas both the long-term and short-term projects are run by the municipality, CoCT. The process of transferring the land from an actor at one governmental sphere to another has been challenging, not least because of the many environmental considerations and regulations the transfer must abide by.

The vertical disconnection between Province and CoCT as to how to move forth with the informal areas within Driftsands Nature Reserve has impeded the work on ground, both in the long-term and the short-term. Whereas it in South Africa is a provincial responsibility to ensure environmental sustainability, it is the municipalities which will have to bear the costs of the poor decisions of the informal settlements, e.g. within a nature reserve. Turok (2012, p. 44), suggests that these types of “[o]verlapping responsibilities between government spheres and interference from above have confused lines of accountability”. These ‘confusing lines’ and vertical disconnections are found in a national-municipal relationship as well, as noted by the NGO informant #1 (interview, 19.08.15),

“Well the mess-up is that is a big jump between what the city wants to do versus what nationally is allowed to do. It is a highly regulated environment and just because you want to build houses in Busasa, Burundi<sup>22</sup> or Green Park does not mean that you actually can do it. [...] Like getting a water-use license or this housing subsidy. These are things that the city cannot violate as they would basically violate a national law.”

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<sup>22</sup> Busasa and Burundi are two informal settlements located on the Cape Flats

All in all, we can identify these challenges as ‘governance shortcomings’, insomuch that the different spheres of government have failed in creating a stable and effective governance network which through a coordinated approach translates policy into practice (Turok, 2012).

Extensive bureaucracy, poor communication and different promoted agendas is a hindrance for the project implementation in the Green Park settlement. This suggestion is clearly illustrated by the ISM Manager’s reply to the question of whether the Western Cape Province had been reluctant to give up the parts of the Driftsands Nature Reserve that Green Park is located on.

“No, I don’t think there is reluctance, Andreas. I think it is just the dreaded ‘red tape’. Everyone must put a signature and stamp on that. About 10 000 people. I don’t know. It seems like that. It is that dreaded red tape. It just take very long!”

The frustration with governmental red tape is echoed among several of the other informants in within the CoCT. For instance, does the Project Manager on the short-term platform project, CoCT official #1, note that the “biggest challenge” in working in the CoCT’s different interventions in Green Park, was the legislative and policy constraints they face when implementing new projects in informal settlements – “to actually get our projects on the ground” (interview, 15.09.15). The Project Manager consequently argues that the interventions could have gone better if it were not for the often cumbersome and overly bureaucratic system of the CoCT administration.

However, the research also suggests that “red tape”, “policy constraints” and “bureaucracy”, is seemingly being used as an excuse, or at least a very general explanation to critical questions as to why various programs and projects take so long, are not given funding of are not even implemented. The quotes below illustrate some of the common governmental replies to criticism:

“Luckily we’ve got very clear policies within the city. When we implement a project it is a policy that we enforce, and if you ask me “why did you do that?”, then I can say that it was not my decision - but I am just following directive and policies.” (CoCT official #2, interview, 14.09.15).

“The thing is that the communities must understand is that we want to help them but sometimes our hands are tied because of legislation. And they don’t want to understand that. They say no - we are poor, you must help us. And what can we do when we can’t help them? In Green Park we were lucky that we could help them - some areas we can’t.” (ISM Manager, interview, 07.09.15).

### 7.3 Knowledge gap

Drawing on Kühne's (2015) findings, I argue that the abovementioned horizontal disconnections found within the CoCT as well as other governmental sphere, have filtered down through the networks, creating vertical disconnections between the city officials and the local community. This have had a major affect on the CoCT officials' capacity and ability to inform and educate the residents in Green Park. As such, the horizontal disconnection became especially evident in that several of the residents that was to move onto the platforms misunderstood, were not informed or did not consider the basic function of the platforms as informed by the street-level bureaucrats working on constructing these. The platforms in Green Park are all constructed with a physical inclination to one side, so that the rain and flash-flood water can to run off. Nevertheless, when the Green Park residents began raising their structures on the new platforms, city officials reported that they found households with the entrance facing 'upwards' on the platform consequently leading the run-off water to flood into their homes. Others again, dug holes into the platforms to retrieve milling to put up against the structures for flood-protection, leading large ponds of still-water on the platforms.

“The community is under the impression, [...] that the platforms will absorb water as such. I said to [them], there is no way that the platforms can do that. It is a gravel material, it cannot absorb water - it is always going to be over land, or running into a storm water system. Of course they are still under the impression that it absorbs water” (CoCT official #1, interview, 15.09.15).

This vertical disconnection in way of failing to inform the Green Park residents of how to use the platforms correctly, is by the CoCT official #1 (interview, 15.09.15), explained as a “communication barrier”.

“I think there is definitely a lack of understanding. I think some of the community-members understand why we have come here, and what our role and objective was. I think others don't. But that is a general problem we have with all informal settlements. I think it is a communication barrier. I am not sure, but it is definitely one of the problems that we have to overcome in the settlements.”

However, my findings suggest that the vertical disconnection need be explained, not only as a lack of understanding from residents in Green Park, but also through the CoCT planner's lack of knowledge as to what effect the platforms would have. This notion is perhaps especially evident with regards to topic of top-structures. The Regional Coordinator (interview, 21.09.15), explained that the residents in Green Park for years had been used to building structures on a

soft ground. This meant that it was easy to dig trenches and sinking the sides of their structures into them, thus preventing water to enter. Yet, the hard surface of the G5 made the construction of top-structures on the platforms much more difficult. These issues were seemingly not expected by the city officials tasked with implementing the platforms, and the Regional Coordinator admitted that this was something that they planners had not considered.

“We were kind of caught by surprise when it rained and we discovered that, ‘Ey! people only planted the poles [...] – but they failed to sink the sides into the platforms.’ So the sides were just resting on the platform and the water could just run into it freely. [...] So that was quite a learning-curve for us. So next time we will be aware of that.” (Regional Coordinator, interview, 21.09.15).

His comments highlight the fact that the platform project was considered a pilot project for flood relief in informal settlements. Because the technology was still quite new, and not yet tested at a large scale, there existed a natural lack of knowledge and capacity within the ISM as well as the CoCT. These conclusions are supported by the NGO informant #1 (interview, 19.08.15), who noted that the CoCT had not “actually done their homework properly in terms of how they would do it on these absolutely massive platforms”. This becomes an important

Here, it can be useful to draw on Peyroux et al. (2014) notion of governance configurations as discussed in Chapter Three, to illustrate how the socio-material configurations have shape the urban management decisions as the CoCT officials are being somewhat constrained in utilizing the new technology of platforms as a flood mitigation strategy.

Just after the platforms in Green Park had been finalized, Mayco-member Benedicta van Minnen said in an interview with the Weekend Argus: “Due to the fall created on these platforms, it will function as an overland drainage system allowing water to drain away from dwellings” (Weekend Argus, 25.04.2015). Her comments are interesting as they reflect the ISM engineering office’s direct and technical solution to the challenge of flooding. However, this technical approach is in fact by many criticized of being too technical – not focusing enough on the social aspects and communicating the technical plans to the residents living there, again illustrating the socio-material configurations in the urban management.

## **7.4 Governing across the formal-informal divide**

Literature on collaborative and urban governance emphasize the need of including actors both within and beyond the state, in urban decision-making (Ziervogel et al., 2014). Working within

the formal-informal specter, this inclusion becomes even more important, as these areas tend to be even more challenging to govern. The project manager for the long-term formalization project, CoCT official #2 (interview, 15.09.15), notes as much:

“You must keep them informed. That is very important. Because if they feel left out, then you can run into problems with your project quickie. Community participation is very important. Keeping them informed, because that keeps them on your size as such.”

The project manager’s comments reflect some of the dilemmas the CoCT have when dealing with informal settlements, such as Green Park. Whereas the City wants a high community participation and having the community ‘on its side’, it also needs to ensure that the project is realized. As such, with the implementation as the overreaching goal, the project manager holds that, “there will be compromises and sacrifices that you will have to make, to make sure that the project is implemented. So you need to give that guidance.” (CoCT official #2, interview, 15.09.15). However, this type of ‘guidance’ is not always well received within the community. Many, especially in the older, ‘Crossroad Generation’ are skeptical of all types of governmental interventions in Green Park. There are various reasons for this, but South Africa’s history of apartheid and the many years of being unsure of whether or not the government are on their side, have obviously played a large part. The findings suggests that for some, this lack of trust comes with a form of powerlessness as many feel that they are forced to accept that city and formal channels are their only valid choice in their pleas for services and flood protection. On the question of whether they trusted and believed the CoCT’s promises to help the Green Park, one resident replied,

“what we say is that we do not trust. [But] if we don’t trust the CoCT, who else are we going to trust? There is no other way. We have to trust them whatever that they say that they’ll promise to do. They are our only alternative” (GP resident #1, interview, 16.09.15).

#### **7.4.1 Community Leader involvement**

Being the ‘only alternative’ for residents in informal settlements suggests that the CoCT administration sit on and exert tremendous power and influence over the decision-making structures within Cape Town. However, working within an urban governance framework, we could argue that what actually happens in cities depends just as much or even more on the multiplicity of informal channels, than on the traditional formal decision-making structures within the city government (Devas, 2004). With this in mind, the NGO informant #2’s critique

of the Informal Settlements Management office at the CoCT becomes interesting. The NGO informant #2 (interview, 11.09.15), argues that in the case of Green Park, intervention in the short-term as seen with the construction of platforms, would never have happened if not for the demands and pressure from the Green Park community itself. From this, we can argue that with regards to project implementation within informal settlements, the CoCT and the ISM office are increasingly becoming a 'responsive agent' rather than a 'kick-starting agent'. Here, we can draw a parallel to the shift from government to governance discussed in Chapter Three, as the state actors are increasingly being set aside in favor of a more complex network of actors. The findings in this study would support this notion inasmuch that we could identify the Green Park community leadership, and the Community Leader in particular, as the "kick-starter" for action, as opposed to the ISM itself or even other actors within the formal sphere of governing, such as the ward councilor (this will be discussed later in the chapter).

The ISM Manager admits as much admitting that the CoCT's intervention with short-term relief in Green Park was largely affected by the Community Leader's threats of arranging media-covered marches and protests. He notes that the pressure "was not as much from [the Ward Councilor] as it was from [Community Leader]. He was pestering us every day" (ISM Manager, interview, 07.09.15). Moreover, most of the informants agree that the major turning point in the CoCT acceptance that a short-term relief was needed while waiting for the long-term formalization came after the catalyst that was the Community Leader and the Green Park leadership's meeting with the Director of Urbanisation at the Human Settlement Department, as described in section **5.6.1**.

From this, I argue that for the case of Green Park the Community Leader himself have become an important piece in the governance structure as he, together with the 'street-level bureaucrats', essentially became the connecting link between the CoCT and the Green Park community, working in the intersection between the formal and informal (Lipsky, 2010). In this, it is possible to identify an 'extension of the front-line of the local state', as described by Barnes and Prior (2009), inasmuch that it encompasses the Community Leader. I argue that he came in such a position where he was used by the CoCT to relay information to and from the Green Park community, thus serving as a negotiator on behalf of the PSC and the Green Park community as a whole. Although not all interactions between the Community Leader and the others were entirely positive ones, Kühne (2015) argues that the open communication between the different actors proved to be a positive factor in the short-term project. As much is evident

in the then Mayoral Committee member for Human Settlements, Councilor Siyabulela Mamkeli's comments on the initiation of the platform project in Green Park:

“The community, through their leadership, is working with officials to make this intervention possible. These leaders should be commended for the way that they look after the real interests of their community. This is a prime example of how we can make progress possible when we all work together”<sup>23</sup>.

One potential critique of the CoCT's 'extension of the front-line' in Green Park has been that the extension to a large degree only includes the Community Leader as an individual, rather than the community leadership as a whole. Critics could then argue that despite the Community Leader's popularity among a large section of the residents in Green Park, he do have a fair number of opponents within the settlement as well (cf. section 5.2.3). As such, when “[e]verything in this area is dependent on [the Community Leader]” (GP resident #3, interview, 16.09.15) these opposing and critical voices within the community are at risk of not being heard and communicated to the decision-makers within the Cape Town administration. For instance from the Community Leader's opponents has the main critique been that he is selling plots and bringing in new residents to the area, which they argue is a violation of the original agreement that the Green Park community had with the governmental bodies to be allowed to stay within the Driftsands Nature Reserve.

“He has just come in into the community and is now bringing in [new residents]. There was an agreement with the City for us not to bring more people in, but he is not respecting that agreement. Even the City is now overlooking this kind of agreement.” (GP resident #3, interview: 16.09.2015)

I find that the various governmental bodies working within Green Park are to a large extent aware of the Community Leader's alleged business of selling plots to outsiders. They will also be aware of this not always transparent way of relaying all information to and from the community. Nevertheless, my findings would suggest that the CoCT choose to 'look the other way' in some of these cases, preferring to keep the Community Leader as the CoCT's main 'gate-keeper' into Green Park (Dupont et al., 2016; Thagaard, 2009). As such, I argue that the CoCT's choice of including the Community Leader within a wider governance network is as much a question of practicality as well as legitimacy for the city. The Community Leader is in personal

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<sup>23</sup><https://www.capetown.gov.za/en/MediaReleases/Pages/CityinnovativeinterventionsfloodproneGreenParkstartsoon.aspx> - Retrieved 23.08.2015

communication with various informants, described as being “easy to work with”, “eloquent and educated” and “politically very well connected”. One informant even humorously described him to be “a pain in the butt sometimes, but usually a nice guy”. The Community Leader is in other words a both well-regarded and practical asset for the CoCT, in the realization and implementation of the different interventions in Green Park. The ISM Manager (interview, 07.09.15), explained that,

“there is absolutely no way that we can engage with everyone in the informal settlement. Not even in the public meetings where everyone comes. Some people might be at work, other just don’t care. So it is extremely difficult with the negotiation and the public participation process going into this. We will never get everyone to agree to what you do.”

As such, dealing with one person with a relatively strong standing within the community, the CoCT avoided having to ‘get everyone to agree to what they did’.

At the same time, it is important to note that the Community Leader not only was ‘used’ by the city. He also actively ‘used’ the city and the governance network, benefiting by playing different actors up against each other. Not only state actors but also non-state actors. The NGO informant #1, (interview, 19.09.15), notes,

“I mean the bottom-line was that all of us got a bit played by [the Community Leader] and the committee. They kind of cleverly used us [CORC] to provide them with the layout and stuff. They also cleverly used us to subsidize some of the top-structures that they build. They did kind of corner the city. I don’t think that the flooding issue was ever solved, but I think they really escalated Green Park’s flight in the political spectrum and political game.”

#### **7.4.2 Channels of Governing**

As discussed, in section 5.2.2, the system of wards in South Africa was introduced as a way of bringing governance closer to the people, as well as to offer participatory mechanisms of the local democratic governance (DPLG, 2005). Each ward councilor is a politically elected official charged with communicating the wishes and needs of the local communities up throughout the governance system (cf. figure 5.1). Meant to function as the key-mediator between the community and government, the ward councilor is in a position of significant power and influence. Yet, his or her power is dependent on the ward councilor’s legitimacy as a mediator. For instance, a critique toward the ward-system has then been that it assumes that informal settlements always will be made up of unified communities whose interests can be represented by *one* councilor. This is not always the case (Bohlin, 2013). Millstein (2011, pp. 34-35 referring to Béné-

Gbaffou, 2008) notes that although a ward councilor, by the different tiers of government, are seen as the legitimate representative for an informal settlement, the residents and informal dwellers themselves might disagree, rather preferring informal channels of legitimacy.

I argue that this have been the case in Green Park where the political side and ward-system have largely been excluded from the process of developing and constructing platforms as flood relief measures. Not only by the residents themselves, preferring informal channels, but also partly by the formal, administrative side of the city-government. The Community Leader notes that from a community standpoint, dealing more with the administrative side than the political side within the CoCT had been an active choice:

“I think we are more involved with the administrative because were not so happy with the political side. We just did a bit of both. Because when you speak to [the Director of Urbanisation], who is an administrator but you know that she is also involved in the political game. So if we are speaking to her, you know that you are also speaking to a person with ‘two sides’” (Community Leader, interview, 27.04.15).

The comments of the Community Leader are interesting as it underlines the important role he himself played, as well as showing the common usage of informal channels of decision-making within an otherwise formal system. As previously discussed, the meeting with the Director of Urbanisation was a catalyst for the initiation of the platform-project, as she decided that something would have to be done to relieve the residents in the Green Park from the continuous floods. This meeting came after the continuous pressure from the Community Leader, and illustrates yet again his role as the ‘kick-starter’ and initiator of the project.

“[I]t was our initiative. You remember that I said that out of being desperate - we went out of our way to get a meeting with [the Director of Urbanization]. To kind of make things happen. Because of if we did not do that, we would not be where we are now. The platforms would not exist.” (Community Leader, interview, 27.04.15).

By going “right to the top”, through an informal channel, the Green Park leadership leaped the regular legislative fences, ignoring the formal procedure of complains, which preferably should gone up through the ward councilor and into the city, as shown in Figure 7.2 below.

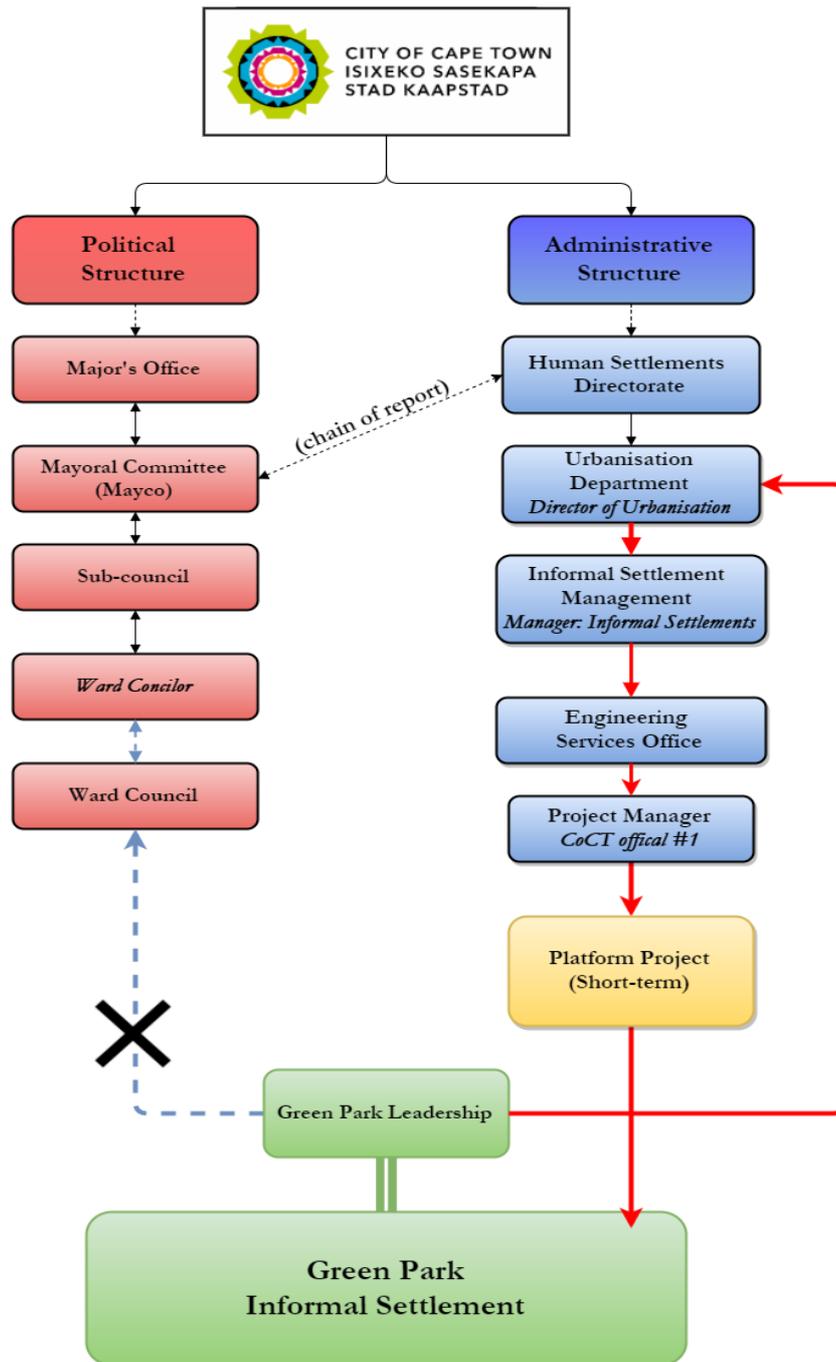


Figure 7.2: Informal channels of communication used by the Green Park Leadership

The Community Leader stressed that this was done out of urgency, stating that,

“the project itself is long overdue. We are forced to speak to the relevant authorities, which is on top. This is out of desperateness. We are supposed to follow protocol, [ward] committee; then Ward councilor and moving up. However, there is not enough time” (Community Leader, interview, 27.04.15).

A consequence of the informal “short-cut” within the formal system is a delegitimization of the local ward councilor as the key-mediator between the community of Green Park and the decision-making structures within the CoCT. Moreover, in line with Millstein (2008a) claims, it illustrates the fact that that legitimacy in informal settlements are often constructed *informally*, through personal connections or social networks and that these links and are “often dependent on particular councilors or officials” (Todes, 2015, p. 27).

## 7.5 Summary

This chapter sought to answer the second research question posed in this thesis. This has been answered through the outlining of what is a complex network of actors involved in the urban governance decision-making in Green Park. The complexity of actors from various institutions and constellations would suggest that there exist a high level of capacity and knowledge within the network. However, this chapter finds that due to horizontal and vertical disconnections between the various involved actors, this know-how and capacity is constrained from being efficiently used. This is particularly evident within the CoCT administration where departments and directorates often are criticized of ‘silo-thinking’. In the case of Green Park, the horizontal disconnection between the ISM office and New Housing, as to when to implement is a telling example of this.

Findings in this study would suggest that the horizontal disconnections within the CoCT and in relation to the provincial government have filtered down through the network creating vertical disconnections between the ‘formal’ and the ‘informal’ actors. This again has led to a considerable knowledge gap in both the implementation of the short-term plans and the physical construction of top-structures onto the platforms. Building on this, the chapter put forth the analytical framework of governance configurations, showing that the urban management is very much enabled or constrained by the different available technology and know-how (Peyroux et al., 2014). Consequently, in the case of Green Park, the new and largely untested technology of platforms as a tools for flood mitigation have further complicated the CoCT intervention in the settlement.

The last section of the chapter draw on the idea that urban governance decision-making is characterized by a ‘pushing the front line of the local state’ (Barnes & Prior, 2009). The findings in this study suggest that this ‘front line’ have come to include the Green Park Community Leader. The Community Leader have played a key role throughout the short-term

platform project becoming an integrated part in the urban governance structure. His important role in the decision-making is illustrated through his and the Green Park community's pressure and demands towards the CoCT, as well as the usage of 'informal channels' within the 'formal system' of governing as way of pushing his own and the Green Park community's promoted agendas.

## 8 Summaries and Reflections

In this thesis, I sought to have a closer look at the way in which a formal government meet, govern and interact with an informal settlement. This is done in with reference to the current realities of the urban world today where cities are becoming increasingly urbanized in tandem with a growing informality encompassing many of the poorest and most vulnerable in the society.

To exemplify and concretize this quest, I have focused the City on Cape Town's meeting, interaction and governing of the informal settlement of Green Park, focusing in particular on the implemented project of flood mitigation as well as proposed plans for a long-term formalization. As such, the mission for this study has been to 'tell the story' of Green Park informal settlement, describing and analyzing its journey from being at risk of flooding every winter, though the CoCT interventions for emergency relief, promises of electrification and finally to the potential formalization of the area with formal housing and the security of tenure.

The study has been centered round the two following research questions:

- i) *How has the City of Cape Town's implemented plans and policies of flood reduction been perceived and appropriated differently by the various actors involved with the Green Park informal settlement?*
- ii) *What have been the main governance challenges and constraints for the urban authorities implementing plans of flood relief and formalization within the informal settlement of Green Park?*

These research questions have guided the study's theoretical assumption, the empirical data production while on fieldwork in Cape Town as well as continuous analysis of these data throughout the research process. Using a theoretical framework of urban governance, I have identified and accounted for the complex network of actors who in various ways are involved with either the 'short-term' or the 'long-term' plans in Green Park.

## 8.1 Main findings

This study suggests that the CoCT's interventions within Green Park is more than anything else, characterized the complex network of actors and institutions and the disconnections and lack of communication that exists between these. I have identified the communicative and cooperative challenges between the multiple actors in the network to be cases of 'vertical disconnections' or 'horizontal disconnections'. Based on my findings I argue that the vertical and horizontal disconnections within the urban governance network have had at least three direct or indirect consequences on the CoCT-Green Park relation, and on the implementation of the plans and projects:

Firstly, the various disconnections within and between the tiers of government often results in a slow-going bureaucracy where government officials having to deal with much 'red tape' in their interactions with informal settlements. My findings show that vertical disconnections between the Province of Western Cape and the relevant department in the CoCT have caused delays and disagreements in the process of transferring the Green Park-land from the provincial level to the municipal level, subsequently hindering the implementation of the long-term plans of formalization. The cumbersome process of deproclaiming the land as a protected Nature Reserve has further complicated the interactions between the actors involved.

Secondly, vertical disconnections between the CoCT and the Green Park community have created various practical and institutional 'knowledge-gaps', especially with regards to the residents struggle of raising top-structures onto the platforms in a correct and safe manner as the CoCT officials were not able to communicate the proper way of raising these.

Finally I argue that the various disconnection within the urban governance networks have resulted in a reinforcement of Green Park residents' misconception that all governmental officials work as *one* collaborative and connected unit. This of course, have further complicated and confused the different CoCT-projects introduced in the Green Park settlement, notably the proposed 'long-term' formalization project, the 'short-term' emergency relief, and the potential electrification of the settlement. All these three projects were often confused, mixed and misinterpreted by residents in Green Park, as discussed in Chapter Six. From this it is possible to argue that what is perceived and understood one way by government officials might very well be perceived and understood in a totally different light for the residents in the informal settlement.

Although, this in itself is not a 'groundbreaking' finding, it suggests the need for both state and non-state actors operating in informal settlements to be clear and precise in the formulation

and communication of projected plans and processes. As such, by having the same aim and end-goal, the implemented or projected plans and processes will be more successful.

### **Channels of communication**

An important part of this study has been to identify the various channels in which actors operate and to assess the power and influence certain actors and individuals have on the governing and decision-making process. This have been done, in line with the second research question, so to better the understanding of the challenges and constraints that the urban authorities meet when operating in Green Park.

Based on my findings in this study, I argue that the biggest challenge of the urban authorities operating in Green Park has been ‘the dreaded red tape’. Albeit a general term, a large number of my informants, both state and non-state, referred to the red tape as being a major hindrance for the various project implementation. Of course, Green Park’s location within a protected (and provincially owned) nature reserve have further complicated the issue.

I argue that a consequence of this red tape and the slow-going process of project implementation eventually led the Green Park residents and leadership to put much pressure on the CoCT to do *something* in the settlement. Giving in to this demand by initiating the short-term project we could argue that the CoCT and more specifically the Human Settlements Directorate, increasingly are becoming a responding department, rather than a kick-starting department. This claim is further reinforced by the increasingly central role of the Community Leader in Green Park. Operating as a key mediator between the CoCT and the Green Park community (between the formal and the informal), the Community Leader possess much power and influence on the decision-making process in Green Park. His usage and navigation through the formal system of governing through informal channels of communication (as discussed in Chapter Seven) have led to a blurring of the line between the formal and informal spheres. Moreover, giving additional support to Devas’ (2004) claim that within the conceptualization of urban governance, the informal relationships between actors can be at least as important as the formal.

## Relevance and Applicability

As in all qualitative research, we need to be careful to not generalize and draw conclusions of a quantitative art. However, the qualitative study can as noted by Thagaard (2009), provide a basis for a theoretical generalization. This would be evident for my case as well.

## 8.2 Concluding Remarks

There is nothing in my findings that would suggest that the CoCT do not have a fundamental wish to improve the current situation for the residents in Green Park. Now and in the future. Rather, in my meetings with government officials this I have seen a genuine wish to improve the living situations and the livelihood for the people living in the informal settlements. Yet as we have seen throughout this thesis this wish to help is often hindered or constrained by the complex system of actors, the lack of communication and collaboration between the relevant actors as well as an often complicated and tiresome bureaucratic processes filled with policies and regulations that slow project-implementation even more. As such, the future of the Green Park settlement is still very much uncertain. Although there are many planned and approved projects for both the electrification and the formalization of the area, history have shown that nothing seems to be certain until the actual and physical construction-work begin. In talking with informal dwellers in Green Park, the lack of action have been reflected in growing frustration and a mounting resignation.

I find it appropriate to end this study with the hopeful, yet resigned reply of one of my informants in Green Park,

*Interviewer:* So where do you see Green Park in five years? – Best case scenario.

*GP-resident #3:* I just hope that it will be fine. I hope that it will become all right (interview, 16.09.16).



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# Appendix I: List of informants

**“CoCT official #1”, interview 15.09.2015**

Informal Settlements Management (ISM) office at the CoCT. Project Manager for short-term platform project in Green Park.

**“CoCT official #2”, interview 14.09.2015**

Official at New Housing office at the CoCT. Project Manager for the long-term formalization project including Green Park.

**“Community Leader”, interview 14.08.2015**

Current community leader in Green Park informal settlement and chairperson of the short-term platform project PSC.

**“Conservation Manager”, interview 01.09.2015**

Conservation Manager at Driftsands Nature Reserve

**“Eskom official”, interview 10.09.2015**

Planning coordinator for the proposed electrification of Green Park.

**“GP resident #1”, interview 16.08.2015**

Resident in Green Park, previous member of the former community leadership

**“GP resident #2”, interview 16.08.2015**

Resident in Green Park, previous member of the former community leadership

**“GP resident #3”, interview 16.08.2015**

Resident in Green Park, previous member of the former community leadership

**“GP resident #4”, interview 17.08.2015**

Community Liaison Officer and Community Secretary in Green Park. One of the households moving onto the platforms.

**“ISM Manager”, interview 07.09.2015**

Head of Informal Settlements Management (IMS), CoCT.

**“NGO informant #1”, interview 19.08.2015**

Former project manager at CORC.

**“NGO informant #2”, interview 11.09.2015**

Project Coordinator at CORC.

**“Province official”, interview 11.09.2015**

Two-person interview with two acquisition officers at the Immovable Asset Management department, Province of Western Cape

**“Regional Coordinator”, interview 21.08.2015**

Regional Coordinator for the eastern region in Cape Town, Human Settlements Directorate

**“Ward Councilor”, interview 03.09.2015**

Local ward councilor for the ward including Green Park

# Appendix II: Exemplified Interview Guide

## Introduction

Could you please shortly introduce yourself and describe your role to within the CoCT?

- Which department/ what “title”
- What is your role with regards to Green Park?

## The city and Green Park – background

When was the first time you heard about Green Park?

- In what context?
- Who raised the concern?

What were the main concerns/ issues that were focused on?

- *Electricity, formalization, flooding?*

## Platforms

Can you tell me about how the platforms came to be?

- To what policies and mandates must you/ the CoCT adhere to when planning these types of projects?

Who were involved in planning and constructing these platforms?

- And who gave the *go* for them to be built?
- Was there a re-blocking done as well?

The platforms project is labeled as an ‘interim program’. What are the practical consequences of this?

- Was it easier to get funding and approval when the project was labeled as an “interim”/ “emergency”?

## Province connection

Why does the GP-land need to be transferred from Province to CoCT?

- Was it the city who requested the land to be transferred, or did province ask if you wanted the land? Or were the community themselves involved?

Can you tell me a little bit about the process of getting go-ahead to do work in GP from Province?

- Did it take a long time?
- Did province have any problems with that? Or CapeNature?

## CoCT-Community relations

How would you describe the city’s relationship with the community?

- To the Community Leader?

Was the community consulted during the implementation of the platforms?

In other interviews I have had with some of the members in the community they say that the community did not follow “normal procedure” through the ward/sub-council, but that they rather have gone “right to the top” as a way to speed up the process.

- How do you react to these claims?
- If so, have this pressure had an effect on the project moving forward faster than it normally would?

### **Perceptions**

Looking back now, what was *in your view* the city’s main agenda when building platforms in Green Park?

And if we do the same with the *community of Green Park*. Will they have a similar understanding/ perception of the platforms as the CoCT?

Which role does the electricity agenda play?

### **Institutional barriers and practical challenges**

In your mind, during the whole process - what have been the biggest challenge or barriers to actual realization of the project?

- Some residents also complain about not receiving enough information about how to build their houses on the platforms. How would you reply to this?

### **Formalization project**

What (if any) is the link between the formalization project and the platform project in Green Park?

### **Concluding questions**

Would you label the project as a success?

What would you say is the way forward for Green Park?

- Best case / worst case scenario?

### **Other**

Do you have any tips of people you think I should talk to?

Do you have something to add?

- Should I have asked for anything else?
- Do you have any questions for me?

# Appendix III: Informed consent form

## Consent form

*“Flood management and informal settlement upgrade - A case study of Green Park, South Africa”*



### Background

Planning for, and initiating work to upgrade and secure informal settlements in the City of Cape Town is a difficult process involving many different actors at various governmental and non-governmental levels. In my study, I will look closer at the case of the informal settlement of Green Park. Here, the City of Cape Town are finalizing the process of constructing platforms to reduce the dangers of flooding and the upgrading of service stations and buildings in the settlement. A wide range of actors and institutions has been involved in the planning and implementation of these platforms. The objective of the study is to identify and “map” these different actors, see how they mobilize to promote demands as well as identifying the institutional barriers and practical challenges they face during the process.

My study is connected to the CLIMWAYS-project (Climate change and urban water governance: Pathways to social transformation), which is a consortium of Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR), the University of KwaZulu-Nata (UKZN), the University of Cape Town (UCT), and the Department of Sociology and Human Geography at the University of Oslo (UiO). Senior researcher Trond Vedeld at NIBR manages the CLIMWAYS-project, and senior researcher Dianne Scott (UCT) is in charge of the Cape Town team.

### Interview

In order to answer my research questions I wish to interview 15 to 20 actors connected in different ways to upgrading agenda and the process of constructing platforms in Green Park. The questions I want to ask will be about their role in this process; the challenges and barriers they face; how cooperation is with other institutions and actors; their reflections around the current state of the project and ways forward.

I prefer to record interviews using an audio recording equipment. This is done to facilitate a more precise recollection of the conversation. Audio recordings will not be shared with others and deleted after transcription. The interviews will approximately take 1 hour and I will together with the participants decide upon a suitable time and place. The interview is voluntary

and participants can withdraw at any time during the interview. If participants decide to withdraw from the project, all data given by them will be deleted immediately.

### **Data material**

All the information collected will be kept confidential. No others than myself and the other members of the CLIMWAYS project will have access to the data material. The data collected will be stored at my personal password protected computer and electronically on a secure CLIMWAYS Dropbox account.

The study seeks to understand and analyze a specific planning process and see how different actors involved have played a part in it. As a consequence the participants cannot be offered anonymity as they could be recognized due to their professional title or by people with knowledge about the events described in the study.

The project is planned to be completed by the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2016. The finished product will be published on the University of Oslo's home page. Relevant data will be shared with the CLIMWAYS project group who plan to finalize their project within January, 2017. All data material will be shredded and destroyed after the final project end.

### **Contact**

I hope that you have the opportunity to meet with me and share your view and knowledge on this topic. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on, XXX. You can also contact my supervisor, Prof. David Jordhus-Lier at the Department for Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo: XXX

The study is reported to- and approved by the Data Protection Official for research, Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD).

### **Declaration of concert**

I have received information about the research project and I am willing to participate.

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(Signed by project participant, date)