

THE POLICING OF ILLEGAL SQUATTING IN THE GREENBELTS WITHIN
WELTEVREDEN PARK AREA

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements for
the degree of

MAGISTER OF TECHNOLOGIAE

in the subject

POLICING

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MAY 2010

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I declare that **“THE POLICING OF ILLEGAL SQUATTING IN THE GREENBELTS WITHIN WELTEVREDEN PARK AREA”** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed

SIGNATURE

(MS S A MABUDUSHA)

DATE: 31/03/2010

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following people:

Dr Moses Montesh for being such a devoted supervisor and an inspiration to me.

Captain Jacque Pretorius from Honeydew SAPS for his willingness to provide me with information and the Honeydew policing precinct map as well as for arranging my visit to the greenbelts.

Captain Mike Ngele from Honeydew SAPS for providing me with information regarding the police tasks within Weltevreden Park.

Andries Mentjies from JMPD for organising the greenbelts photos for me.

Sizwe Mabuza from JMPD for providing me with information regarding the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park.

Dee White, Weltevreden Park ward concillour for providing me with information and the map of Weltevreden Park.

Lastly, I would like to thank all my colleagues at UNISA's Department of Police Practice for their support.

Summary

After South Africa's democratisation in 1994, the areas which had been deemed "only for whites" within the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (CoJ) were opened to all citizens. These changes attracted a high in-migration of people seeking better living in the CoJ. This influx not only challenged the provision of employment but also impacted negatively on the availability of land and housing and on the maintenance of safety and security by the police. Lack of accommodation forced immigrants to squat in the open spaces (including in the greenbelts) within the CoJ.

A literature review provided an understanding of this problem locally and internationally. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the affected stakeholders. The findings showed that the measures needed to combat the causes of illegal squatting are beyond police control. The involvement of departments such as Human Development, Labour, Home Affairs and Environmental Management is needed for a successful solution to the problem.

Key concepts: Policing, Greenbelt, Illegal Squatters

Opsomming

Na Suid-Afrika se demokratisering in 1994, is die areas binne die Johannesburgse Metropolitaanse Munisipaliteit wat aanvanklik as vir "slegs blankes" beskou is, vir alle burgers oopgestel. Hierdie veranderinge het 'n hoë in-migrasie tot gevolg gehad van mense wat op soek was na 'n beter leefwyse in Johannesburg. Hierdie toevloei van mense het nie net aan werkvoorsiening 'n uitdaging gebied nie, maar het ook 'n negatiewe impak gehad op die beskikbaarheid van grondgebied en behuising, sowel as die handhawing van veiligheid en sekuriteit deur die polisie. Die gebrek aan behuising het immigrante gedwing om op oop ruimtes (insluitend die parkgordel) binne Johannesburg te plak.

'n Literatuuroorsig het begrip vir hierdie probleem op plaaslike sowel as internasionale vlak verskaf. Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude is ook met geaffekteerde belanghebbendes gevoer. Die bevindinge het getoon dat die maatreëls wat benodig word om die oorsake van onwettige plakkery te bestry, buite die polisie se beheer is. Die betrokkenheid van departemente soos Menslike Ontwikkeling, Arbeid, Binnelandse Aangeleenthede en Omgewingsbestuur is nodig ten einde die probleem suksesvol op te los.

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Bill of Rights which was included in the Interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 200 of 1993 as amended by the Constitutional Act 108 of 1996 enforces values such as the rights to human dignity, equality and freedom. The Constitution further guarantees the rights of people to decent housing, and freedom of movement and residence. Many people used the opportunity provided by the Bill of Rights and the Constitution to freely migrate to the urban areas of South Africa without fear. This migration towards the cities was not only observed among the South African citizens but also among people from different parts of the continent (Maharaj, 2004:20), with foreigners regarding this country as a land full of prosperous job opportunities and hope for a decent living (Maharaj, 2004:2). The movement towards urban areas posed its own challenges for government departments charged with rendering services such as housing and safety and security.

The population in the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) area also increased rapidly, from 2 883 226 in 2000 to 2 986 338 people in mid-2005, and is estimated to rise to 3 103 182 people in the mid-2010 (CoJ: City Development Plan, 2001/2002). As a result, the provision of housing over the years became a major challenge to the municipality, with an estimated more than 240 000 backlogs in the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development

Framework, 2003:28). Owing to poor control of high urbanisation and the increasing movement of immigrants in the country, the large housing and service shortages continue to be difficult to overcome, resulting in more people turning to open spaces (including the greenbelts) as a place to stay (South Africa. Western Cape Department of Housing, 2003:5).

A greenbelt is an open space within an urban area in which people are not allowed to live and on which they cannot build any form of housing structure (operational definition). The objective for reserving these greenbelt spaces is to protect the natural environment and to prevent urban sprawl (Park, 2001:37). According to the City of Johannesburg Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (CoJ: Public Open Spaces By- Laws, 2007/2008:65), it is the responsibility of the local government, City Parks and the Environmental Management Department to maintain all the open spaces within the City of Johannesburg. These departments are tasked with public safety, by-law enforcement and conservation of open spaces together with other regulatory services related to the greenbelts. According to Section 205(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996, the South African police departments are also charged with an overall maintenance of safety and security within the South African society.

The focus of this study is on the challenges facing the policing of illegal squatting in the greenbelts within the Weltevreden Park area in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. The impacts that squatting has on the surroundings and adjacent residences are discussed, together with the reasons for squatters invading such greenbelts.

A profile of the area under the study, Weltevreden Park, is drawn up and analysed. The researcher also gives an overview of the problem of illegal squatting in South Africa as well as in other countries around the world, such as Brazil and Hong Kong. At the end of the study, recommendations are formulated, based on the findings of the research.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

During the apartheid era, the occupation of towns and cities in South Africa was demarcated along racial lines, with the cities being demarcated for the occupation of white people only (Pirie & da Silva, 2001:173-175). Beside the segregation of black people in the cities (including the city parks and greenbelts), non-citizens of this country, for example, miners from Mozambique were also not allowed to apply for citizenship. As a result, hostels were constructed in townships such as Soweto, Alexandra and Tembisa in order to accommodate and control the surplus of black people working in the cities as well as to prevent illegal squatting in the open spaces (Pirie & da Silva, 2001:173-175).

Strict laws that were passed to control the surplus of black people in the cities included:

- The Group Areas Act (41 of 1950) that was passed in order to compulsorily segregate black people from places that were deemed to be for whites;
- The Prohibition of Illegal Squatters Act (52 of 1951) that gave the provincial governments and the local authorities the powers to demolish any form of illegal squatting;
- The 1952 Amendments to the Native Urban Areas Act (54 of 1923) that made it compulsory for all black people to carry their identity documents where ever they

went so that it could easily be established who was allowed in the city and who was not.

All of these oppressive laws were abolished after the 1994 elections (Pirie & da Silva, 2001:173). The abolition of the above-mentioned legal prescripts and the rising influx of undocumented immigrants and urbanisation movement to the cities after the democratisation of this country increased the number of housing shortages and led to the problem of illegal squatting in open spaces (including the greenbelts). Huchzermeyer (2004:344) is of the opinion that the illegal squatting problem, especially on the conserved open spaces such as the greenbelts, results from various social issues such as “unequal access to urban economy, unbalanced urban structure and land market, inadequate policy on urban land reform, and inadequate budgetary allocations to the government’s housing delivery programmes”. She argues that in order to address this problem of illegal squatting in the greenbelts attention should be given to the above-mentioned roots of the problem.

1.3 PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

The problem that is the focus of this study concerns the challenges facing the policing of illegal squatting in the greenbelts within the Weltevreden Park area and the role played by these greenbelts in crime. According to Section 24 of the Constitution of Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, the purpose of protecting the greenbelts is to provide clean air to the public and to conserve nature for future generations. This makes the presence of squatters in these areas a problem because these squatters do not have the necessary infrastructure for healthy living, which includes decent housing, electricity, refuse removal, sanitation and water supply.

As a result, these squatters cut down trees in the greenbelts in order to make fire, and carry out activities that are morally deemed to be performed in private spaces (such as bathing) in public places under trees or bridges or even in valleys. Lack of refuse removal and sanitation also results in the greenbelts being polluted with garbage, increasing the chances of inviting diseases such as cholera (Ballard, 2004:162).

The above-mentioned problems are referred to in a study conducted by Ballard (2004:162-166) in Durban regarding the public's perception of squatters and vagrants. In his study Ballard found that squatting results in environmental pollution and damages the earth's surface. He also discovered that this problem is not confined to the greenbelts but that it also impacts on the health of the adjacent communities. Furthermore, he indicates that the presence of squatters in the greenbelts also challenges the roles of the police in maintaining safety and security in the adjacent residences. Added to this, Saff (1998:449) argues that the occupation of illegal squatters on the greenbelts has a negative impact on property values in the adjacent communities and makes it difficult to sell those houses.

In response to this problem, Mr Motsuki (2008), law enforcement and special operation manager of Region C of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (CoJ), argues that the municipality cannot solve these greenbelt issues, because it does not have enough human, physical and financial resources to cater for all the areas under its jurisdiction. As a result of limited resources, service delivery is prioritised on the basis of the urgency of the service needed, since the area under discussion is a rapidly developing area.

So it often happens that services such as housing, water and electricity are the services attended to mostly as compared to the greenbelt issues, which often fall to the bottom of the list. The Directorate for Community Forestry (South Africa. Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, Undated:7) also regards urban greening and urban forestry as one of the areas that receives the least priority from the local government as compared to other services.

Current measures aimed at dealing with illegal squatting in South Africa, for example, the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act (19 of 1998), seem to be ineffective. The reason is that legislation like this 'Act' provides only for the reactive management of the problem once it has occurred and there are no pro-active measures available to prevent this problem before its occurrence (South Africa. Western Cape Department of Housing, 2003:5).

The National Urban Renewal policy, which should serve as a backup plan and a source of financial and guideline support to the provincial and local governments, is not yet established in this country. However, the provincial governments such as the government of the Gauteng province have launched their own policy objectives that focus mainly on renewing the urban centres, without the national legislation or policy in place to guide them. As a result, these departments experience difficulties with the actual implementation of such programmes because they have limited finances or frameworks in place to help them execute their objectives (Engelbrecht, 2009: 4 & 18).

The crime prevention projects have been established from different levels of the government, such as the Intergovernmental Safety Coordinating Committee, and other responsible parties, such as the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD), the Environmental Management Department and the South African Police Service (SAPS). However, it seems that there is insufficient coordination among these departments and this hinders the success of the public safety projects (South Africa. Department of Community Safety, 2008/2009:17). This lack of coordination among the various role players also results in a lack of accountability for the overall crime prevention within the greenbelts.

It is indicated in the CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework (2003:49) that continuing overcrowding and illegal squatting on reserved open spaces, including the greenbelts, challenge the CoJ municipality's service delivery. As a result, a need for a detailed study or programme to guide the CoJ municipality on how to deal with such matters has been deemed very important. The preliminary interviews conducted by the researcher with the Councillor of Weltevreden Park (2008) highlighted that so far there is no evidence that the municipality has any ready-made plans to respond to these greenbelt problems. To date there is no research that has been conducted in the CoJ regarding the: "policing of illegal squatting in the greenbelts". This research intends to fill in that gap and to suggest a strategy that could be used to deal with this problem.

1.4 THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this research is to investigate, identify and describe the factors that challenge the policing of illegal squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park.

The objectives of this research can be summarised as follows:

- To investigate and describe the reasons for squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park;
- To investigate and describe the impact of illegal squatting on the surroundings and adjacent residences;
- To establish if there is a link between these squatters and the crimes committed within Weltevreden Park;
- To investigate and describe the role played by these greenbelts in crime within Weltevreden Park;
- To investigate and describe the profile of the squatters in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park;
- To understand and describe the nature of illegal squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park; and
- To develop a strategy to combat illegal squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is:

How is the problem of illegal squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park policed? The following sub-questions are also examined:

1.5.1 What role is played by these greenbelts in crime?

1.5.2 What are the reasons for squatting in the greenbelts?

1.5.3 What are the challenges facing the policing of illegal squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park?

1.5.4 How does illegal squatting in the greenbelts impact on the adjacent communities and the surroundings?

1.5.5 What is the nature of the relationship between the police (SAPS and JMPD) and the other key role players such as the City Parks, Human Development and Environmental Management departments?

1.6 VALUE OF THE STUDY

The police will benefit from this study because the gaps that hamper the success of policing illegal squatting (or maintaining safety and security) within Weltevreden Park will be identified and recommendations will be made, particularly on how to respond to such gaps. This will benefit not only the police but also the other key role players in terms of guiding them on how to act against illegal squatting in the greenbelts.

Other municipalities and police departments experiencing similar problems of illegal squatting in the greenbelts within their area of jurisdiction may learn from the recommended guidelines.

If the recommended guidelines are able to be implemented, then the communities adjacent to these greenbelts will be relieved of some of the problems experienced as a result of illegal squatting, such as air pollution and feelings of insecurity. As a result, the police role of maintaining public safety and security will be enhanced. In addition, this study intends to make a contribution to the academic community by increasing the knowledge regarding the topic under the study.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Goddard and Melville (2001:1), research involves not only collecting data but also “answering unanswered questions” or establishing a new quest for knowledge. This suggests that a research methodology is a particular method adopted by the researcher in order to gather information and to answer the intended research questions.

1.7.1 Research approach and design

The researcher decided to use the qualitative research approach. According to Walker (2001:8), this approach emphasises a detailed understanding of the problem being studied. This approach has the following advantages for the researcher:

- It enables the researcher to get the meaning behind the facts by giving the reasons for the problem being as it is rather than by making generalisations.
- It enables the researcher to understand the problem focused on by the study from the research participants’ points of view.

- It encourages the researcher to develop a relationship with the research participants so that she can get a detailed understanding of the participants' expressions and perceptions of the problem.

The limitations of using the qualitative approach are that the researcher cannot conduct her research from the office or without direct contact with the research participants, which in turn might influence the researcher's decisions (Walker, 2001:57). This approach, however, is best suited to this study because using it the researcher is able to obtain a detailed understanding of the problem from the selected research participants' points of view.

Using the qualitative approach qualifies the design of this study to be considered phenomenological in nature. The term "design", according to Fouche (in De Vos; Strydom; Fouche & Delport, 2005:268), is used by different authors differently and at times interchangeably with terms like "strategy of inquiry" or "traditions" and "methods". Fouche (in De Vos et al., 2005:286) defines design as "the options available to the qualitative researchers to study certain phenomenon according to certain formulas suitable for their specific research goal". For the purpose of this study the researcher defines this term by comparing it to a recipe which the researcher has in mind that guides her on how to go about answering the proposed research questions and finally achieving the goal of the research (operational definition). Phenomenological designs are the designs that aim at providing the meaning behind what is expressed by the research participants regarding their experiences of the problem at hand (Fouche in De Vos et al., 2005:270).

This study is descriptive and contextual in nature. The descriptive nature of qualitative research means that the research aims at giving a clear picture of the problem at hand, whereas the contextual nature of qualitative research means that the research aims at understanding the context of the problem being studied. The advantage of using both aspects of the qualitative approach in this study is that the researcher is able to obtain a clear understanding of the roots of squatting in the greenbelts in this country and to contextualise the current problem within the available literature gathered. This information together with the findings of this study enables the researcher to give a thick description of the problem being studied (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:272).

1.7.2 Target population and sampling

“Population” refers to a totality of all the entities which the research problem involves, for example all the people, events and the objects that relate to the problem being studied (Strydom in De Vos et al., 2005:193). Sampling involves drawing a small number of participants from the total population group in which the researcher intends to study. According to Strydom (in De Vos et al., 2005:194), in a qualitative research study, sampling is not as strongly applied as in a quantitative research.

Usually in a qualitative study the sample group is not randomly selected, meaning that not every participant has an equal chance of partaking in the study. The reason for this is that qualitative research focuses more on obtaining rich saturated information rather than on representing the whole population group. The use of samples helps to obtain more accurate information, which is been difficult to obtain when studying the whole population group.

Sampling also makes the process of data analysis more manageable by saving time and expense (Strydom in De Vos et al., 2005:194). The target populations from which the research sample was drawn include the police, the squatters in the greenbelts of Weltevreden Park and the affected community members. The researcher drew other information from the Weltevreden Park ward councillor, City Park rangers and Migrant Advisory Help Desk of Region C in the CoJ municipality. The method used to reach these participants was purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, the researcher selects the research participants that appear to have expert knowledge of the problem at hand (Strydom & Delport, in De Vos et al., 2005:328).

For the purpose of this study, the Weltevreden Park ward councillor was selected for interviewing because of the knowledge she has pertaining to the problems within her jurisdiction. The Department of Human Development within CoJ was also contacted in order to obtain information regarding the ways in which it intends to deal with or deals with the issue of illegal squatting in the greenbelts. The community members were chosen on the basis of their involvement in the residence associations that exist in Weltevreden Park, such as sector policing forums.

The members of SAPS were selected on the basis of their involvement in sector policing forum within Weltevreden Park. The City Park rangers and the JMPD participants were selected on the basis of their involvement in activities such as by-law enforcement, nature conservation activities and patrolling within Weltevreden Park. The squatters asked to participate in the study were those who were found in the greenbelts on the day that the researcher visited the greenbelts. All these participants were asked to take part in the research.

The researcher was not able to determine beforehand how many participants would be interviewed, as this depended on whether enough information was obtained or not. The reasons for selecting these participants were that they were easily accessible for the researcher and that their knowledge of the area and of the problem being studied made it likely that they would be able to answer the proposed research questions very well.

1.7.3 Data collection

Data was collected through the use of a literature review, semi-structured interviews and documents.

1.7.3.1 Literature review

The literature review is described as a review of other scholars' literatures (studies) in order to examine what they think about the topic the researcher intends to study. Carrying out a literature review is advantageous as it familiarises the researcher with the existing knowledge pertaining to the problem being researched and it can also be used as a supporting evidence to the research study (Delpont & Fouche, in De Vos et al., 2005:263). A review of the current literature provides the researcher with a guideline to follow in the study and keeps the researcher focused. According to Fouche and Delpont (in De Vos et al., 2005:123), a literature review includes the review of "scientific books, articles in professional journals, research reports and monographs, internet, television broadcast and newspapers".

During the literature study the researcher noticed that most authors use the term “illegal squatters” interchangeably with the term “vagrants” (Ballard, 2004) and unlawful occupants (South Africa. Western Cape Department of Housing, 2003). This meant that during the literature search the researcher had to look up all these terms in order to increase the chances of accessing more information.

The researcher searched for books pertaining to this topic with the Unisa library catalogue search and did not find any book dealing with illegal squatting, greenbelts and policing as one topic, but found different books dealing with these concepts separately. The researcher also obtained some of the journal articles and national, provincial and local policy and legislation documents by browsing the Internet via the Unisa library website at <http://www.unisa.co.za>. Other documents regarding the area under study were obtained from the Region C offices of the CoJ as well as from the Roodepoort Museum.

1.7.3.2 Interviews

Interviewing, according to Greef (in De Vos et al., 2005:287), involves the participants’ personal descriptions of the issue at hand and the researcher’s reflection on what was said by the participants. The disadvantage of using translators in this data-collection method (interviews) is that translation might impact on the accuracy of the participants’ answers, as data might not be transcribed exactly as the participants expressed it. To increase the quality of information obtained, the researcher took field notes and observed any non-verbal communication expressed by the participants during the interview sessions.

Semi-structured interviews were adopted in this study. Semi-structured interviews are those interviews formulated in relation to the research problem, while still giving freedom of expression to the research participants (Greef, in De Vos et al., 2005:292). The advantage of using semi-structured interviews is that it makes it possible for the researcher to draft the questions that need to be answered for the purpose of the research, while at the same time giving the participants an opportunity to add anything they think is relevant to the research (Greef, in De Vos et al., 2005:290).

The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with the following participants: the police, City Park rangers and the ward councillor of the Weltevreden Park area as well as a Department of Human Development representative. The advantage of choosing this method for these participants was that it offered them privacy, which facilitated the freedom for them to express themselves and as a result enabled the researcher to obtain detailed information from these participants. However, this type of interview has certain disadvantages in that it does not facilitate the sharing of ideas and is time consuming as compared to focus group interviews (De Vos et al., 2005:299).

For the squatters and the residents of the adjacent residences affected by this problem a focus group interview was conducted. Unlike the one-on-one method, which is directed at an individual person, with focus group interviews the research questions are directed to a number of more than two participants.

The advantage of using a focus group for these participants is that it saves the researcher's time, as opposed to attending to each participant on a separate schedule. It also enabled the researcher to understand the general feelings of the community members regarding the research problem and also to establish the reliability of the information given by comparing the participants' responses (De Vos et al., 2005:300). The limitation of conducting a focus group interview is that the participants can easily influence each others' responses or limit each others' freedom of expression.

1.7.3.3 Documents

According to Strydom and Delpont (in De Vos et al., 2005:315), the term "documents" refers to "any written materials or recorded materials such as diaries, letters, minutes of meetings, agendas, newspapers, police dockets, video records and pictures". The documents analysed in this research study include the minutes of sector meetings; Honeydew SAPS statistics; Integrated Development Plan and Regional Spatial Framework documents from the CoJ Metropolitan Municipality; an SABC1 programme DVD; local newspapers publishing issues pertaining to squatting on the greenbelts; policies and legislation from national, provincial and local departments of Housing, Environmental Affairs and Safety and Security.

1.7.4 Strategies for ensuring the reliability of the study

The researcher ensured the reliability of this study by making sure that data was gathered from participants that had been purposively selected, based on the good knowledge they had of the area and of the research problem.

The researcher conducted member checking by comparing the information obtained from different participants in order to establish the commonalities between the data. For example, data gathered from the adjacent community members was compared to establish whether these participants agreed or disagreed about similar issues.

The researcher also triangulated the findings of the current study with the findings of other researchers who had conducted studies related to the research topic. The reason for this was to determine whether what the other studies had identified as challenges and/or impacts of the problem was similar to what was found in the current study. In this way the researcher's aim was to establish whether the current findings were applicable to other situations with similar problems. If that applicability could be established then the true value of the study could be established as well.

The researcher made use of a co-coder as a measure of triangulation. In this way, the researcher was able to compare and discuss her interpretations of the segments on the interviews with those of the co-coder to determine whether the interpretations were similar for similar issues. The researcher's aim in doing this was to establish a consensus on the meaning underlying the participants' answers.

1.7.5 Ethical issues

According to Strydom (in De Vos et al., 2005:56), researchers have two basic categories of ethical responsibility: responsibility to the research participants who are taking part in the research study; and responsibility to follow the given framework, to be free from errors and honest in giving their feedback on the research study.

To ensure that she met her responsibility towards the research participants, the researcher asked each participant to take part in the study voluntarily. The participants who agreed to take part in the study were informed of the goal of the study and the process that would be followed during the study, and were also asked to sign an agreement form to confirm in writing that they understood their role and the goal of the study as well as the manner in which the study would proceed. If a participant agreed to take part in the study by means of verbal feedback (without signing an agreement form) the researcher asked the participant to tape record that verbal agreement together with the interview session.

The participants were allowed to terminate their participation at any time during the interview and no one was forced to participate in the study. The researcher also made sure that the privacy of the research participants was protected and that the participants were informed of who would have access to their information (for example the co-coder and the transcriber would obviously access the information despite its confidentiality). Finally, the researcher made sure that the research process was in accordance with UNISA's code of ethics.

1.7.6 Data analysis

According to De Vos (in De Vos et al., 2005:333), data analysis refers to “a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data”. The researcher in this study followed Tesch's eight-step process of data analysis, which is summarised as follows:

- The researcher reads carefully through all the transcriptions and writes down the significant ideas that come to mind.

- The researcher picks the transcriptions one by one and understands the underlying central storyline each transcription contains and writes it down.
- After completing this task for several participants, the researcher now makes a list of the emerging ideas.
- The researcher now goes back to the data and gives labels to each segment in the transcription.
- The researcher then groups similar labels under the same themes.
- The researcher now confirms if all the labels are grouped under the correct themes.
- The researcher then starts with preliminary analysis by grouping data belonging to the same category in one place.
- If necessary the researcher recodes the available data (Tesch, in Van As & Van Schalkwyk, 2000:62).

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of this study are discussed under Chapter 6, which deals with the recommendations and conclusions of the study.

1.9 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The key concepts used throughout the study are defined as follows:

1.9.1 Policing

According to Dempsey and Forst (2005:4), policing refers to “the police role of maintaining order and dealing with law-breakers”. Shearing (1998:1) defines policing as simply “what the police do”.

Therefore, for the purpose of this study “policing” will refer to the activities performed by the police in order to maintain safety and security within the community (operational definition).

1.9.2 Illegal squatter

In terms of the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act 19 of 1998, an illegal squatter which is also known as an “unlawful occupant” is defined as a “person who occupies a land without the express or tacit consent of the owner or the person in charge, or without any right in law to occupy such land” (Section 15). For the purpose of this study an illegal squatter will refer to anyone occupying land that is reserved for a particular purpose without permission (operational definition).

1.9.3 Greenbelt

According to the CoJ Municipality Public Open Space By-Laws (2004:3), a greenbelt refers to a “conserved public open space, which is managed by or on behalf of the Council for conservation purposes”. A greenbelt is also defined as “an open space sustained to protect the natural environment and to prevent urban growth” (Park, 2001:37). Therefore, for the purpose of this research a “greenbelt” will refer to an area where development is prohibited in order to protect the natural environment (including trees, land surface, lakes and animals) and to prevent urban sprawl (operational definition).

1.10 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the research problem and discusses the background of the problem being studied, and also gives an overview of the research methodology. The research methodology section includes the research approach, design, aims and value of the study, together with the method used to collect data. Chapter 2 focuses on the profile of the area under study – Weltevreden Park. Chapter 3 provides an explanation of the problem, by discussing: the causes of squatting in the greenbelts, the implications of squatting in the greenbelts, legislation dealing with illegal squatting, and the role of the police in dealing with this problem. Chapter 4 discusses the problem of squatting in other countries, with a focus on how such countries address this type of problem. Chapter 5 presents the research findings, and Chapter 6 provides the recommendations derived from the research findings and the overall conclusion of the research report.

CHAPTER 2: THE PROFILE OF WELTEVREDEN PARK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Weltevreden Park is one of the urban areas which fall under the jurisdiction of Region C of the City of Johannesburg (CoJ) Metropolitan Municipality. The information regarding the Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDF) for this municipality is based on the findings from the city's Geographical Information System (GIS). This GIS presents only a picture of a region as a whole and not the specific areas under a particular region. As a result, information on specific areas within those regions is very limited. This means that not much specific information on Weltevreden Park is provided in the RSDF documents. This makes it difficult for the researcher to gather and compile a sound profile of the area under study. For this reason, the researcher has chosen to present the profile of the study area step by step, starting with an overview of the CoJ Metropolitan Municipality, followed by a detailed analysis of Region C, and then a discussion of Weltevreden Park area.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

The CoJ Metropolitan Municipality was established in 2000 under the Gauteng Provincial Notice number 6766 of 2000 as amended by Notice 8698 of 1 December 2000.

This municipality is located at the centre of the Gauteng Province and it has a population of about 2 883 226 people (CoJ: City Development Plan, 2001/2002). The average population growth of the entire city is estimated at 0.9 % between the year 2000 and 2010. This makes it the fastest-growing city in the country (CoJ: City Development Plan, 2001/2002). After the initiation of the new metropolitan municipality, the previous 11 regions of the CoJ were joined together and restructured to form the current seven regions: Regions A to G (CoJ: City Development Plan, 2001/2002). The areas demarcated under the jurisdiction of this new municipality include: Roodepoort, Soweto, Midrand, Sandton, Central Business of Johannesburg and Orange Farm as well as part of Alexandra (CoJ: City Development Plan, 2001/2002).

Within the structure of the new metropolitan municipality, each region is tasked with the responsibility of delivering and managing services such as housing, health care and social development within its jurisdictions. In addition to this, separate departments to manage areas such as museums, art galleries and heritage sites, and law enforcement have been established. The policies implemented by the provincial government are then monitored at the local level by the respective city councils (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2003:15).

This municipality is known for its diversity in job opportunities, high population rate and a better economic development as compared to other municipalities in South Africa (CoJ: City of Johannesburg Overview, 2008). The CoJ alone generates approximately 16% of the South African Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and it has created employment opportunities to about 12% of the national employment.

This municipality experiences a high inflow of people seeking job opportunities. This has meant that numerous efforts have been implemented in this municipality in order to balance the economic status between the poor and the rich. The restructuring effort adopted includes the establishment of the executive mayor's office and the implementation of new policies for the newly established departments.

The Joburg 2030 plan has also been adopted in order to provide everyone within this municipality with a better standard of living (CoJ: City of Johannesburg Overview, [sa]). However, the CoJ still appears to be characterised by inequalities because well-established infrastructures in this municipality are still concentrated more in urban areas than in non-urban areas, resulting in gaps between the rich and the poor (CoJ: Integrated Developmental Plan Revision, 2007/2008a). An increasing in-migration of African people into the Central Business District (CBD) and the surrounding areas is observed in the CoJ, whereas an observable out-migration of white people from those areas is also on the rise (CoJ: City development Plan, 2001/2002).

The CoJ is also known for having the highest level of crime in the entire country, especially in the city centre. The reasons for this include the high in-migration of people who experience economic difficulties. Crime affects both the middle and the lower class, together with the overall economy of the city (Louw, Shaw, Camerer & Robertshaw, 1998:1).

2.3 ANALYSIS OF REGION C

After analysing the information regarding the City of Johannesburg: Region C the following information about its character was established:

2.3.1 Location

Region C is one of the seven administrative regions that collectively form the CoJ Metropolitan Municipality. This region was demarcated to the northwest side of the Johannesburg CBD, to the north of Soweto and bordering Mogale City Local Municipality to the west (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2008/2009:7).

2.3.2 Physical and social characteristics

This region is rich with nature and it has a variety of residential suburbs, ridges, and agricultural holdings and a number of open spaces, which attract more developments and make it a good place for investment purposes. These open spaces include: Roodekraans Ridge, Little falls , Kloofendal Nature Reserve, Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens, Golden Harvest Park, Florida Lake, Len Rutter Park, Bram Fischerville Wetlands as well as the Cosmo City conservation area (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2008/2009:7). Owing to this availability of developmental opportunities and the location of most tertiary institutions in the region, an increasing change in population and developmental trends is being observed (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework , 2008/2009:7).

Industrial areas such as Manufacta, Robertville, Lea Glen and the Roodepoort Regional node characterise the southern part of this region. The informal settlements such as Princess Agricultural Holdings, Sol Plaatjies, Matolesville, Doornkop/Thulani, Leratong, Tshepisoong and Bram Fischerville, together with Roodepoort area, are also situated in the southern part of the region. The informal settlements in the northern parts of this region, such as Zandspruit and Cosmo City, comprise a mixture of middle-class and lower-class people (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2008/2009:7).

The transport networks linking this region to the CBD include the Ondekkers and Beyers Naude roads as well as the passenger rail that is located in the south of this region. These rail stations are located close to the shopping nodes, and residential and industrial areas. However, the informal settlements in this region have no rail network and residents of these settlements mainly use taxis as a means of transport. As a result, informal taxi ranks have established themselves in this region to transport people to and from their workplaces (CoJ: Draft Regional Development Framework, 2008/2009:7).

2.3.3 Demographic analysis

According to the 2001 census, this region has a population of about 316 332, approximately 8% of the entire CoJ population. This region attracts mostly young, middle-class adults who are looking for a better residential investment.

As a result, it has a high number of people of the school-going age group, which increases the need for service delivery in that area, for example parks and schools (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2003:8).

2.3.4 Infrastructure and services

The water supply in this region comes from Rand Water Service, which has the Vaal River as its main source. The Rand Water Service is an organization which is responsible for providing and managing water services in South Africa. In the northern part of the region C the main water supply is by means of the Honeydew-to-Lanseria system. The greater Roodepoort, Ruimsig and Poortview areas as compared to other areas in the region have enough water and storage capacity. The water main and reservoir supplying the areas in the far north with water have insufficient carrying capacity (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2008/2009:9).

The northern suburbs have enough waste management services, including collected domestic, commercial, industrial and institutional waste as well as garden waste and special waste services. In contrast, the same service, such as water courses and roads, is not provided to the informal settlements in this region. Eskom and City Power are the only two electricity suppliers serving the entire region. Eskom is an organisation which is responsible for supplying electricity in South Africa, while City Power is the local electricity supplier within Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

Region C is designed in such a way that it enables the storm water run-off to fall directly into the established watercourses. These watercourses have been constructed in such a way that they will be able to carry a large amount of water. Most of the sewage systems drain waste to the northern Wastewater Treatment Works and they are situated in the eastern part of the region.

The western portion of the region between Roodepoort and Beyers Naude Road drains to the Driefontein Wastewater Treatment Works (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2008/2009:9-10). This region has about five police services: Honeydew police station, Roodepoort police station, Florida police station, Muldersdrift police station and the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD). These police services are all tasked with the duty of crime prevention although each department has its own areas of speciality. For example, the SAPS priority is more focused on investigating and combating criminals, whereas the JMPD's priority is more focused on managing unlawful behaviour and involves activities such as controlling traffic and enforcing the by-law policies (Pretorius, 2008). It can be deduced that the urban areas in this region have well-established infrastructures as compared to the informal areas in this region.

2.3.5 Common problems experienced within Region C

This region has well-established infrastructures that require continuous maintenance (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2008/2009:10). The available large tracts of open spaces lack maintenance and that makes the adjacent residences reluctant to make use of them.

As a result, this under-utilisation of the open spaces makes them more vulnerable to illegal activities such as illegal dumping and illegal squatting (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2008/2009:8). According to the Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDF) (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial Development Framework, 2008/2009:9), the enforcement of by-laws for the control of the activities such as illegal dumping and illegal squatting is ineffective within this region.

This region has poor areas such as Leratong, Itsoseng, Motolesville and Sol Plaatjies, Bram Fischerville, Doornkop, Thulani, Princess, Zandspruit and Tsepisong, which still need serious development and support. As a result, the availability of poor areas on its own affects the local government's decision about who should be served first and whose problems can be attended to later.

Consequently, the above-mentioned poor areas become the priority as compared to the open spaces, including the greenbelts in the urban areas, whose maintenance is not prioritised (CoJ: Draft Regional Spatial development Framework, 2008/2009:11). It can be deduced from the above analysis of Region C that this region in itself is a centre of attraction, not only to the future residential and business investors that could boost its economic status but also to poor people looking for job opportunities.

2.4 ANALYSIS OF THE WELTEVREDEN PARK AREA

After analyzing the information about Weltevreden Park area the following information regarding its history and its character was established:

2.4.1 History of the Weltevreden Park area

The Weltevreden Park area was named after the farm Weltevreden 202-IQ, which was established in 1861 (Smith, 2004:2). This farm covered a size of about 5.5 x 5.5 km (Smith, 2004:1). According to the available evidence, the farm Weltevreden was first granted to R. G. Bronkhorst in 1861 and later transferred to several people, including H. J. Badenhorst in 1870 and C. J. Smit in 1872.

The first suburb to be established in this farm in 1907 was Fairland, which consisted of a shop, a police station, a school and a church. The other suburbs establishment after Fairland include Allen's Nek, Constantia Kloof, Northcliff, Florida Hills, Flora Cliff and Quellerina (Smith, 2004:2).

Areas such as Allen's Nek, Constantia Kloof, Floracliffe, Florida Hills, Quellerina and Fairland and Berario surround the Weltevreden Park area and together they make up what was once Weltevreden farm. Although the farm was established in 1861, archaeological findings indicate that before the occupation by white farmers of this land it appears that there was an occupation in the area a million years ago (Smith, 2004:2). Evidence found includes an old metal forge and number of skeletons from 1700 AD and artifacts as well as a stone on which is written "BaTswana Village" just south of Weltevreden farm.

According to Mason (in Smith, 2004:2), the farm Weltevreden shows that it was used mainly for farming activities because it is rich with grassland and has very few trees. This farm Weltevreden consisted of small settlements and it was in 1973 that the first extensions were made and the area was developed quickly in about 10 to 15 years. Owing to the increasing development on the farm some of the open spaces were turned into the parks (Smith, 2004:8). Amongst the other suburbs developed on the farm Weltevreden, Weltevreden Park is the largest suburb.

2.4.2 Physical and social characteristics

Weltevreden Park is an urban area with no informal settlements and it has a total size of about 6.8 km². This area is mainly characterised by a number of town houses and business complexes. Alone it has a total population of about 31 986 people, with most of these people being of white middle-class origin (Honeydew Crime Intelligence Analysis Centre, 2008).

The majority of residents in this area are between the ages of 35 and 65. This area also comprises large tracks of open spaces (greenbelts) running through the residences. The length of these greenbelts is about 2.86 km and it starts at Springhaas Street in the south between the N1 highway and JG Strijdom drive to the north, where it veers to the northwest to Cockspur Street. The main routes used to access this area include the N1 Western Bypass, JG Strijdom Street, Albert Street, Comelius Street, and Haak-en-Steek, Hendrik Potgieter and Jim Fouche streets (Pretorius, 2008).

2.4.3 Infrastructure and services

Weltevreden Park has well-established infrastructures such as electricity, water, sewage, schools, clinics and churches. It is also served by the Honeydew police station, Johannesburg City Parks and the JMPD. According to Section 214 of the Interim Constitution Act 200 of 1993, the government provides for the establishment of the Community Policing Forums (CPFs) by the local policing service and the initiation and support of such forums by the provincial policing service.

Chapter 7 of the South African Police Service Act 68 of 1995 furthermore outlines the objectives of CPFs as to:

- establish effective communication, co-operation, and transparency between the police and the community (Section 18).

In this way the community members are urged to engage in policing activities within their areas by acting as the eyes and the ears of the police. In the case of this study, the researcher has established that the police and the Weltevreden Park community have formed a “Community-Policing” relation as alluded to in the Act.

The Weltevreden Park community members have formed residents associations and have also identified a group of community members to facilitate the communication process between them and the police. The police have also established their own sector policing unit and have appointed a sector manager to work closely with the Weltevreden Park residents. According to the white paper on Safety and Security (South Africa.

Department of Safety and Security, 1998:21), sector policing refers to “the division of the policing areas into smaller managerial sectors and the assignment of police officers regularly to these areas on full time basis”. Its objective is to enhance a good relationship between the police and the community. As a result, it appears that there is a good relationship, communication and the sharing of information between these two parties (Pretorius, 2008). The police are aware of the difficulties experienced by the Weltevreden Park residents and the Weltevreden Park residents also know that the police are aware of the existing problems in their area.

The residents of Weltevreden Park are also aware that these problems do not only affect their lives but also have an impact on the duties of the police within their community (Pretorius, 2008).

2.4.4 Crime analysis in the Weltevreden Park area

The most commonly reported crimes within this area include: petty theft, house robbery, burglary at residential premises and illegal dumping as well as intrusion of private property. Usually the instrument and method used to commit these crimes involves the breaking of windows and doors, firearms and knife pointing (Honeydew Crime Intelligence Analysis Centre, 2008). The victims of these crimes often include both males and females of all races and genders, whereas the suspects in the area are mostly young black males younger than 35-years-old (Honeydew Crime Intelligence Analysis Centre, 2008).

The majority of items stolen in these incidents include household appliances, such as televisions, music systems, and computers; cash; and other valuable items found on the premises. There are no specific dates of the month or days of the week or specific times in which these crimes are committed, which has led the police to conclude that crimes are committed as the opportunities arise (Honeydew Crime Intelligence Analysis Centre, 2008).

2.4.5 Honeydew SAPS initiatives to fight against crime

In order to strengthen the fight against crime within the Honeydew policing area (including in Weltevreden Park), the Honeydew SAPS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the private security companies that work within their policing area. This MOU was signed between the involved parties on 28 October 2008 (Kempen, 2009a:28). This initiative was influenced by the rising crime level within the Honeydew policing area, which resulted in the police station being rated the police station dealing with the second-highest house robbery rate and the seventh-highest business robbery rate in the entire country (Kempen, 2009a:28).

The aim of entering into this agreement was to strengthen the corporation and coordination of resources amongst the involved parties. This means that the private security will act as the “ears and the eyes” of the police in terms of providing them with information. The private security companies will also increase the availability of vehicles and manpower during crime incidents (Kempen, 2009b:39).

In turn this will improve the police response rate to the crime scenes. The reason for this is that the private security companies’ job is solely to guard the residences, meaning that they spend more time patrolling the residences than the police do. As a result, they are often very close to the incidents occurring in the residences than the police are. Therefore, during a crime incident they are tasked with a duty of securing the crime scene while waiting for the police to arrive and take over the investigation.

This partnership is still in a fragile stage and therefore it is difficult for the researcher to assess its impacts on the crime level within the Honeydew SAPS. However, since it is targeting serious crimes such as business robbery, it can be deduced that the Honeydew SAPS does still not have the best practice in place to police illegal squatting in the greenbelts within its policing area.

2.5 Conclusion

The urban areas of this region, including Weltevreden Park, as compared to the informal settlements in this region appear to have well-established infrastructures and large open spaces (greenbelts). The majority of the developments taking place in Region C are in the urban areas, including Weltevreden Park, and very little or no developments are taking place in the informal settlements. This suggests that the rising job opportunities in the development sites and the availability of open spaces in the area make the area vulnerable to illegal squatting.

CHAPTER 3: ILLEGAL SQUATTING IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The South African migration data of the 2001 census indicates that the number of black people who moved from rural areas to urban areas between 1996 and 2001 is about 3 754 379. This means that about half of the black population lives in urban areas whereas the other half remains in the rural areas (Kok & Collinson, 2006:7). Solomon (1996:6) points out that this large black movement to urban areas is not solely due to internal movements of South African citizens, but is also the result of the fact that amongst other African countries “South Africa, particularly, serves as a magnet to those seeking employment, a higher standard of living and brighter economic prospect”. Internal and international migrations of people are resulting in land and accommodation issues in South African urban areas.

3.2 LAND ISSUES IN SOUTH AFRICA

Land issues in South Africa date back to the apartheid government, when the minority group (white people) intentionally took ownership of the land away from the majority group (black people) (Mason, 1987:2). As a result, the minority group owned most of the land and granted as little as about 13% of the land to the majority group (Irogbe, 2003:26). Then, after the democratisation of this country in 1994, the new land policy programmes and legislations were introduced in order to overcome these injustices.

3.2.1 Established programmes

Programmes that have been introduced since 1994 are:

- Land restitution programme, which gives back land to or refunds those whose land was taken from them during the apartheid era;
- Land redistribution programme, which gives those who were previously denied the opportunity to own land a chance to do so with the help of government grants if they need financial help; and
- Land tenure reforms, which aim legally to protect the title deeds of those in possession of land (Irogbe, 2003:22).

3.2.2 Enacted legislation

Legislation enacted to support the above-listed programmes includes:

- The Extension of Security of Tenure Act 62 of 1997, which protects people from unfair removals from the lands that they own; and
- The Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994, which allows the previously marginalised groups to be given back their lands or be compensated for such lands.

However, the implementation of these land reform programmes has been indicated to be ineffective in addressing the injustices of the past because only a few of the many land claims lodged have been attended to (Sibanda, 2001:6). The government seems to be failing to deliver as it promised and the reason given for this is the insufficient human, physical and financial resources.

Contributing to this slow delivery process is the fact that the legislation of this country does not have enough records of who owns/owned which part of the land and who does not (Sibanda, 2001:2). In addition to that, the majority of land claims also concern urban land, where most of the claims represent an individual person, whereas rural land claims represent large groups of people. This results in the shortage and overcrowding of land in urban areas, which in turn lead to people squatting anywhere in the urban areas, including in the greenbelts (Sibanda, 2001:4).

3.3 THE EXTENT OF ILLEGAL SQUATTING IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Department of Statistics South Africa reported that it has difficulties with counting homeless people who sleep in the streets or under bridges or those living in open spaces, including the greenbelts and parks (Hirschowitz, 2001:14). The reason is that these people often have no identity documents or direct home addresses. As a result, the total number of illegal squatters in the country is unknown.

However, the information derived from the total number of housing backlogs in the country indicates that more than 50% of the people who do not have houses in South Africa are living in informal settlements or are illegally squatting anywhere in the country, including in the greenbelts. These people mainly occupy such lands unlawfully and some of them have intentionally established some kind of housing structures on such lands (Poni, 2008).

3.4 CAUSES OF ILLEGAL SQUATTING

The factors leading to the problem of illegal squatting in the greenbelts are described below.

3.4.1 Poverty and unemployment

The level of unemployment amongst the total working age population in South Africa increased from 34.4% in 2000 to 40.5% in 2005 (Frye, 2006:6), and, out of a population of 46 million South Africans, an estimated 48.5% people were still living in poverty in 2002 (Frye, 2006:1). Frye (2006:2) contends that people in the poor areas, especially those who were marginalised during the apartheid government, are still held back by a lack of facilities such as quality schools and tertiary education qualifications or skills to improve themselves or to come out of poverty. Because poverty multiplies itself across generations, increasingly more poor people are prevented from overcoming their circumstances (Frye, 2006:2).

Frye (2006:2) further argues that social grants implemented in South Africa to empower people do not do enough because they only offer assistance to children, disabled people and pensioners, while the working age group is still expected to obtain income from employment. The problem is that unemployment in South Africa is still believed to be a “short term and cyclical problem” (Frye, 2006:2). Owing to this high level of poverty and unemployment the majority of people in poor areas have responded to their circumstances by migrating to urban areas with the hope of bettering their lives. According to Olufemi (1998:233), unemployment problems which result in lack of income to afford accommodation are one of the reasons why so many people are homeless and are sleeping rough in urban areas.

According to the Solidarity Helping Hand (2008:3), South Africa also has white people who have been marginalised by the apartheid era and who have lived or are still living under poverty. Although poverty is less prevalent in the white population than in the black population it is also observed amongst the white population (Solidarity Helping Hand, 2008:3). Schlemmer (in Solidarity Helping Hand, 2008:3) indicates that about 10% of white South Africans are living in poverty, begging on street corners, and staying in the greenbelts, as these people have no means of affording decent lifestyles or housing. This problem is observed in different provinces around the country, but it is mainly concentrated in urban areas around Gauteng and Western Cape Province (Solidarity Helping Hand, 2008:3 & 7). White poverty is less prevalent than black poverty and is often ignored or taken very lightly by most people.

According to the South African Institute of Race Relations (in Solidarity Helping Hand, 2008:11) poverty amongst white people has been increasing annually since 1998. The reasons for this include the high loss of jobs in the country and the exclusion of poor whites from the job market by the government's Affirmative Action Programme. The 2002 -2006 general household surveys showed that the number of white people waiting for the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses is estimated to be +/- 7500 annually (Solidarity Helping Hand, 2008:7). From the above, it can be deduced that poverty and unemployment are the major factors behind illegal squatting among various races in South Africa.

3.4.2 The rising influx of undocumented foreign nationals

South Africa as compared to other African countries has a good economic and social status and is still perceived by many people from other parts of the continent as being a land full of job opportunities (Solomon, 1996:6). Foreign nationals immigrate into this country with the hope of obtaining a better living despite the problems facing the majority of black people in this country. Because of this hope, this country mostly attracts foreign people living in poverty (Solomon, 1996:6). In a study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 1996 (South Africa. Department of Home Affairs, 2000) it is indicated that there is an increasingly large number of immigrants living in South Africa illegally. The majority of these immigrants are asylum seekers from the neighbouring countries. These people come to South Africa as a result of high poverty, unemployment and political instabilities that persist in their countries of origin.

According to Solomon (1996:9), these increasing numbers of immigrants entering the South African borders add to the problem of illegal squatting because the majority of them enter the country having no money, and being homeless and jobless. Because of this, they tend to resort to squatting anywhere in the country, including greenbelts, as their alternative solution until they get better places to stay.

3.4.3 Delays in land redistribution and substantial housing backlogs

According to the White Paper on Land Policy (South Africa. Department of Land Affairs, Undated:15), the exclusions of black people from acquiring land in the urban areas during the apartheid era have influenced the rate of the urbanisation movement after democracy, which has created huge pressure on urban land.

A problem associated with this massive migration of people to urban areas is that it occurs outside of “clear and coordinated policies and strategies to provide for speedy land delivery, management and development”. People tend to grow impatient with waiting for the legal procedures to allocate land to them. They therefore resort to taking the law into their hands by occupying the open spaces that were not meant for development, such as the greenbelts (South Africa. Department of Land Affairs, Undated:15).

Increasing migration movements contribute to housing backlogs in urban areas and make it difficult for the municipalities even to provide sufficient housing in all the residences under their jurisdiction. As a result of these large housing backlogs some of the people have resorted to illegal acquisition of land. Other migrants from areas a distance from their workplaces resort to illegal squatting on the greenbelts because they want to avoid taxi fares or accommodation costs (Kok & Collinson, 2006:26).

According to Maharaj (2004:12), the housing policies in South Africa also contribute to the problem of illegal squatting on the side of asylum seekers because they do not clearly state whether such people are entitled to RDP houses or not. Sections 21 and 26 of the Constitution of Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, provide everyone in the country with the right to access adequate housing and residence. This legislation leaves the majority of poor undocumented immigrants with no choice but to squat wherever they find suitable ground.

3.4.4 The eviction of farm tenants and workers

According to Ngoveni and Minnaar (2000:4), more pressure on urban lands also resulted from the farm tenants and/or workers who were evicted from the farmlands by those farmers who were threatened with the land claims in 1994. The majority of these people had nowhere to go and as a result they invaded open spaces in urban areas. These people did not only lose their place to stay but also lost their jobs and they needed a place to stay which would allow them access to employment. So the greenbelts on the periphery of the city usually tended to be their best option because they would be able to go to and from the city and within the urban areas to search for employment.

3.4.5 The abandoning of the greenbelts

Hilborn (2009:12-14), emphasises that activities such as drug dealing, vandalism, and illegal squatting on the open spaces (including the greenbelts and parks) results from the abundance of those places (the greenbelts and parks) by the adjacent community members. In his argument he reiterated that when an open space (including the greenbelt) is not taken care of or is not used by the adjacent community it sends a message to the potential criminals that no one cares about this place. As results, the greenbelt will be dominated by potential criminals and even used mainly for illegal activities.

3.5 THE IMPACTS OF ILLEGAL SQUATTING

Ballard (2004:48) notes that racial discrimination might be one of the reasons behind the dislike of squatters by white people, but not the main reason because even black people living adjacent to squatters display the same dislike of the squatters. According to Saff (in Ballard, 2004:48), the main reason behind the dislike of the squatters is that the adjacent communities want to protect the value of their properties and to maintain the benefits accompanying the urban areas such as living near the countryside and having a quiet environment. The reason for this is that people choose to live in urban areas because of the privileges those areas offer to them (Ballard, 2004:49). Therefore, illegal squatting in the greenbelts in urban areas is deemed to be an intrusion into their urban lifestyle as “western, modernised and civilised” people. The threats associated with squatting are summarised in the subsections below.

3.5.1 Threat to property prices

Saff (1998:449), who conducted a study in Cape Town in order to test the validity of the assumption that the occupation of squatters close to suburbs affects the property values in those adjacent communities, found that this assumption proved to be true. In his study he found that squatting does lower the prices of the adjacent houses and that it makes it even more difficult to sell those houses because people are hesitant to buy houses close to squatters.

3.5.2 Threat to safety

From the study conducted by Ballard (2004:54-56), it appears that most of the residents interviewed associated squatting with crime by indicating that since they had arrived in their neighbourhood they had experienced more house break-ins than before. They also claimed that they no longer felt comfortable driving around in their area. The community members close to the greenbelts in KwaZulu-Natal also indicated the same perception of squatters. These residents pointed to an increase in theft within their areas since the squatters had moved into the nearby greenbelts (SABC1, 2008). Evidence identified by the police includes computer cases found on the greenbelts together with broken cables and television sets (SABC, 2008).

Squatters seem not only to pose a threat to the adjacent communities, but also to challenge the role of policing. The reason is that it becomes difficult for the police to investigate criminal activities if the suspects cannot be named or have no home address to which they can be followed. The adjacent communities also feel more like easy targets for criminals when they live close to the squatters and they also fear for the safety of their children when the children go to the parks or schools (Ballard, 2004:57).

3.5.3 Threat to health

The squatters' lack of the necessary basic services such as electricity, refuse removal, and sanitation affects the quality of life in the adjacent communities. This is because they make fires, and wash their clothes and bathe themselves in the rivers flowing through the urban areas.

Owing to a lack of refuse removal the area is likely to be littered with garbage. The squatters also urinate and defecate on the greenbelts and these greenbelts are close to the houses of the adjacent residents. Therefore, air pollution resulting from fires as well as the dirty environment disturbs not only the quality of life of the adjacent communities but also damages the view of the urban area (Ballard, 2004:60-62). This is also a violation of the residents' rights as outlined in Section 24 of the Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, which entitles them to the right to a healthy environment.

Private activities, such as bathing, urinating and defecation, which are morally supposed to be performed in private places, occur in public places (Ballard, 2004:64). The open spaces like the greenbelts are then used as homes by squatters and no longer as recreational areas or countryside.

3.5.4 Threat to urban identity as “modern, westernised and civilised” area

Most people buy houses in urban areas because they want to enjoy the benefits offered by these places, such as recreational activities, horse-riding, jogging and viewing the countryside (Ballard, 2004:67). If squatters occupy these areas which are not meant for occupation then the adjacent residences feel as though their sense of place has been taken away from them because they can no longer enjoy the above-mentioned privileges that go together with buying an expensive urban residence (Ballard, 2004:65).

Ballard (2004:67) further contends that other reasons for people buying houses in urban areas are that they associate the urban environment with a quiet and green environment that will offer them a sense of privacy. Therefore, the smoke caused by fires and noises made by the squatters are seen as a disturbance or violation of their right to a quiet urban environment.

3.6 THE ROLE PLAYED BY GREENBELTS IN CRIME

According to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) (Undated:1), an appropriately managed, designed and planned environment can create a feeling of safety for the community members. In contrast, dark streets and lack of maintenance to the greenbelts and parks, such as neglected replacement of lights, trimming of trees, cutting of overgrown grass, and collection of refuse, can discourage the users from taking responsibility for such places.

As a result, they can attract criminals in the sense that they (the greenbelts) can be used as hiding places and areas for accessing their targets and as escape routes after committing crimes (CSIR, Undated:9). In other words, unmaintained greenbelts attract criminals or create an environment that is conducive to criminal activities.

3.7 APPLICABLE THEORY: MERTON'S STRAIN THEORY

According to Merton's Strain theory (in Vold, Bernard & Snipes, 2002:136), the societies we live in do influence how we lead our lives because they outline what is acceptable and what is not.

Within each culture or society there are certain acceptable ways of attaining a decent living that are encouraged for everyone to adopt. Of all the methods of achieving success, education is the most emphasised method. People who have managed to obtain a decent living are praised within these societies regardless of the method used to achieve those goals.

On the other hand those who are poor are looked down irrespective of whether they are disciplined people or not. Within each society it is assumed that everyone is capable of achieving the set goals and those who do not are regarded as unambitious. These people are judged without examining their social background, whether they have the ability or finance to further their educational skills to achieve those set goals or not.

According to Merton (in Vold, et al., 2002:136), the above-mentioned acceptable means of attaining success in life can generally be regarded as “middle-class values” because they include hard work, honesty, and education, whereas illegal means are prohibited. These acceptable ways of gaining success are placed under pressure because it is usually the final result, which is wealthy life that is praised by the public more than the manner used to reach this result.

If a person conforms with the acceptable ways of gaining success but does not become wealthy, she/he will still be looked down on, whereas those who achieve success even if this is by means of unacceptable methods such as crime are rewarded for their achievement and respected as people of high social status.

Merton (in Vold et al., 2002:137) is of the opinion that situations like this put people who are not capable of reaching the set goals under a lot of pressure. The problem is that the majority of these people are in the lower classes and it is only a few of them who can pull themselves out of their economic situations and achieve that success. However, for the majority of the people such goals are unrealistic. This means that the people who cannot see any future in following the acceptable ways of achieving success may become frustrated and as a result resort to other lifestyles which they may find comfortable to adopt in order to live freely with no pressure.

In his theory, Merton (in Vold et al., 2002:140) explains how disadvantaged people can respond to their frustrations by embracing any of five different modes of adaptations used to cope with life's difficulties:

- Conformity- those who fall into this category accept both the goals set by their society together with the ways of reaching those goals, and they will follow them throughout regardless of whether they succeed or not.
- Innovation- people in this category accept the goals of becoming successful, but do not accept the legal ways of reaching those goals. These people may engage in activities such as gambling or crime in order to reach success.
- Ritualism- these people do not accept the goal of becoming wealthy, but they accept the ways set by the society to become successful. These people abide by the ways of achieving success, even though they do not hope to attain a high standard of living.

- Rebellion- in this category are those people who do not accept either the goals set by the society or the acceptable ways of achieving those goals, and instead replace them with their own new goals and ways of achieving those goals, for example by joining gangs.
- Retreatism- these people reject both the acceptable goals set by the society and the ways of achieving those goals. The most important thing they care about is having food on the table. Examples of these people include the vagrants/illegal squatters.

According to Merton (in Vold et al., 2002:140), these modes of adaptation explain an individual's choice of behaviour in response to the circumstances faced in life. As indicated earlier, illegal squatting in the greenbelts results from issues such as poverty, unemployment and delays in the provision of RDP houses and land redistribution. This theory supports the reasons for the occurrence of illegal squatting, especially on the greenbelts. Amongst the explanations given in the theory is that it is because of the frustrations of having no means to provide for themselves that people end up adopting this type of lifestyle of sleeping rough in the greenbelts.

3.8 SOUTH AFRICAN LEGISLATION DEALING WITH ILLEGAL SQUATTING

Under the apartheid era illegal squatting was heavily discouraged by the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act 52 of 1951, which gave the police the powers to get rid of any form of unlawful occupation of land. These evictions were carried out unfairly by means of severe punishment and humiliations.

This legislation collapsed after South Africa gained democracy in 1994 and it was replaced with the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act 19 of 1998 (PIE Act), which provided the occupants with the right to be fairly evicted from any public or private land. The aim of this Act is to protect squatters from unfair evictions and to qualify the squatting movement as a civil matter and not as an offence (South Africa. Western Cape Department of Housing, 2005:14).

This Act states that illegal squatters should be notified by a court order to vacate the land in question and that special considerations should be given to children, elders, disabled people and households headed by women if those occupants have been staying on that land for less than six months. If the occupants have stayed on a piece of land for more than six months they should be provided with an alternative shelter, although this provision of an alternative shelter is not a prerequisite for obtaining an eviction order (PIE 19 of 1998).

This Act has been criticised for being financially demanding and time consuming to implement as well as for providing only for reactive management of crimes that have occurred and for excluding pro-active measures of dealing with potential crimes. With the high urbanisation movement experienced in urban areas, social developments within the municipalities will need to adopt a wider approach which is both reactive and pro-active in order to control the problem of illegal squatting. The reason provided is that, without this kind of broader approach, housing competition will escalate and this will eventually result in a shortage of service delivery.

Consequently, this will make it difficult for the municipalities to cater for all the areas under their jurisdiction (South Africa. Western Cape Department of Housing, 2005:5). In 2003, the Draft Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Amendment Bill was introduced in order to amend to the PIE Act 19 of 1998. This draft proposes changes in some definitions and obligations included in the PIE Act (particularly sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 9). Amongst the changes proposed are the definition of land to include a “surveyed or unsurveyed section of land” and any form of housing structure on land; to qualify the implementation of this Act; and to make an offence of contravening the provisions of the Act (COSATU, 2003).

COSATU (2003) argues against this draft Amendment Bill by stating that it does not balance the rights of the “haves” with those of the “have nots”, but instead protects the rights of the “haves” by compromising the rights of the “have nots”, as stated in the Constitution, to housing and residences.

3.9 THE POLICE ROLE IN CRIME PREVENTION

Section 205(3) of the Republic of South Africa’s Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, provides that the tasks of the police include the prevention, combating and investigation of crime; the upholding and enforcement of the law, the protection and security of the inhabitants of the Republic and their property as well as the prevention of any action that may threaten the safety or security of the community.

The Constitution requires the police to investigate any charge laid in their hands and to make sure that the criminals are apprehended and brought before a court of law.

According to the White Paper on Safety and Security (Department of Safety and Security, 1998:24), effective crime prevention is based on the partnership between the government bodies, including the police and structures of civil society. In order to ensure successful crime prevention the role players involved are tasked with the responsibilities described below.

3.9.1 The national police

The national government is tasked with the provision of the national vision and framework for crime prevention. It initiates, coordinates and facilitates crime prevention programmes by assisting the provincial and the local governments with technical guidance, training and information sharing as well as managing and coordinating the prevention of certain priority crimes.

This department is also responsible for mobilising other departments which have a role to play in crime prevention initiatives, such as the departments of Welfare, Public Services and Administration (South Africa. Department of Safety and Security, 1996:26).

3.9.2 The provincial police

The role of the provincial government is to initiate social crime prevention and to coordinate the government functions with those of other stakeholders (including the departments of Environmental Affairs and Housing and local government) responsible for crime prevention. The aim of this initiation and coordination of resources is to assist local government together with vulnerable areas in curbing crime.

The provincial government can achieve the above objective by: overseeing police performance, promoting the cooperation between the police and the involved stakeholders, and assessing the needs for improvement in policing departments within the province if there are any (South Africa. Department of Safety and Security, 1998:33).

3.9.3 The local police

The local government is charged with the role of aligning the resources to priority areas under its jurisdiction and with empowering the local policing authorities. Crime prevention within the local government includes effective enforcement of by-laws to ensure a safer and cleaner environment that is less conducive to crime (for example by maintaining street lighting, fencing parks and maintaining the environment) and the coordination of crime prevention initiatives operating within the area to avoid duplication and to prevent crime on municipal properties.

3.9.4 Civilian oversight

The role of oversight bodies such as CPFs and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) is to work together with the police at the provincial and local levels to curb crime. This cooperation is achieved by the sharing of information regarding public safety (South Africa. Department of Safety and Security, 1998:36). Camerer (1996:2) points out that the police alone cannot ensure public safety because the commission of crime is influenced by a large number of socio-economic factors. The socio-economic factors mentioned above include economic inequalities, poverty and unemployment.

These factors are some of the social concerns which fall outside of the police capabilities, meaning that they are amongst the issues that cannot be addressed by the police but should be dealt with by government departments such as the Department of Housing and Social Welfare.

The researcher has noticed that there is a gap between the policies set by different government departments and the implementation of these policies. Different departments at the provincial and local levels have established public safety projects such as the Intergovernmental Safety Coordinating Committee and the Gauteng Social Crime Prevention Framework, which were established in 2006 together with a set of guidelines to assist the local government and its partners to incorporate widespread safety plans in their Integrated Developmental Plans.

Furthermore, the Gauteng Department of Community Safety plans to implement a local network capacity development programme to assist local authorities in establishing more community safety forums in order to coordinate local safety efforts and to improve the accountability of governance service units' supporting efforts. However, as the discussion has alluded to before, owing to insufficient coordination and funding amongst the different agencies, success is indicated to be limited (South Africa. Department of Community Safety, 2008/2009:16).

The essence of partnership amongst different stakeholders is to work together and to delegate the responsibilities and resources to relevant areas. The crime prevention programmes managed in this way help to reduce the chances of any criminal opportunity.

However, if this partnership is ineffective then the chances of crime-provoking situations rise, which in turn may hinder the role of the police within their working areas. CPFs which were developed in order to enhance the communication between the police and community members are also hindered by poor reaction from the government in terms of providing services to the urban poor.

The reason for this is that no matter how effective CPF communication is in preventing crime-provoking situations, CPFs cannot alleviate housing backlogs or unemployment (Camerer, 1996:3).

Lab (1997:20) notes that at the primary level crime can be prevented through environmental design by means of installing electric fences, CCTV camera surveillance and by putting lights on streets and locking gates as well as having private security to protect properties 24 hours a day. This Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) makes it difficult for criminals to get access to properties protected in this way.

In contrast, Ballard (2004:53) is of the opinion that such CPTED can only prevent squatting within the protected areas such as residents' homes, but it cannot stop people from occupying the suburban open spaces such as the roadside, parks and greenbelts. On the other hand, Camerer (1996:3) argues that fencing the greenbelts is not a viable solution either as it may well limit the use of these premises by the rightful residents.

Shaw (1998:4) emphasises that to make crime prevention a reality at local government level, good internal management of resources and a better planning and implementation of resources for ensuring the benefit of crime prevention are of importance. This can also improve the municipality's service delivery. In this way duplication of functions by different role players may be avoided. There appears to be a serious need for a broader approach to addressing the problem of illegal squatting on the greenbelts.

The reason is that without appropriate and pro-active strategies to deal with illegal squatting the municipalities will continue to be over burdened with the responsibilities of service deliveries and the police roles will continue to be hampered by this problem as well (South Africa. Western Cape Department of Housing, 2003:5).

3.10 THE POLICE ROLE IN ADDRESSING ILLEGAL SQUATTING

According to Shaw (2002:23), the police service during the apartheid era was characterised by unfair treatment of the citizens and was permitted to enforce its duties brutally if there was such a need. According to Ngoveni and Minnaar (2000:2), the police were given the powers to evict squatters forcibly and to apply different methods, ranging from beatings to intimidation, to evict illegal squatters. Then, as a result of the introduction of the Interim Constitution, Act 200 of 1993, and the new Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, together with the Extension of Tenure Security Act 62 of 1997, the powers of the police were limited.

As a result of the aforementioned Acts, the current police roles within the eviction process are limited to overseeing that everyone affected by the eviction process is treated fairly and that their properties remain protected (Ngoveni & Minnaar, 2000:5). In this way the police cannot decide to evict illegal squatters because their presence disturbs the police duty to create a safe and secure environment for the inhabitants of this country. This also because of the fact that illegal squatting is currently regarded as a civil matter that should be dealt with accordingly by the court of law.

This means that whenever the police are requested to police the issues of illegal squatting, they are uncertain about their responsibilities or the roles they should take in order to execute their mandates (Ngoveni & Minnaar, 2000:2). The reason is that it is difficult for the police as public servants to uphold the human rights of the squatters

and at the same time to maintain public order and prevent any threats of criminality. As a result it can be deduced that the changes in police roles have not only affected the execution of their powers but have also influenced the establishment of informal settlements and illegal squatting in the greenbelts within the country.

3.11 CONCLUSION

In conclusion it can be deduced that illegal squatting in the greenbelts within South Africa is a common problem because it is practised in most of the cities around the country, although it is more prevalent in certain areas than others. It also appears that there is no effective legislation or strategy in place to address this problem of illegal squatting in the greenbelts and that the police are uncertain about how they

should act with regard to this problem. Lack of coordination amongst the role players also appears to be an influence behind the problem of illegal squatting in the greenbelts. The reason is that it seems that there is no “working-together” relationship to fight against this problem.

According to a quote in Stadler (1979:93), “chasing squatters is like chasing birds from a cornfield” because when you chase them from one side they will go to another side. The same can be claimed for the illegal squatting problem in South Africa today. Hence, COSATU (2003) proclaims that unless the government implements a permanent, balanced solution to address the causes of illegal squatting in the greenbelts this issue will continue as it is.

CHAPTER 4: ILLEGAL SQUATTING IN OTHER COUNTRIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is the unraveling of squatting problems in the countries of Hong Kong, India, Nigeria and Brazil. These countries were chosen because they share similar historical problems with South Africa. In examining the situations in these countries, the researcher intends to understand and describe the strategies used by these countries to combat squatting problems. The objective behind this is to determine how South African local municipalities, especially the municipality governing the Weltevreden Park area, can learn from these countries. In conclusion, this chapter highlights the roles played by different stakeholders (including the police, the local governments and the other role players) in combating this problem.

4.2 HONG KONG

4.2.1 Historical background of squatting in Hong Kong

Hong Kong was a British Colony until 1997, when it was handed to the People's Republic of China as a semi-autonomous region or special administrative region. After World War Two, Hong Kong's population increased to an estimated number of about 750 000 inhabitants in the 1980s. According to Smart (2002:334), this large number of inhabitants was due to the Hong Kong's Housing Department, which had spent most of its time concerned about evicting squatters rather than managing this problem. On the other hand, squatting was seen as an issue resulting from the private housing sectors because these sectors were blamed for creating expensive houses which were unaffordable to the poor. Most of these poor were refugees who had migrated to Hong Kong fleeing the wars in China.

This massive inflow of immigrants into Hong Kong had resulted in a shortage of housing, scarce land and also the overburdening of service delivery. As a result, the migrants invaded the greenbelts of the city and established informal houses. These informal houses had poor basic services such as electricity, which resulted in numerous fire breakouts, which placed the lives of the poor at risk (Smart, 2002:335).

4.2.2 Attempted strategies for combating squatting in Hong Kong

Before 1954 illegal squatting had been a serious problem in Hong Kong and the government had no solution in place to address this problem other than to make use of harsh reactions. As a result, the Hong Kong Housing Society established an agency called the “Squatter Control and Clearance Division” in the 1970s.

The purpose of this division was to evict the illegal squatters – the people who had occupied an area or any building without permission, as well as to ensure that no further illegal squatting occurred in conserved areas or decayed buildings (Smart, 2002:334). During this eviction period the evicted squatters were not entitled to any compensation for their building structures; their shacks were demolished and no alternative shelters given to them.

Furthermore, the squatter control officials were assigned to patrol the previously occupied areas so that no further squatting occurred (Smart, 2002:340). These squatters then protested against these actions and demanded to be resettled elsewhere.

As a result, the Resettlement Department was then launched by the Hong Kong Housing Society in order to create accommodation for the homeless and to reduce the high demand for housing (Smart, 2002:334).

This department then established public rental flats. Despite the rising inflow of refugees in Hong Kong, the development of these public rental flats was also influenced by the outbreak of a fire that resulted in about 50 000 people being left homeless in one of the squatter areas in Hong Kong. The Resettlement Department was not fully dependent on the government. As a result, it was then merged with the Housing Division in 1972 to form a new department called the “Hong Kong Housing Authority” (Yan, Undated).

The Housing Authority was launched in 1973 and it was tasked with the duty of providing houses to the poor. Between 1973 and 1982 an estimated 220 000 flats were established: 180 000 were public rental flats and 23 000 were home-owned flats. In 1987 the government also introduced the long-term strategy of helping the poor to buy their own houses through the housing subsidy. The target for this long-term plan was to grant accommodation to about 70% of the population between 1997 and 2006 (Yan, Undated).

In 2008 this project managed to accommodate about 29% of the population in the established public rental flats. The objective of this project was to house those people who could not afford to buy houses in the private sector.

This project was committed to a deadline of not more than three years, meaning that those who had registered their names on the waiting list should be allocated houses within a period of three years (Hong Kong: The facts, 2008).

4.2.3 The criteria for granting public rental houses

The method used was a points system, whereby an applicant with a higher number of points on the waiting list was given priority over the others. These applicants were regarded as those who needed accommodation the most. The priority was determined on the basis of the applicant's age, time spent on the waiting list, the applicant's monthly income, and the number of years spent living in Hong Kong. The applicants who met the requirements were regarded as eligible for housing.

The tenants were granted accommodation for not more than ten years and if tenants passed away, their flats were given to other applicants on the waiting list. Tenants who had been living in a public rental flat for ten or more years were given the option of vacating the flat so that it could be given to others on the waiting list or to pay a higher price for their accommodation.

If it happened that during the ten years of stay in the flat a tenant decided to buy a house somewhere, the tenant was not allowed to pass the house on to a relative but was obliged to give it back to the Housing Authority. The flat would then be allocated to another person on the waiting list (Hong Kong: The facts, 2008). The purpose of these public rental flats was to eradicate the squatting problem by providing the poor with low-cost accommodation, while they were searching for better employment opportunities.

The money paid by these tenants was used mainly to maintain these rental flats (Hong Kong: The facts, 2008). In this regard the Hong Kong government was working closely with the private sector to ensure that they won against the squatting problem (Yan, Undated). These public rental flats achieved good success with regard to providing the homeless with housing. As a result, the squatting problem declined (Yan, Undated).

It can be deduced that the measures applied by the Hong Kong government to control the large number of squatters within the urban areas, especially in the greenbelts, were similar to the ones applied by the apartheid government in South Africa before 1994. Although the intentions of implementing these temporary public rental flats differed- from that of South Africa during the apartheid era, the implementation meant that the squatters around the urban areas were finally able to obtain accommodation. The identities of the tenants were known and in turn that made policing easy as suspects could be traced by using their physical addresses and their identity documents.

4.3 INDIA

4.3.1 Historical background of squatting in India

In 1947 after India had become independent from Britain most of its cities experienced an increased population growth. Amongst these cities was Delhi, which was estimated to have a total urban population of about 13 million by the year 2001 (Schenk, 2003:14). The first observed immigration into Delhi was in 1947 by more than 500 000 Hindu and Sikh refugees who were seeking asylum status in Delhi.

As a result of this large immigration, the government of India established camps in the city centre as well as on the outskirts of the city in order to accommodate these refugees (Schenk, 2003:14). In the 1950s again internal migrations occurred in India, in which a large number of rural residents moved to the urban areas in order to seek employment opportunities. This number reached about 300 000, with most of these migrants squatting in the areas close to their workplaces (Schenk, 2003:14).

Consequently, the government of India developed a 20-year master plan to structure future land use and development. This master plan was implemented in 1962, with the objective of resettling these squatters outside of the city centre, but not far from their workplaces or from the city centre. However, this plan did not work as expected owing to a lack of funds and the cost of land, resources and housing (Schenk, 2003:14). As a result, in 1973 the number of squatters increased within the city.

In response, between 1975 and 1977 the government started again with the removal of the squatters from the city centre to the outskirts of the city. During this period only a small number of these squatters were able to be accommodated in the areas outside the city and the rest were evicted from the city, with no alternative accommodation being provided for them (Schenk, 2003:14).

By the end of this operation in 1977 the number of the squatters had decreased. Then, those who had been evicted from the city centre with no alternative accommodation being provided for them invaded the open spaces (greenbelts) outside the city centre. After 1977 the squatting problem continued in the city centre of Delhi and impacted negatively on economic development in India.

As a result, the government of India adopted a strategy called “Operation pushback”, which was launched in 1991. The main objective of the “Operation pushback” was to prevent the inflow of undocumented immigrants in India as well as to control the current immigration and urbanisation movements (Ramachandran, 2002:321).

During the operation, the police raided the squatter areas and arrested the undocumented immigrants. The arrested immigrants were placed in a repatriation centre and later transported to their own countries (Ramachandran, 2002:313-317). The squatters with legal documentation were placed at a far distance from the city centre and their workplaces. As a result, this decision affected most of the squatters who were employed in the city centre and resulted in most of them losing their employment.

Those who lost their employment as a result became poorer because they could not be granted land tenure nor could they be provided with basic needs or employment (Schenk, 2003:14).

4.3.2 Urban development and sustainability in India

Mahadevia (2002:5) observes that very often Indian urban development and sustainable environment projects have excluded the urban poor. He argues that in order to attain a sustainable city, the living conditions of the poor should be integrated into the city’s development plans (Mahadevia, 2002:61).

He further points out that India experienced squatting problems and unsustainable development in the 1990s because it did not take account of the urban poor in its development plans (Mahadevia, 2002:62).

4.3.3 Attempted strategies for combatting urban poverty and squatting

According to Mahadevia (2002:70), the Indian government established the following strategies:

- India's Golden Jubilee Urban Employment Programme, which was launched in 1997 in order to provide the poor with skills to enable them to generate income for themselves. In this programme the poor were provided with the in-service training and others were loaned money to establish activities that could generate them income. However, this programme was not successful because it benefited the poor for a short period and afterwards they remained unemployed. It was also criticised for not providing the poor with valuable items such as raw materials and access to the markets that could enable them to provide for themselves on an ongoing basis (Mahadevia,2002:70);
- Slum improvement project together with the Sustainable Adjustment Programme, which were also established in order to improve the living standard of the poor by providing them with decent housing and proper infrastructure (Mahadevia, 2002:63); and
- Other programmes, which were established with the help of private companies in order to improve the health services and education facilities and to empower poor communities through skills development.

In addition community members in some of the areas such as Chennai and Bangalore also participated in the processes of attaining sustainable development by working together with the NGOs as well as government-initiated programmes (Mahadevia, 2002:69). Some of the cities in India employed city beautifiers, people whose duty it was to keep the environment clean. These people ensured that the streets and the greenbelts within the urban areas were well maintained and that no illegal squatting occurred. The city beautifiers received compensation for their services from the adjacent residences. These efforts helped a number of unemployed people to earn income, while keeping the environment clean (Mahadevia, 2002:75). These programmes were practised in small areas and proved successful in those areas (Mahadevia, 2002:75). However, since it is not known for certain how effective they can be in larger areas their impacts cannot be generalised to the entire country of India.

4.3.4 Measures used in Ahmebadan City to strengthen the financial capacity of Ahmedabad local municipality (India)

Ahmebadan City is known as the textile capital of India and as the biggest of India's municipalities, with an estimated population of about 3 515 361 (as indicated by the 2001 population census of India). However, in 1993 about 41% of this population was indicated to be living in conditions which were below the human living standard. Before 1993, the Ahmebadan municipality suffered great financial loss.

As a result, in 1994 this municipality introduced its fiscal and management reform programme, which was aimed at increasing its financial status and also at enabling it to provide basic services to its community.

The first project was aimed at increasing an entry tax on goods, which had been serving as the main source of income for the municipality (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), 2002:1). To increase this goods entry tax, the previous “valuation manual for tax assessment” was upgraded in order to meet the current market prices. Other projects were aimed at upgrading the property tax collection, by implementing the new systems to monitor the current tax payers and to identify those who were defeating tax payment.

Furthermore, financial specialists were employed in the Ahmebadan municipality in order to manage the finances of the municipality effectively (ICLEI, 2002:2). In 1996 the Ahmebadan municipality’s financial status was in a good position and as a result it managed to establish a five-year investment plan specifically to address basic service needs such as water, housing, sewerage and electricity. In addition, the Ahmebadan municipality formed partnerships with NGOs and the community and business. Together they coordinated their resources and consequently achieved a successful improvement of the lives of the poor (ICLEI, 2002:3).

4.4 NIGERIA

4.4.1 Historical background of squatting in Nigeria

After Nigeria gained its independence from Britain in 1960, new industries were established, and as a result job opportunities within the newly developed industries increased. These industries on the one hand empowered the economy of Nigeria, and on the other hand overpowered the agricultural production sector, on which many poor people had been dependent for decades.

As a result, the agricultural sector declined and most of the poor migrated to the cities to search for employment within the newly developed industries. The political instability which took place in 1960, together with the civil war between 1967 and 1970, also resulted in most rural residents migrating to urban areas to search for accommodation (Fourchard, 2009:2).

According to Fourchard (2009:6), these movements led to the establishment of two forms of squatting in Nigeria:

- Traditional squatting, where squatters occupy the existing decayed buildings in towns; and
- Spontaneous squatting, where squatters invade the open lands illegally.

The other reasons for these squatting problems include the fact that the cost of accommodation in urban areas was more than most of the poor could afford (Fourchard, 2009:10). Within the squatter areas, the squatters lived in bad conditions, with no necessary infrastructures such as decent housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply (Fourchard, 2009:10). According to Fourchard (2009:19), the traditional squatters suffered more financially because most of their income was spent on paying rent, and buying electricity and water from private dealers. The squatters that lived in these areas were faced with no choices because they could neither afford to renovate these old buildings nor to build their own houses.

According to Fourchard (2009:5), the Nigerian government was divided into three levels of power: the local government, the state government and the federal government. The federal government's task was to give support to urban design and planning.

The state government's task was to give support to and to oversee the performance of the local government, while the local government's task was to deliver services to the community and this level of government was under the control of the state government. As a result, the local government had limited powers to perform as optimally. This meant that, it did not manage to control the massive urbanisation movement.

From the 1990s the task of providing public services and managing public spaces was referred to the private sector (Fourchard, 2009:5). According to Fourchard ([sa]:6), between 1976 and 1996, the establishment of the newly developed local municipalities in Nigeria increased from 301 to 776. However, owing to a lack of coordination amongst these local governments overall urban management proved unsuccessful and there was no policy in place to guide the local governments on what to do (Fourchard, 2009:11).

In terms of making policies regarding urban development, the role players included: local governments, the town planning division of the state government, and the state water corporation, together with agencies such as the national electricity power authority and Nigerian Telecommunications Limited of the federal government. All these agencies participated in improving the living standard of the urban poor. However, they did not have a clear mandate or a good relationship with each other. As a result, they duplicated each other's functions and yielded no success regarding the upgrading of urban squatters (Fourchard, 2009:21).

This lack of coordination began in the 1990s because these government agencies competed with each other on a political level and none of them gave much attention to the upgrading of the urban poor (Fourchard, 2009:21). According to Fourchard (2009:21), the local governments had not enough funds allocated to them to perform their duties. They were financed by the state and the federal government, which were not consistent in terms of providing financial support. During economic crises these two levels of government cut off their financial support to the local governments and this led to declines in service delivery.

4.4.2 Attempted strategies for combatting squatting in Nigeria

According to Fourchard (2009:22), the following strategies were used in Nigeria to address squatting:

- The Oyo State Urban Renewal Scheme was a World Bank Assisted Project which was established in 1989. The aim of this scheme was to upgrade the living standards in the squatter areas within Ibadan city by improving the existing poor infrastructures. In this way the aim was to minimise the cost to be endured when developing the new infrastructures. Therefore, the focus of this scheme was on those squatter areas which had few or poor infrastructures. This scheme was completed in 1995 and by the time of its completion the following facilities had been improved: roads had been tarred, sanitation and refuse removal set up and resettlement sites had been established (Fourchard, 2009:22).

- The Urban Basic Service Programme was established in order to focus mainly on poor women and children living in places which were below the living standard.
- This programme provided the poor with basic skills in order to enable them to generate incomes for themselves. It had also assisted in the improvement of infrastructures (Fourchard, 2009:22). The above two programmes were rated ineffective because of the long time they took to be completed. They were also criticised for not establishing new infrastructure but rather improving existing infrastructure.
- According to Fourchard (2009:25), the government of Nigeria also established a partnership between the state, international agencies and community-based organisations in order to eradicate squatting within the city. The aim of this partnership was to work together to uplift the living conditions of the squatters. In this way, donations were gathered from different private donors in order to pay builders, while other donors contributed the building materials such as bags of cement. According to Fourchard (2009:25), this operation was fruitful because the participants went out of their way to contribute financially so that this operation could be successful. As a result of the project, some of the poor managed to obtain proper housing.

Bello (2009:5) suggests that when Nigeria attempted to address the squatting issues, it could have applied more preventive measures to discourage further illegal squatting such as finding alternative accommodation for the squatters who were to be evicted. He emphasises that squatting could also have been dealt with through the following three approaches:

- Eradication and relocation process. The Nigerian state programme failed in Nigeria because the squatters' building structures were demolished with no alternative accommodation given to them. The fact that squatters had to apply for the public housing and be placed on a waiting list first before they could be allocated accommodation persuaded people to resort to squatting in the greenbelts (Bello, 2009:6). Bello (2009) suggests that alternative accommodation should have been provided to the evictees.
- Clearance and Redevelopment Programme. Following this approach, the squatters should be temporarily removed from the occupied area so that it can be developed and later re-settled in the area once it is developed (Bello, 2009:6).
- The upgrading of the squatter areas. In accordance with this approach, the squatter areas are arranged in order according to the urban planning regulations and the squatters should be provided with the necessary infrastructure to lead to better living (Bello, 2009:7).

According to Olujimi (2009:203), the problem experienced in Nigerian urban areas was that the rural-urban movement was taking place even during the periods when there were no new economic sectors developing in the cities.

This is the reason that there are high numbers of poor people in the urban areas of Nigeria, with the accompanying high service demands and presence of more squatting (Olujimi, 2009:204). Other reasons for the increase in the squatting problem in Nigeria are the large number of housing backlogs and delays in the processes of granting land to the poor in urban areas as well as the resistance of the government towards bearing the cost of buying land from the private owners (Olujimi, 2009:204).

According to Olujimi (2009:206), it is clear that the funding of the many introduced government projects is a problem. He suggests that in this type of case there should be effective communication between the agency tasked with the duty of urban planning and development and the people (the communities and land owners within a particular urban area). The aim of involving the communities and land owners in the planning process is to reach out to all the affected and involved parties when creating development plans. In this way a consensus regarding the need to develop their lands can be reached. The advantages of this will be as follows:

- The poor who cannot afford to buy urban land will be granted space to occupy.
- The development will be made legally, within the city planning regulations.
- The land owners and the adjacent communities will attain a sense of belonging and feel part of the developments taking place within their

areas, while the form and identity of their area are still maintained (Olujimi, 2009:207).

4.4.3 Urban development and environmental sustainability in Nigeria

According to Arimah and Adeagbo (2000:280), urban and environmental development in Nigeria is regulated by the urban planning regulations, which dictate what is needed by the residents and what is not. These authors also outline the intended objectives regarding whom the service is directed to and who has a role in providing such services.

Arimah and Adeagbo (2000:280) note that in 1993 Nigeria was estimated to have about 36.2% of its population residing in the urban areas. These high urbanisation movements led to shortages of housing and also to the development of illegal squatting, particularly in the greenbelts, as well as environmental deterioration. In their argument they emphasise that the urban development and planning regulations of Nigeria did not keep up with the population changes within the urban areas.

The reason is that the urban development projects were still following the old outdated regulations which had been established on the basis of a city without an illegal squatting problem or the existence of urban poor. This is also the reason that the Nigerian government is failing to respond to the current illegal squatting problem, because the urban poor are not included in initial urban plans (Arimah & Adeagbo, 2000:280).

4.5 BRAZIL

4.5.1 A short history of squatting in Brazil

In Brazil the problem of squatting increased after the development of new industries as most of the rural residents migrated to the urban areas to search for employment (Hewitt, 1999:29). These movements resulted in the following problems in the cities: scarce land, housing and employment shortages, and deteriorating environments. All the above problems also led to the development of a squatting problem (Hewitt, 1999:29). About 70 637 people were evicted from a private land in Brazil between 2004 and 2006.

Within these eviction processes harsh actions such as beating and shooting were used to enforce the eviction. The rights of the evictees were neglected (COHRE, 2008:13). According to the Centre on Housing Rights and Executive (COHRE) (2008:12), about 12.4 million people in Brazil are still living in houses which are below human living standards.

4.5.2 The strategies for combating illegal squatting in Brazil

The Brazilian government adopted a strategy called “information sharing and technology sharing” also known as “international municipality cooperation” amongst the local governments to help to improve the service delivery to the urban poor (Hewitt, 1999:29). This type of initiative has been developed in New York, where it is also known as the “Mega-Cities Project”.

The Mega-Cities Project has linked about 18 metropolitan areas around the world, in order to form a relationship that will facilitate the exchange of information and provide a learning curve for all the participants. The aim of such relationship building is to learn from each other on how developing cities can be protected from the poor management of urban issues (Hewitt, 1999:29).

According to Hewitt (1999:30), this international municipality cooperation programme was regarded as a good programme for enhancing knowledge and skill development within the municipalities. It was divided into three categories:

- International partnerships: these are the long-term-based relationships aimed at continuous sharing of ideas amongst the municipalities involved;
- Special initiatives: these are the short-term-based relations aimed at addressing specific issues raised by the developing countries; and
- Training and research projects: these are projects that focus on knowledge development through presentation of courses and seminars to policy makers and local government officials.

This programme was established by the International Office of the Federation of the Canadian Municipality and it gained popularity in 1986 when the Federation of Canadian Municipality was launching its 49th annual conference. In the conference the representatives of the developing cities worldwide who attended the conference were paired with Canadian partners. Together they discussed the specific problems of the country at hand and shared ideas on how such problems could be addressed step by step.

Sao Paulo, a city of Brazil, participated in this relationship and it was helped in terms of finding the solutions to its problems and the ideas on how it could improve its service delivery to the public (Hewitt, 1999:30). Finally, the provision of services to the poor was improved. However, the focus of this programme was on the health-related services, meaning that not much attention was given to providing decent housing to the poor but rather that attention was only given to ensuring that they received quick responses during emergencies (Hewitt, 1999:30).

In 1996 about 520 squatters occupied open land (greenbelts) in Brazil (Amazonian state of Para) because they were on a waiting list for land tenure, but had not yet been granted such land. They had become impatient with waiting and had decided to invade the Amazonian state's open land unlawfully. According to Robinson (1998:8), most of the idle lands in Brazil were owned by only 2% of the population, whereas the majority of the population (being the poor) was still struggling to obtain land tenure. These squatters then resorted to illegal squatting and often experienced eviction actions from the landowners and the police (Robinson, 1998:8).

4.5.3 Urban development in Brazil

The Open Evaluation Department (OED) studied the five bank-sponsored projects in Brazil; these are the projects which had managed to uplift the lives of the poor between 1980 and 1991. The aim of the study was to understand how these projects managed to achieve such success so that the OED could use the same learning experience to guide other municipalities and/or policy makers (OED, 1997:2).

According to the OED, these projects managed to improve the service delivery to the urban poor. They also enhanced the leadership skills of the municipal authorities and mobilised the local communities regarding the procedures to be followed when implementing the services as well as the responsibilities of the role players involved.

Four out of these five projects proved successful because they managed to mobilise all the role players to form a relationship that was determined to improve the living conditions of the urban poor. These projects were assessed on the basis of the changes they made after their completion and also on whether the residents were satisfied with the new developments.

According to the OED (1997:5), in order to inform other municipalities on how they should achieve success the available funding bodies must be determined to improve the lives of the poor, and the successful projects' strategies should be published so that other municipalities can learn from them. In contrast, COHRE (2008:8) argues that there are about 28 000 public properties that have been obtained and used illegally by the private sectors in Brazil. There are also 50 000 properties that have been neglected and about 5.9 million idle properties belonging to the private sectors which are abandoned. COHRE (2008:8) suggests that there are enough of these properties to accommodate the existing large number of illegal squatters in Brazil. Furthermore, COHRE (2008:8) emphasises that the government of Brazil is disregarding the rights of the evictees by not granting them land and also by supporting eviction processes. It can be deduced that Brazil has not yet reached a state of equilibrium when it comes to uplifting the living standards of the poor.

4.6 CONCLUSION

It appears from the above discussions concerning different countries that squatting problems are experienced in most urban areas in countries across the world. Although different countries attempt different strategies to combat this problem it can be deduced that the common problem hindering the success of these attempts is a lack of funds and commitment from the role players. Amongst the countries discussed, Hong Kong and India appear to be the only countries that have achieved reasonable success in addressing the squatting problem. The reason is that they have been able to mobilise all the role players to commit themselves to eradicating illegal squatting and not only to eradicating this problem but also to uplifting the lives of the urban poor.

It can also be deduced from the above discussions of four countries that the role of the police in addressing the problem of squatting is limited to facilitating the eviction process by ensuring that it is conducted smoothly, with no harm brought to the evictees. Olujimi (2009:207) indicates that it is of importance for every developing country to acknowledge that “government resources are limited and its areas of attention are unlimited”. This means that there should be coordination of resources from the different role players. A good example of a country that has been able to coordinate its resources is India, which has managed to initiate projects and measures which have enabled it to be financially stable and to afford to improve the living standards of the poor.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of this study. In this study interviews were conducted with the aim of investigating, identifying and describing the challenges facing the policing of illegal squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park. Some of these interviews were recorded but others were not recorded because some of the participants did not give permission to record their conversation. As a result, the researcher was only able to transcribe the recorded interviews word-for-word, whereas field notes were obtained for the unrecorded interviews. Furthermore, the data obtained from these interviews was analysed by both the researcher and the co-coder separately. Then, a discussion, which led to a consensus regarding the emerging themes, was held by the researcher and the co-coder. The findings are discussed below.

5.2 THE PROFILE OF SQUATTERS

From the researcher's conversation with the participants, the researcher noticed that there were two categories of squatters in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park. These she decided to name: one as the category of the "strictly vagrant squatters" and the other as the category of the "not just vagrant squatters".

5.2.1 The “strictly vagrant squatters”

The “strictly vagrant squatters” refer to those squatters who make a living out of begging on the streets and receiving food and clothes from other people. People in this group are usually unemployed, helpless and hopeless – very often they can be found in the greenbelts during the week, especially during the daytime.

5.2.2 The “not just vagrant squatters”

In the group of the “not just vagrant squatters” are those that are involved in daily paying work (temporary jobs) and usually during the week, especially during the daytime, they are not found in the greenbelts because they are employed. These squatters are found in the greenbelts mostly during the weekends or at night. Very often they are found doing laundry or sitting together sharing jokes or asleep at night. The “not just vagrant squatters” seem to be more serious about life than the strictly vagrant group and often when they are removed from these greenbelts they get aggressive and become verbally abusive towards the police.

5.2.3 The gender, nationality and educational status of the squatters

The findings also show that the squatters found in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park are all black males. According to Participant C, *“It is very rare to find white squatters or female squatters in this greenbelt; it can be just one or two sometimes”*.

Within Weltevreden Park there are no children squatting in the greenbelts. According to the police, some of these squatters seem to be involved in the use of substances such as dagga, which is often found in their possession. The police have reported that they have never found hard substances such as cocaine and heroin in the possession of the squatters. In addition, the findings show that the majority of these squatters are undocumented foreign nationals coming from countries such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi. Only a few of the squatters are South African citizens. These squatters come from different provinces in the country; for example: areas around Gauteng, Eastern Cape and Limpopo. Furthermore, the study found that not all of these squatters are unskilled or uneducated people but that there are some of them who have Matriculation certificates, driver's licences and tertiary certificates.

5.3 THE REASONS FOR SQUATTING IN THE GREENBELTS

The following factors were found as the reasons for squatting.

5.3.1 Job opportunities within Weltevreden Park

The findings show that the rising job opportunities within Weltevreden Park influence the problem of squatting because some of these squatters' wish is to see themselves working. According to the police, *"Weltevreden Park is a very developing area and town house constructions are taking place in the area time and again"*. When answering the question of why they had decided to squat in these greenbelts one of the squatters said, *"...many of us here are marketing"*, meaning that they are marketing themselves to potential employers or looking for jobs within the construction industry.

These squatters go to the streets early in the mornings to wait for potential employers, with the hope that there may be someone in need of a helping hand who will hire them in return for remuneration. They (squatters) further indicated that some of them are making money from recycling used materials such as bottles, tins and card boxes while others work as gardeners in the adjacent residences.

5.3.2 Lack of accommodation

The findings reveal that some of the squatters coming from areas around South Africa are squatting in the greenbelts not only because they are unemployed and have no money but mainly because they have no place to stay. The reason is that most of these South Africans move from underdeveloped areas to developing areas (such as Johannesburg) to look for employment.

On their arrival they find no places where they can stay and they eventually resort to squatting (see Annexure B, C and D). The reason that others live in the greenbelts is that they do not earn enough for them to afford to travel to and from their workplaces every day.

One of the main reasons supplied by most foreign nationals for resorting to squatting was the xenophobic attacks that took place in the country in 2008. The indication from these squatters was that after these attacks they lost their accommodation, livelihoods and their jobs. As a result they were left desperate, with no choice but to resort to squatting in the greenbelts.

The closing down of the camps which were established in order to accommodate these victims exacerbated the problem of squatting because those who had been sheltered were also left without accommodation.

5.3.3 Insufficient shelters

The findings show that region C of the City of Johannesburg Municipality (CoJ) does not have its own shelter and as a result the homeless people who have been helped within this region have been referred to shelters and churches in other regions within the CoJ. The problem with these shelters is that they are currently overcrowded and that those who control the shelter intake give preference to women and children. As a result the majority of men are left with no place to stay.

5.3.4 Free food and clothes

Other police participants argue that squatting in Weltevreden Park greenbelts is also influenced by the churches and NGOs as well as sympathetic adjacent residents who provide free food and clothes to these squatters. According to Participant B (police official), *“These efforts attract even more squatters in these greenbelts and that creates a bad name for us (both the police and the Park Rangers) because every time we approach these people either we search them or remove them, whereas other people such as the NGOs support them. So to these squatters we are unsympathetic people who care less about them.”*

5.4 THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

According to the Weltevreden Park local councillor, *“there were squatters in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park before 2008 but it was just one or two and they were not always there”*. The councillor reported that *“...at that time you will see them here and tomorrow they are not there and someday you see them again; just like that”*. When comparing the current problem of illegal squatting within Weltevreden Park with previous years (such as 2007 and 2006) it seems it is now worse, especially after the xenophobic attacks that took place in the country. According to Harris (2002:170), “xenophobia” refers to unfair treatments and negative perceptions of foreign nationals which result in serious physical and emotional harm.

In addition, the councillor emphasises that squatting in Weltevreden Park is a serious problem because these squatters have occupied most of the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park, both private and public lands, and they are largely concentrated along the long river that runs through the Weltevreden Park area. When describing the problem of illegal squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park, the councillor put it as follows, *“...this is a continuous, cyclical problem that repeats itself again and again and there is no action or plan in place to solve this problem”*.

This problem seems to be frustrating to the residents as one of them threatened that they would take the law into their own hands if no action was taken to solve this problem. The reason given was that they were and still are willing to patrol their residential areas at night by searching strangers and chasing away those who are not supposed to be in their area.

However, the police do not agree with this idea and they have advised the Weltevreden Park residents to follow legal procedures before engaging in such activities. The police have urged residents to bring the details of those who would like to participate in patrolling and they will be sent to the provincial police department for approval. Thereafter, a number of police will be identified to give them backup as they (the residents) do not have the authority to search any person.

The problem highlighted by these residents is that since they have sent their details to the police they have not received a response. These residents seem to be impatient with the legal procedures and the lack of response has left them with the feeling of helplessness and frustration about this problem.

This is also a bureaucratic problem in the sense that without the involvement or authorisation of the police there is nothing the adjacent residents can do about this problem. The police on the other hand do not have much power to resolve this problem without the involvement of the Human Development Department of the CoJ.

One of the residents expressed his frustrations as follows, *“people are walking and living in our streets and greenbelts daily and the police are doing nothing about it. We feel like the more we complain about this problem the lesser the response we get from the police”*.

Another resident contended that *“The police said we should be their ears and eyes but when we do just that they don’t take any action. Currently we spend more money on private security companies to protect us while we pay taxes”*.

It can, therefore, be deduced that some of the residents have deployed private security companies in order to obtain more security.

5.5 THE IMPACTS OF SQUATTING IN THE GREENBELTS

Squatting has the following impacts to the residence of Weltevreden Park:

5.5.1 Adjacent residences and surroundings

The impact of squatting in the greenbelts is negative both to the adjacent residences and to the surroundings. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, the squatters make fires in the greenbelts and this causes air pollution and damage to the greenbelt surface (see Annexure A).

Secondly, the squatters use the nearby river to do laundry and to bath themselves. Lastly, they drop their litter in these greenbelts and much litter is collected because some of the squatters make money from recycling materials. These squatters collect substantial numbers of cardboard boxes and bottles and they pile them in these greenbelts so that they can make a large quantity which will generate them more money.

Participant B indicated that *“sometimes City Parks organise special operations with the Environmental department and clean these greenbelts, cut the overgrown trees and grass and clean the rivers as well, but that does not help because these squatters will continue littering and polluting that area as well as collecting items for recycling”*. All the above-mentioned environmental issues resulting from squatting in the greenbelts damage the greenbelts’ surface.

The dirty rivers are a risk for inviting diseases and often after these squatters get paid, especially during the weekends or month ends, they buy beers and make barbecue and create a lot of noise.

In terms of safety, one of the residents indicated that, *"We live uncomfortably in our homes; we sleep with one eye open and the other closed because crime is happening day and night in our area"*. It can be deduced that the residents do not trust the approach of the police to this problem because they do not understand how the police fail to believe that these squatters are committing crimes in their area while crimes are continuously committed in the area.

5.5.2 The squatters themselves

The study reveals that it is not only the adjacent residences and the surroundings which are negatively affected by this problem but the squatters are also suffering the consequences of having to live in the greenbelts. These are the consequences of sleeping in cold weather, having neither enough clothes nor food and also having to be frequently chased away or arrested by the police. From the researcher's personal observation of the greenbelts and her face-to-face interaction with some of these squatters it was apparent that the squatters live in fear, they get nervous when someone approaches them and they do not trust people. The reason is that they fear that any person who approaches them may chase them away or arrest them and they only feel free to talk to strangers after they are assured that they will not be chased away.

The researcher used this method to approach the squatters after realising that they were nervous. The researcher put them at ease by informing them that she was not there to disturb their living or to chase them away or arrest them and it was only then that they started to open up and tell their stories.

5.6 STRATEGIES USED TO POLICE SQUATTING IN THE GREENBELTS

According to the police (SAPS and JMPD), after a complaint is reported at the station regarding the illegal squatting in a greenbelt, they go to that greenbelt and confirm the presence of the squatters.

If they find that there are people who have illegally occupied the greenbelt without permission, they arrange a special operation with the Johannesburg City Parks and the Local Home Affairs Department and together they visit the greenbelt.

5.6.1 Steps followed during a special operation

The steps followed during a special operation are outlined below.

Step1: Friendly approach

In this step all the parties introduce themselves; the officials tell the squatters who they are, why they have come to them and what they are going to do.

Step 2: Environmental awareness

In the second step the Johannesburg City Parks, which deals with conservation, informs the squatters that they are not allowed to stay in that greenbelt as it is conserved for nature purposes.

They also advise them that drinking or using dirty water from the streams is risky for their health and making fires is also bad for the greenbelt and results in air pollution, which is a problem for the adjacent residences. They further alert the squatters that there are shelters around Johannesburg that they can go to and ask for accommodation.

Step 3: Search and arrest

In the third step, firstly the accompanying Home Affairs officials request to check the squatters' citizenship status and, secondly, the police search them and confiscate their belongings (such as clothes and blankets). Through this process, the undocumented foreign nationals are arrested. On the arrival at the station these squatters are screened (they are interviewed about their citizenship and their fingerprints are taken together with their personal details).

After that they are transported to the Lindela repatriation centre from where they are deported to their countries of origin. If it is found that a person is a foreign national and has the legal documentation to stay in the country or is a South African citizen, then the responsibility is given to the City Parks and the JMPD to deal with them. Then these departments chase them off the greenbelt. It appears that the squatters with legal documentation are treated differently from the undocumented squatters.

From the above discussion it can be deduced that the police are still following the traditional method of policing, which considers an arrest as the ultimate solution, and they do not examine a problem from a broader perspective (Peak & Glensor, 1996:74).

According to Peak and Glensor (1996:74), in this kind of traditional policing “...emphasis is on enforcing the laws and making arrest and providing short-term solutions to problems”. It seems that within the traditional mode of policing non-criminal issues are often not given much attention as compared to criminal issues.

5.7 THE CHALLENGES FACING THE POLICING IN COMBATting SQUATting IN THE GREENBELTS

The purpose of arresting the squatters, confiscating their belongings or chasing them away is to make them lose hope, and the perception of the police is that in this way the squatters might leave these greenbelts. However, these actions appear to be fruitless because when the police remove the squatters today the following day they are back. So that is a challenge to policing because the police repeat the same task with no success and they waste resources. The other challenge identified was that often these squatters run away when they see the police coming and those who are chased away also come back on the following day or even immediately after the police have left the spot.

Participant B stated that *“sometimes we remove them now and confiscate their belongings but within few minutes after leaving that spot they are back again. So we just work them on our daily basis and as long as the social service is not on board to inform us exactly what we should do with these people then this problem will continue as it is”*.

Another problem highlighted was that the undocumented foreign nationals who are taken to the Lindela repatriation centre make plans to return to the greenbelts. According to Kollapen and Majodina (2000:36), one of the reasons that some of the undocumented foreign nationals do not reach their countries of origin, instead returning to the places from which they were removed, is that they bribe the police on the way to Lindela or bribe the officials at Lindela to let them go.

One of the police officials also argued that *“...and it is true these people do come back because I know some of them that we have been chasing for months now but they are still there. Every time we remove them immediately as we leave the greenbelt they comes back. We have been taking their belongings but that did not work. What we have realised is that we remove the same people again and again and others we know them and they also know us.”*

The above discussion shows that the strategy used by the police to police this problem is not a long-term solution but is rather a short-term solution, which is the reason that this problem is cyclical.

The findings also show that some of these squatters do not want to stay in the shelters. The reason is that in the shelters they feel as if they are treated like prisoners because there are rules that control them and there is no freedom. Some of those who are requested to leave the greenbelt area (especially the documented squatters) do leave for good but others do not and in that way they are contravening the by-law enforcement.

According to the by-law enforcement policies, a person who contravenes these laws should be arrested or fined and a court case should be opened against such a person. So what happens in the case of the squatters is that once arrested they are released for free, meaning that they are not sent to court or fined.

Participant C explained that *“we cannot just go and arrest them as no crime is committed. A fine will not help either as they do not have money to pay the fine or the court will not regard this as a serious crime enough to send them to prison”*.

After noting that there is no point in arresting these people, the police (both the SAPS and the JMPD) have adopted a new strategy, which is just to go to the greenbelts and chase these people away. From the above discussion it can be deduced that the police are frustrated about this problem and that they do not know how to deal with this problem anymore.

5.8 THE LINK BETWEEN SQUATTING AND CRIME WITHIN WELTEVREDEN PARK

The police argue that most of these squatters are not involved in criminal activities but that there are criminals coming in from other areas who commit crime in the residences adjacent to these greenbelts. Most of these police officials are of the opinion that there are criminals from outside the area who use these greenbelts as their places to plan their crimes and from which to observe, enter and exit the Weltevreden Park area. Therefore, it is these people that engage in criminal activities within Weltevreden Park. One of the police participants emphasised that *“About 99% of these squatters are not criminals, but they are poor people who just need a place to stay”*.

Another police participant further stated that *“...from the cases that we have dealt with up to so far regarding the crimes that occurs in Weltevreden Park area they rarely link the squatters to these crimes. As a result we don't have a strong evidence to link them to most of the crimes occurring in that area. Those who may be involved in criminal activities will be just few of them and even engage in just smaller crimes.”*

Participant E (police official) further argued that *“how stupid are they to steal items in the adjacent communities and stay with them right next to the communities they have committed crimes at? I seriously believe that they are not the ones committing crimes in Weltevreden Park, but there may be some criminals somewhere who come and commit crimes in that area.”*

Participant C (police official) emphasised that these squatters often help the police to identify the criminals by providing the police with the physical descriptions of the suspects. The reason is that often these criminals use these greenbelts to plan their crimes and they stay in the greenbelts with these squatters, pretending to be one of them.

Participant C further indicated that *“the majority of people squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park are man and man are not as inquisitive as women, you can come and share jokes with man without asking you who you are and that is what is happening there; people just come and go and no one is saying anything”.*

Another police pointed out that *“the squatters who do engage in criminal activities may commit such crimes somewhere and not in the adjacent communities, or they may act as the accomplices for other criminals committing crimes in Weltevreden Park by providing them with information about the area”*.

In contrast, some of the police participants indicated that sometimes during the special operations they find these squatters in possession of items such as video cameras and expensive cellular phones and other expensive small items. This raised the question that if they cannot afford to pay rent or to buy themselves food how then can they afford to buy such expensive items? In addition, another participant (police official) indicated that *“some of these squatters sometimes when we go there at night we don’t find them and we only find them during the day or they arrive early in the morning at around 3 am, so that is very suspicious as well”*.

The above responses show conflicting arguments regarding the involvement of squatters in criminal activities. For this reason, the researcher concludes this discussion with the statement from Section 35(3) of the Constitution which provides that any person should be presumed innocent until proven guilty. Until the police have enough evidence to link these squatters to crimes occurring within the adjacent residential areas it will be illegal to judge or label these squatters as criminals.

5.9 THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE GREENBELTS IN CRIME

The findings show that these greenbelts do play a significant role in crime within Weltevreden Park area. The police believe that these greenbelts are often used by criminals as their place to hide, to plan their criminal activities, to observe the adjacent residences and as their routes to enter and exit the area.

At the time that the researcher visited these greenbelts, she observed that these greenbelts are pieces of land linked to one another and that they run through the residential areas of Weltevreden Park. She further noted that these greenbelts have small foot paths through them, which makes it possible for anyone to walk from one greenbelt to another. These foot paths make it easy for anyone to enter or exit the area. What was also observed was that there is no restriction to people using these greenbelts: the researcher observed a number of people passing by and using these foot paths.

The researcher believes that these foot paths are used as the short cuts to walk from one section of Weltevreden Park to another. Some of these greenbelts are separated by a small bridge or a yard, and from the researcher's observation it seems very safe to jump those yards or just to walk underneath that bridge from one part of the area to another.

From the above observations it can be deduced that the easy access of these greenbelts makes the entire community of Weltevreden Park accessible and more at risk for a number of criminal activities such as robbery. The researcher asked for the JMPD officials' opinions regarding the assumptions that these greenbelts are not well maintained and that the grass is left overgrown.

In response to this question the general view was that these greenbelts are well maintained and the Johannesburg City Parks often organises special cleaning operations with the Johannesburg Environmental Department during which they clean and cut the grass as well as the trees in the greenbelts.

Furthermore, one of the JMPD officials explained that it *“...is just that the public don’t understand conservation, especially when it comes to conservation areas such as Parks and the greenbelts – we do not cut them the same. In a greenbelt we don’t cut the grass as flat as in the park, the grass in the greenbelt has to be cut up to a certain level; it must be a little bit up so that it can attract birds and other species because they need a place that looks a bit underdeveloped in order to live and lay eggs freely.”*

From the researcher’s personal observation of these greenbelts they seem to be regularly maintained and the litter not as broadly scattered as was emphasised by the residents. The researcher noted that the environment which is damaged or where there was littering was only within the space that the squatters had occupied and not the entire system of greenbelts.

5.10 OTHER GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS

The government stakeholders involved in addressing illegal squatting in the greenbelts are addressed below.

5.10.1 The Johannesburg City Parks

The Johannesburg City Parks and the JMPD work as one unit but the JMPD has the power to make arrests whereas the City Parks does not have such powers. The City Parks focuses more on nature conservation while the JMPD focuses more on by-law enforcement. This unit (both JMPD and City Parks) is expected to serve the entire seven regions that exist within the Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. Therefore, they (JMPD and City Parks officials) have divided the entire City of Johannesburg into four zones: Zones 1 to 4, and currently this unit has 26 vehicles, 26 park rangers and 45 JMPD officials, which, according to one of the JMPD officials, “...is not enough to serve such a big municipality”. As a result, this makes it difficult for them to patrol the entire municipality in one day. Any area/s which they can manage to attend on a particular day they do not spend much time assessing because they have other parks and greenbelts that need their attention as well. It can be deduced that this unit does have limited resources and manpower for patrolling these greenbelts regularly.

5.10.2 Department of Human Development: Migrant Advisory Help Desk

This help desk was launched in April 2007 by the CoJ under the Human Development Department. The objectives of this help desk include: the provision of foreign nationals with guidelines about the services that exist in the municipality that can help them; the establishment of relationships with people and organisations that are willing to help destitute foreign nationals; and the creation of awareness campaigns regarding xenophobic violence.

This help desk acts as a “referral centre” and works together with the social workers and refugee reception officers in Johannesburg. Together these officials go out to the informal settlements to assess the poor foreign nationals. They interview these people and identify their needs. According to Participant D, foreign nationals have different needs, ranging from the need for shelters to asylum status and employment, whereas others just need to get back to their countries.

Those that need asylum are referred to the Refugee Reception in Johannesburg; those who need to go home are referred to the nearest police station; and those that need shelters are referred to Bienvenue Shelter. Since there are very limited shelters within the CoJ, Bienvenue prefers to accommodate only women and children. As a result men are left out as there is no shelter that specifically accommodates men. Region C also does not have any shelter yet, but, according to the CoJ Migrant Advisory Help Desk representative, the proposition of developing a shelter within this region has been mooted and is still being negotiated.

According to this participant D, the Migrant Advisory Help Desk has no idea that there are people squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park and the researcher also noted that even the police and the Johannesburg City Parks unit have no idea of the existence of this help desk. From this, it appears that the relationship between these role players is very poor and that there is no coordination amongst these departments. The reason is that usually after the Johannesburg City Parks, JMPD and the SAPS have done their part, which is to chase off the squatters or to send them to the Lindela repatriation centre, they do not follow up the situation.

When the squatters come back the following day they just follow the same procedures that they followed the previous day.

This procedure is not fruitful and the city officials are aware of this but there is nothing much that is undertaken by these departments to liaise with other role players so that this problem can be addressed. Consequently, this results in a lot of resources being wasted.

5.11 SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

When the researcher asked the participants what it is that they would like to see happening in order to address this problem, the factors set out below were highlighted.

5.11.1 The presence of visible policing

Some participants (including Weltevreden park councillor and the community members) believe that the presence of patrollers on a daily basis would discourage people from squatting in conserved areas. One of the community members emphasised that *“we need the presence of patrollers on foot or mounted policing to patrol these greenbelts regularly as that will reduce the chance of people squatting in the greenbelts”*. She furthermore indicated that, *“the police should engage more in pro-active policing rather than reactive method of policing”*.

In response to the above suggestions the police argue as follows, *“As the police we cannot manage to patrol those greenbelts on daily basis or 24 hours because we do not have enough vehicles to do that job, whereas we also have other tasks to do at the station (such as investigating serious criminal cases and arresting of suspects).”*

5.11.2 Effective coordination between the stakeholders

The general view was that the Human Development Department should come on board with the other role players to see how it can assist these squatters and provide them with temporary accommodation or shelters. Within these shelters department officials should screen the squatters and find out what skills or qualifications they have, so that they can be provided with training in relevant fields. As indicated before, some of these squatters do not want to stay in the shelters because they find life there boring and they do not have much to do. This suggests that, skill development activities should be practised in these shelters so that these people can be empowered to generate income for themselves.

According to most participants (the police, the community members together with the Weltevreden park concillor), the only solution that can address this problem is the provision of basic needs to these squatters. These include the provision of accommodation and employment and of transportation for those who need to go back to their homes but do not have the money to do so. Alone the Johannesburg City Parks, local Home Affairs Department and the police cannot solve this problem without the involvement of departments such as the Labour Department and the Social Development/ Human Development Department and the NGOs. Participant B indicated that *“All this role players should sit down and coordinate the available resources and come up with a solid plan on what to do with these people and how to do that.”*

5.11.3 Monitoring/accountability of other stakeholders

Some participants (including the JMPD officials) argue that to have a good relationship amongst the role players will be easier if each department knows what the other departments are responsible for and how much resources they have. In this way it appears that the parties involved will be able to monitor each other and know and understand why department A or B is not carrying out its mandate. This will make it easier for the role players to coordinate their available resources and commit themselves to a solution. In this regard, Participant F stated that *“...no department is monitored on how they do their job; in fact there is no quality evaluation in these departments and that is a big problem.”* Participant F suggested that *“If SAPS or the JMPD removes people from the greenbelts they should know where to take them not just to chase them away and expect the problem to disappear.”*

5.11.4 Expanded public work programme in action

The Weldevreden Park local councillor emphasised that if the police or City Parks cannot afford to hire more patrollers then they should make use of the “Expanded Public Works Programmes”. With these programmes people with limited skills or no skills should be hired to do patrolling on a daily basis in return for compensation. These people should be trained by the police and the park rangers. Therefore, the other utilities (such as Joburg City Power and the Environmental Department) and role players (such as the departments of Labour and Human Development) should be asked to contribute financially in order to pay these people.

The participant emphasised that, in this way,” all the role players will be encouraged to commit themselves to a long-term solution because we have nothing at the moment.”

5.11.5 Shelters

Other participants indicated that a shelter should be established within this region (C) so that the squatters living in this region can be temporarily accommodated while the government is working out something for them.

5.11.6 Long-term plan

Most of the participants (including the Weltevreden Park councillor) argued that the government should come up with a long-term plan and provide the finances to implement such a plan. The reason given was that without financial backup from the government the implementation of such plans or policies will not be well sustained.

5.11.7 The involvement of private contractors responsible for development in the area

Some participants (including the community members) indicated that some squatters who stay in the greenbelts because they cannot afford to pay taxi fares should be helped to pay for their transport by their employers. A friendly approach should be directed to private development contractors working in the area so that they can take part in alleviating this problem. Out of frustration the residents' wish is to see these squatters out of their area and it seems as if they are tired of having to cope with this problem.

When the researcher asked them how they want to see the problem solved one of the community members indicated that *“We don’t care what the government does or does not do with them; we just don’t want them in our area anymore.”* Another participant put it as follows: *“We want them out of our area finish and ‘klaar’! They must go because they are all over our place, littering everywhere. We don’t care where they place them and if they are destitute they should go and do that in their countries.”*

5.12 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the general picture that the researcher obtained from all the opinions of the participants of the study is that currently there is no definite strategy in place to deal with the problem of squatting in the greenbelts. As a result, the police are frustrated because all their efforts to address this problem are fruitless. Although the police (both JMPD and SAPS) and the City Parks have established a relationship in order to create a safer community, nothing has improved or been solved.

It can be deduced that the current relationship that has been established so far is not enough. There is still a need for the involvement and cooperation of departments such as Labour and Human Development. These departments should be informed of this problem because it seems that communication is lacking between these role players. It is also clear that the departments responsible shift the responsibilities amongst each other and yet a good working-together relationship does not exist.

CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6. 1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this study is to develop a strategy that can be used to combat illegal squatting in the greenbelts within the Weltevreden Park area. After summarising the findings in relation to the objectives of the study, this chapter makes recommendations for such a strategy, on the basis of the objectives and the findings of this study.

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To investigate and describe the reasons for squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park;
2. To investigate and describe the role played by these greenbelts in crime;
3. To establish if there is a link between the squatters and the crimes committed within Weltevreden Park; and
4. To investigate, identify and describe the impact of squatting on the surroundings and the residences.
5. To develop a strategy to combat illegal squatting in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park;

In relation to the above objectives the findings are summarised below.

Objective no.1: The illegal squatting in the greenbelts within the Weltevreden Park area is caused by the ongoing developments in the area, the rise of the xenophobic attacks in 2008, the availability of open spaces, the lack of accommodation and insufficient shelters for job seekers as well as free goods provided to the homeless people by the NGOs and church groups.

Objective no.2: The greenbelts within Weltevreden Park do play a major role in the crimes committed in the adjacent residences. The reason for this is that they are easily accessible to anyone at anytime, they are linked to each other and they run through the residences. These greenbelts also seem to be used by people from other areas as their hiding places to observe and to commit crimes within Weltevreden Park.

Objective no.3: There is no strong evidence from the police records to link these illegal squatters with the crimes committed in the adjacent residences.

Objective no.4: Illegal squatting has a negative impact on the surroundings and on the adjacent residences as well as for the police. The fact that the police have had no success with every strategy that they have attempted makes both the police and the adjacent residents frustrated. This lack of success has also resulted in the community members losing hope in the police and resorting to extra safety measures such as implementing private security measures.

The occupation of illegal squatters on the greenbelts damages the greenbelts' surface and also threatens the safety and security of the adjacent residents.

Objective no. 5: The strategies used by the police to combat illegal squatting are not effective because this problem is continuously repeating itself.

6.2 HYPOTHESIS

The policing of illegal squatting in the greenbelts is a difficult task for the police because these greenbelts are openly accessible to everyone at anytime and these squatters neither have places to stay nor shelters to turn to. Other countries such as Hong Kong and India have shown that this problem requires the involvement of committed residential areas, government and private stakeholders.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

After analysing the South African strategies of combatting illegal squatting in the greenbelts and comparing them with the strategies used by other countries, the researcher formulated the following suggestions.

6.3.1 Visible policing through bicycle and/or foot patrolling

Bicycle and foot patrolling makes it easy for the police to access the areas that they cannot access using a car. The patrollers on bicycle or foot also find it easier to talk to passersby than when driving in a car. This strategy encourages visible policing and a good relationship between the police, the local businesses and the residents. In turn it discourages activities such as loitering, drug dealing and illegal squatting in the greenbelts (National Crime Prevention Council, 2000:10).

According to the NCPC (2000:10), this strategy was a success in Dover, Delaware, where the police had also mobilised the local businesses and residents to participate and to contribute funding and bicycles for this programme. The researcher suggests that the police should patrol the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park on foot or using bicycles so that they can monitor the people accessing these greenbelts. This strategy will leave no chance for the squatters to settle on these greenbelts illegally.

6.3.2 The use of citizen volunteers

This strategy is very helpful for the police departments, which have limited staff numbers that cannot manage to do residence patrolling on a daily basis. Working together with trained citizen volunteers will provide them with more capacity. These citizen volunteers will strengthen the relationship between the police and the community by acting as the “eyes and the ears” of the police. The police will need to do background checks on these volunteers and also be willing to train, support and guide them regarding the procedures to be followed.

This strategy was a success in Meridian, Idaho, where the police and the local businesses supported this initiative by contributing materials such as spotlights, patrol bags and uniforms, night vision glasses and police radios (NCPC, 2000:75). The researcher suggests that the police should recruit citizen volunteers within Weltevreden Park and make use of these volunteers to carry out the activities that they do not have enough capacity to do, such as regular patrolling.

6.3.3 Support to residence associations

There are community residence associations that are willing to help the police protect their community by engaging in crime prevention activities. These associations require support from the local police departments and the local government agencies in terms of contributing resources, mobilising fellow residents and designing projects as well as determining leadership roles. In this case the local government should work together with the police and these residence associations to craft a common goal regarding the burning issues in the residential area (NCPC, 2000:100). The researcher proposes that the local police should use this opportunity to enhance their relationship with the residents of Weltevreden Park and to be more aware of the residents' concerns.

6.3.4 Centralising services through community policing

According to Peak and Glensor (1996:71), community policing facilitates the exchange of information between the police and the community and is proactive in nature. It also examines problems experienced by the community from different angles and strives for long-term solutions. To centralise the services through community policing means that the police officers should communicate the needs of the residential area with the residents. Then, both the police and the residents should mobilise the local government agencies to provide such services. In this case departments such as social service providers and job placement agencies coordinate their resources and together address the community needs.

This strategy will help create safer recreation facilities, sanitation and social support services as well as help obtain funding from private agencies (NCPS, 2000:72). The researcher proposes that the local police should be aware of the residents' concerns and then mobilise the departments such as Human Development and Home Affairs to participate in combating the squatting problem within Weltevreden Park. The findings of this study have shown that most of these squatters are undocumented foreign nationals and that others are victims of xenophobic attacks.

For this reason, the researcher proposes that the local police should request the involvement of the above-mentioned departments. These departments will help in terms of providing these people with information and by referring them to the relevant shelters or departments where they could obtain refugee status, which they could use to find shelters and employment.

6.3.5 Establishing new shelters and/or low cost rental flats

According to the White Paper on Safety and Security (Department of Safety and Security, 1998:10), the provision of basic services such as housing and employment opportunities contributes greatly to a living environment that is less prone to illegal activities such as illegal squatting. The Hong Kong local municipalities resolved this problem by establishing public rental flats. These flats accommodated more than 29% of the urban poor and most importantly created order and control over the illegal squatters (Hong Kong: The facts, 2008). The findings of this research revealed that most of the squatters who are chased away by the police return to the same spots and very often on the same day owing to the lack of alternative shelters to turn to.

Therefore, the researcher suggests that for the CoJ to manage the current illegal squatting problem in residences such as Weltevreden Park, it should learn from municipalities such as Hong Kong. In other words the CoJ should establish its own low-cost public rental flats or create new shelters in order to minimise the number of illegal squatters in the greenbelts.

6.3.6 Fundraising projects

Municipalities such as the Ahmebadan Municipality in India made use of fundraising projects and employed financial specialists to ensure that they were financially stable and could afford to provide basic services such as housing for their communities.

This Ahmebadan Municipality mobilised the local businesses and the NGOs to donate and contribute funds in order to upgrade the lives of the urban poor. It also applied the internal control measures required to manage its finances and resources, such as hiring new financial experts. With these initiatives the Ahmebadan Municipality managed to afford to provide basic services to the urban poor.

According to the Public Service Commission report (2006/2007), the number of financial misconduct cases in South Africa increased from 771 to 1042 between the year 2007 and 2008. The Gauteng province is rated as the highest amongst all the provinces, with the financial misuse of about 817 cases per year. According to the Public Service Commission report (South Africa. Public Service Commission, 2006/2007), the financial misuse within the public services is the main reason behind poor service delivery in the country. The reason for this is that the misuse of funds compromise the development of better services for the poor.

Therefore, the researcher suggests that the CoJ should also focus on the strategies that can enhance its financial status and enable it to afford to provide basic services for the illegal squatters.

6.3.7 Promoting greenbelt clean-ups

Regular cleaning of greenbelts will create an environment that is attractive to investors and less conducive to illegal activities. In this case, the police, local government agencies, local businesses and community residents should form a partnership with the environmental department.

Within this partnership the focus should be on protecting the greenbelts and ensuring that they are free from activities such as dumping and illegal squatting (NCPC, 2000:146). The researcher proposes that both the residents and the police should involve themselves in cleaning projects in order to keep the area user friendly and less conducive to illegal activities.

6.4 METHODS USED TO ENSURE THE RELIABILITY OF THESE FINDINGS

The methods used to ensure the reliability of these findings include:

- The member-checking method, in which the researcher compared the responses of the participants to establish whether they agree or disagree on similar issues. For example, in this study it was found that most of the participants agree that this problem is continuous and cyclical in nature and that it frustrates both the police and the adjacent residents.

- The triangulation method, where the researcher compared the findings of this study with those of other studies regarding the same topic. These include the study conducted by the SABC news team (Cutting Edge programme) about the squatters in KZN and the study conducted by Ballard in Durban. In this way the researcher noticed the following similarities from these studies: most of the squatters are unemployed foreigners without accommodation. From all these studies it appeared that there is a lack of strong evidence to link the squatters to the crimes committed in the adjacent residences.
- The fact that these greenbelts are accessible to anyone at anytime and are misused by criminals mainly for criminal purposes also seemed to be true (especially in the SABC news study and this study). All these studies proved that squatting has a negative impact on the surroundings and on the adjacent residences.
- The use of a co-coder, whose assistance the researcher made use of to obtain a second opinion regarding the transcribed interviews and to establish a consensus on the emerging themes.

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following difficulties were encountered during the study:

- Insufficient information about the topic under the study

The difficulty experienced by the researcher was the shortage of literature regarding illegal squatting, policing and the greenbelts as one topic. However, there are a number of studies that discuss these terms separately, which the researcher opted for. In some of these studies, the term “illegal squatter” is used interchangeably with terms like “vagrant” and “unlawful occupant”.

- Insufficient information about the study area (Weltevreden Park)

Lack of sufficient information regarding the area under study made it difficult for the researcher to provide a detailed description of the area.

- Recording the interview sessions

Some of the participants did not allow the researcher to tape record their conversations and that made it difficult for the researcher to transcribe those conversation word-for-word. Another limitation was that other participants who gave permission to record their conversations did not feel free to express themselves when the tape recorder was switched on, but only started to open up after the researcher had switched off the tape recorder.

6.6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study supports Merton’s Strain theory (Vold et al., 2002:135-153) which in short asserts that people’s lifestyles are often influenced by their life experiences. The reason that this study supports Merton’s theory is that the findings of this study have shown that most of the illegal squatters in the greenbelts within Weltevreden Park have resorted to squatting owing to circumstances such as xenophobic attacks, unemployment, and lack of accommodation and employment opportunities in that area.

Therefore, in order to combat this squatting problem both the local police and the residents of Weltevreden Park need to form a strong relationship that will convince the government and private stakeholders to participate in combatting this problem. The reason for this is that this problem does not only require a good relationship between the role players but also the resources and funds to be in place to support these projects. With a strong partnership between the above-mentioned stakeholders the police will be able to combat this problem.

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ANNEXURE "A"



ANNEXURE "B"



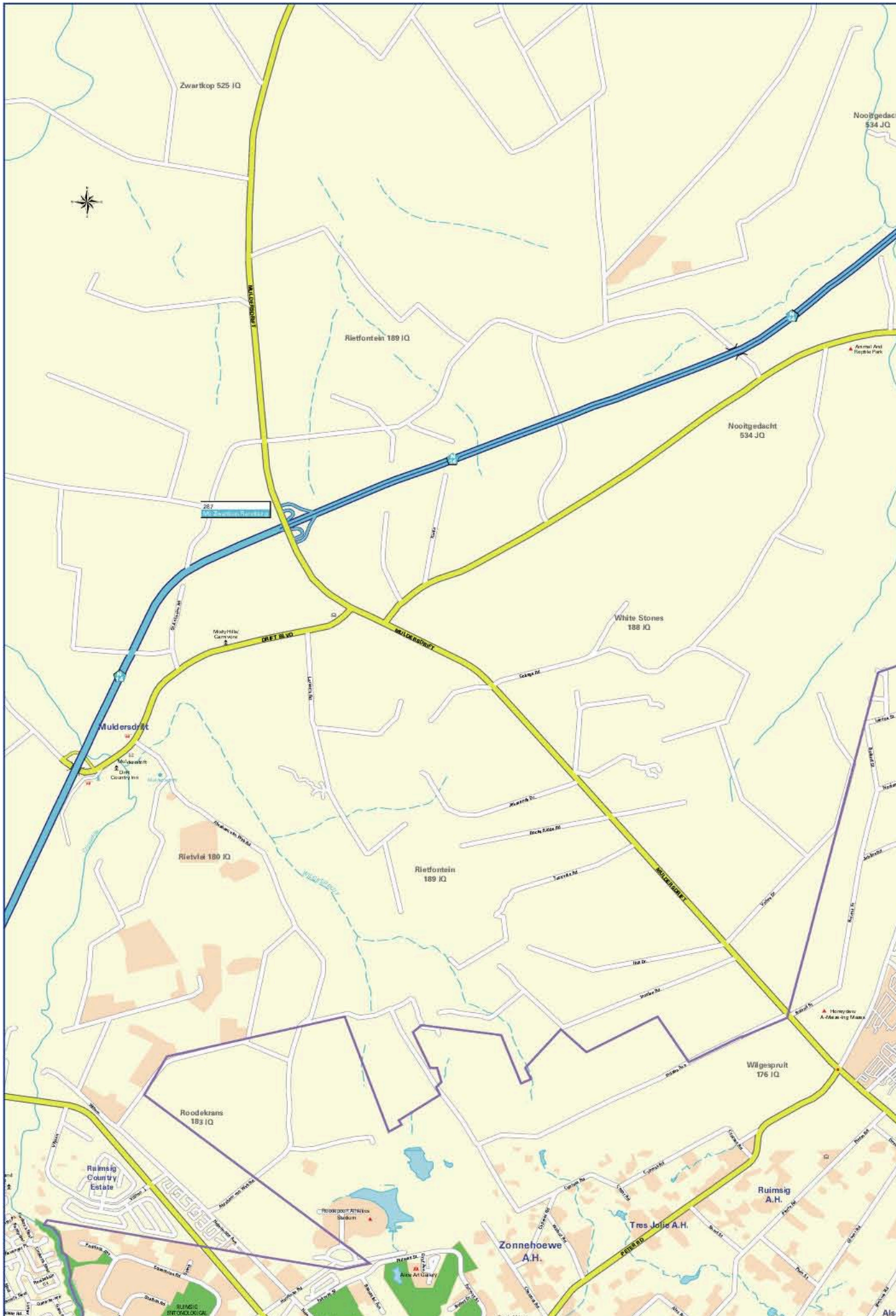
ANNEXURE "C"



ANNEXURE “D”



Honeydew policing precinct map



Region C: Weltevreden Park map

