

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CROSSROADS

1 INTRODUCTION: WHY WAS THE AREA CHOSEN?

The present township of Crossroads was chosen as a case study area for the Ten Year Review partly because of its current identity as an established urban community. To help balance the case study sample, it was selected also as one which is located in the Western Cape area, within the major Cape Town municipality, and which has undergone substantial service delivery over a period of time. However, the name of Crossroads is also indelibly written across the social conscience of South Africa and the world, as one of the most famous sites of the struggle against apartheid. Through the 1970s and 80s the in-migrant squatter population of what was then an informal settlement resisted repeated attempts to clear the area and force its black population back into the rural Eastern Cape. Successive waves of dispossessed families were forced out, until in the end the shack burnings of 1986 almost put an end to resistance. Broken apart originally by political rivalries, the community remained divided and turbulent through most of its subsequent history. The case study examines the progress of government's work in attempting to bring a normal and decent life to the present-day community on the ground.

2 KEY PROGRAMMES IN AREA

Most of the programmes active in the Crossroads area are those concerned with hard infrastructural services, RDP housing, health, education, and social security. The House Building and Subsidy programme, alongside a cluster of related RDP programmes, is the key government initiative, and the CMIP is also central. Due to extreme poverty and unemployment, with as many as 61 percent of 20 citizen households reporting no regular earned income at the time of the study, all the major social security grants are being actively promoted. These include the state old age pension, disability grant, foster grant and child support grant. Access to these forms of public support is said to be generally good, though uptake of the foster grant has been slow. Poverty relief is reported in the form of food parcels. Other involved programmes include the National Schools Building Programme, the Clinics Upgrading and Building Programme, and the Consolidated Electricity Programme as well as SEMUP. Policing also appears to involve Operational Response Services and the Crime Prevention initiative, though these are described by local citizens as very ineffective. All government health programmes are reported to be active in the area except malaria control. Community Based Public Works is said to be operating intermittently, though due to the confusion created by eight years of local government restructuring and the recent transfer of the city administration from the DA to the ANC/ NNP, reporting on municipal programmes and their financing has sometimes not been clear.

3 KEY OBJECTIVES: To a great extent government and municipal delivery for Crossroads after 1994 represented a desire on the part of the public sector to be seen to put right the injustices which had taken place in the name of

apartheid, and perhaps to restore the cohesion and sense of community lost during the apartheid dispossessions of 1970s/80s. Accordingly, even under an opposition political party, the municipality has tried to provide housing and a decent physical environment, expected to lead to consolidation of a new healthy and solidary community. As unemployment has worsened in the area there have been attempts at LED.

- 4 **KEY GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS:** Development delivery in Crossroads has constituted an effort to restructure what had been a severely overcrowded and partly destroyed informal settlement into a formal township. Accordingly, interventions have been mainly of the kind associated with physical development of a residential area, taking place adjacent to the longer-established Nyanga and Gugulethu townships. These interventions have included housing delivery, sewerage, roads, electricity, water, three schools, two clinics, and two community halls. Policing is supplied from Nyanga, and public road transport is also accessible from Nyanga, but there are now plans for a pilot highspeed road and bus /taxi corridor from the Cape Town CBD past Crossroads to Khayelitsha, in collaboration with the national Department of Transport. In addition, there is an LED training project on the northern edge of the area, as well as food parcels delivery.

In terms of institutional initiatives affecting housing and infrastructure delivery, elected local government through the ward councillors now appears to be struggling to hold control of the Crossroads area. Challenges have come since 2001 from emergent leaders who have developed a power base in the older rural-rooted assumptions of communal governance, in which authority over housing and other delivery is held inside the community rather than by the formal city bureaucracy. Related fighting over control of housing has also broken out between people in a newly established municipal ward, and the residents of the older ward from which it was split off. The forward progress of government-sponsored housing delivery has been stopped by these conflicts and shows no sign of resuming.

It is reported that the city administration may intend pulling the plug on this housing development since there is no source of further funding. The institutional incompatibility between communal and bureaucratic governance systems may also be creating potential for other funding leaks where the city administration interacts with the community in the delivery process.

5 **OUTPUTS OF THE INTERVENTIONS**

The process of providing housing and physical infrastructure since 1994 has delivered about 2560 RDP housing units, in addition to about 1285 units before 1994. The approximate value of this housing stock completed since 1994 is about R 40 million. A total of 3989 units was planned for the housing phases after 1994, representing about R 70 million in subsidy funding altogether. However, the conflict over control of the 1691 housing units to be built in the last two planned phases has paralyzed the housing provision process and all associated infrastructural development indefinitely. Since

shooting broke out only after contracts had been signed and the most recent housing phases had already started, some R 25 million appears to have been lost through subsidies paid out to contractors in the northern phase, and perhaps five million in the southern phase. The value of the roads, sewerage and other hard infrastructure involved is difficult to derive independently from figures provided. It appears that most of the affected area remains under informal shack settlement, without services.

In addition to the housing, other Crossroads infrastructure has been provided in the form of a sports field, the second community hall, and a local market area, funded by the city council with national funding: due to the city's administrative restructuring and accompanying staff turnover, costing for these is difficult to determine. A new Crossroads primary school is also being built by the Department of Education, and an early childhood enrichment centre is being constructed by the provincial Department of Social Services. The city health department has upgraded one of the two Crossroads clinics at a cost of roughly R 2.5 million: this clinic and day hospital has been badly damaged by thieves stealing window fittings and other equipment, and it closed in April for about a week due to the series of burglaries. Costs of the damage are not yet known.

6 IMPACT OF DELIVERY & REASONS FOR IMPACT

After an initial period of slow and difficult delivery due to community conflict, conditions in Crossroads improved during the late 90s as conflict abated, and new housing provision was able to move ahead. The area appeared to have developed successfully, and was accommodating its in-migrant population with housing, education and health services. Since 2001, the area appears to be moving backward, with earlier successful delivery and gains from greater civil peace coming into danger as street crime rises and quasi-political violence increases along with it.

The extremely high levels of unemployment and particularly youth unemployment reported in the Crossroads area appear to be the underlying problem. It is important that social security delivery funding has been able to hold back destitution in cases of job loss, but cannot reestablish income levels above poverty or create decent living standards. Local economic development initiatives are intended to fill this gap with alternative income sources, but LED is not yet effectively conceptualized and delivered. Particularly, there is little if any direct support to informal small business development in Crossroads.

Joblessness among the local youth is encouraging armed gangs to commit 'shakedown' street robberies of community schoolchildren and women. While these street robberies are not usually violent, violent crime has also risen very sharply in the area, along with property crimes suggestive of social anger. The community reaction is anger and despair with government's seeming inability to interrupt this cycle.

Crime is putting health services and routine municipal services under stress. Hijackings and vehicle crimes have risen steeply, striking particularly against health and development staff, who now seem to be viewed as well-off outsiders and legitimate targets. It has become very difficult for the municipal health department to oblige nurses and doctors to commute into Crossroads to work at the clinics, due to armed invasions as well as numerous crimes taking place immediately outside the clinic grounds. Teachers and schoolchildren are frequent targets of the street robberies, but the schools themselves appear to be safer than the clinics, reportedly due to mass reprisal attacks by the learners against gangs trying to enter the schools to carry out robberies. Municipal maintenance workers are at risk of attacks throughout the city. Though community life continues, a climate of fear is reported in the Crossroads area as the civil fabric wears down.

This slide toward societal breakdown seems to have encouraged quasi-political leaders to come forward to challenge the councillors and city administration for control over development delivery. Both the two sets of emergent leaders involved in the housing projects stoppage are reported to have been able to use their leverage in putting municipal development into abeyance so to be coopted into formal politics themselves, and obtain 'untouchable' positions with the DA and ANC respectively. The apparent price of their successful cooptation has been loss of R 30 million in government housing subsidies, paid out by terms of contract in the two aborted housing delivery projects.

The police say that they are without resources to patrol the schools and clinics. Police are also seen by the local population as powerless to oppose the climate of impunity which has spread through the Crossroads area and the surrounding settlements. Police and councillors are also accused of collusion with the criminal gangs and political power figures, and poor policing was second only to unemployment as the leading complaint among the citizens interviewed about government's ten-year progress. One Crossroads focus group asked to send a message via the research, telling the government that no development work of any kind would be possible until crime was brought under control.

It appears that in old townships like Crossroads, where the development process itself is often the central arena for engagement and trade-offs between citizens and government, that government development spending can sometimes become one of the victims of power struggles. That is, funds committed to development objectives may be vulnerable to being taken hostage to the conflicts that arise when unemployment comes together with contestation for scarce resources. If policing is weak in protecting the fragile civil order, internal divisions easily descend into open criminality, opening the way for individuals claiming to represent the community's interest to try to wrest control of development allocation from the city so as to informalize it. In such circumstances, it may become a challenge to government how the developmental state and its municipal proxies can reliably protect government development spending.

No simple answer is clear from the Crossroads case material as reported by the area residents, though policing appears as an important mediating factor. However, underlying the disorder in the community is the need to achieve much more effective LED options, so as to help citizens to lift their own incomes out of the poverty category. A second concern may be the need to maintain acceptable continuing levels of delivery for housing and basic services in the older townships, in order to keep pace with unfolding needs due to population increase which may otherwise become a threat. Balancing these aspects of the delivery process is likely to represent an important challenge to government as the second decade of South African social delivery takes shape.

