

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT'S URBAN RENEWAL INITIATIVES: THE CASE OF ALEXANDRA TOWNSHIP

By

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**A mini-dissertation submitted to the faculty of Engineering and the
Built Environment, University of Cape Town, in partial fulfilment of
the Degree of Masters of Philosophy in the field of Urban
Infrastructure Design and Management**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of the implementation of the Alexandra Renewal Programme (ARP) on the lives of residents in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra, in South Africa. The urban renewal project was a government initiative in collaboration with the private sector and community-based organisations. The project aimed to improve the physical, social and economic environments of Alexandra, a densely-populated township whose history includes political resistance, poverty, high levels of crime and unemployment, and yet is located adjacent to South Africa's successful commercial capital, Sandton. The impact of urban renewal programmes such as the ARP has not been evaluated along every dimension, nor recently with concerns raised about the pace of government efforts to drive the change required. Hence, the objective of this study was to assess the impact of the Alexandra urban renewal programme on its residents.

Alexandra typifies the socio-economic marginalisation of black urban neighbourhoods during the apartheid era. Nearly 500 000 people live in approximately 100 000 households in formal and informal housing; unemployment is estimated at 60%, and most household incomes fall below the extreme poverty line of less than USD1 per person per day. Hence the ARP was designed to boost job creation, promote a healthier environment, through provision of affordable and sustainable services, such as decent housing, roads, water supply, sanitation and other infrastructure, and to reduce crime.

The case study was conducted using qualitative research techniques. Focus groups were conducted with 32 residents from formal and informal settlements in the township. Research data was analysed using thematic content analysis.

As a former resident of Alexandra with a long family history in the township, the researcher could provide a grounded and corroborative insight into the phenomenon under study.

The research findings indicate that the implementation of the ARP programme has been generally consistent with the designed outcomes. The respondents indicated that the programme had some positive impact on improved access to government facilities and services, and on some housing and infrastructure projects. However, the participants also expressed frustration, and indicated that they had not gained significant benefits, especially on job creation and business opportunities. In addition, the residents believed that more could be done on the provision of basic services such as housing, water and sanitation. The effectiveness of government officials responsible for the ARP was also a concern.

The study recommends that the three spheres of government (national, provincial and local) should collaborate more to develop relevant policies which drive urgency and effectiveness into the implementation of the urban renewal programme (URP) in Alexandra, and in the Gauteng province in general.

The findings of this study contribute to the broader review of URPs in South Africa, and can assist government's developmental structures in evaluating the impact of these and future programmes.

DECLARATION

I declare that this mini-dissertation is my own unaided work and all the sources that I have quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references. This research is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Masters of Philosophy (Urban Infrastructure Design and Management) at the University of Cape Town. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Signed by candidate

PHINDILE MBANJWA

JANUARY 2018

DEDICATION

I dedicate this achievement to my wonderful parents; my mother, Mrs Patricia Mbanjwa, and father, Mr Cyril M. Mbanjwa, who taught me that through hard work, commitment and perseverance I can accomplish anything.

I further dedicate it to my daughter, Silindile Mbada, who in her many priceless ways encouraged me.

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The Almighty God, for giving me strength and ensuring that my physical and mental health remained intact during this journey.

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Finally, thank you to the community of Alexandra who contributed to the finalisation of my studies, by generously allowing me to conduct surveys and interviews in their homes and for affording me their valuable time.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ARP	Alexandra Renewal Programme
ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CoCT	City of Cape Town
DPLG	Department of Provincial & Local Government
GEAR	Growth, Employment, and Redistribution Programme
GDHS	Gauteng Department of Human Settlements
GJMC	Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council
HDA	Housing Development Agency
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
JDA	Johannesburg Development Agency
LED	Local Economic Development
NDP	National Development Plan
NGP	New Growth Path
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
TMR	Transformation, Modernisation and Re-industrialisation
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
URP	Urban Renewal Programme

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Introduction*

The dawn of democratic South Africa in 1994 heralded numerous government initiatives aimed at addressing the legacy of inequalities from the apartheid government. Urban regeneration was one policy introduced to address socio-economic conditions in the previously marginalised townships, occupied by black people who represent over 80% of the country's population (Statistics South Africa, Stats SA, 2016). Urban regeneration is an approach adopted by developing economies to combat challenges such as housing shortages, infrastructural inadequacies and general urban decay. Therefore, South Africa has prioritised several programmes aimed at integrating the previously disadvantaged population into a free and equal society. This study examines the impact of one such intervention, the Alexandra Renewal Programme (ARP), on its residents.

Urban renewal is the plan, process and programme through which environmental quality redevelopment occurs in derelict urban areas (Choguill, 2007:145; Ibem & Azuh, 2011:6; Lee & Chan, 2010:261). For South Africa, the urban renewal programmes (URPs) have been wide-ranging and include service delivery in housing, education, water, sanitation, road networks, health facilities, adult literacy programmes, and employment creation (Human Sciences Research Council, HSRC, 2003:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245; Sinwell, 2005:2). In Johannesburg, South Africa's largest metropole, the city's vibrant economy attracts large volumes of people in search of opportunities. Johannesburg, the financial hub of South Africa, is also a city of contrasts, where successful business ventures conduct first world business and co-exist alongside neighbourhoods of abject poverty.

The development of an expanding economy requires large-scale construction of infrastructural facilities and housing units, and the rehabilitation of existing facilities. These initiatives also contribute to national cohesion by reducing racial tensions emanating from historical inequalities in South Africa, which tended to be racially based. Therefore, URPs were an imperative for economic and social growth, to

address important issues timeously, and enable economic transformation in the country.

The key objectives of the national URP Implementation Framework are stated as poverty targeting and alleviation (Gauteng Department of Human Settlements, GDHS, 2016). The nodal localities identified for URP development correspond with the landscape of under-development and poverty in South Africa. In total eight urban nodes were designated for renewal, with about 96 active projects underway across South Africa by 2016 (GDHS, 2016). The focus was on addressing the micro and local economic development imperatives that complemented the macro-economic stability in the country. Furthermore, URP initiatives served to improve the co-ordination and integration of service delivery at national, provincial and local levels (GDHS, 2016). The URP was therefore one vehicle for achieving the elimination of poor living and working conditions and for improving the quality of life of urban residents, particularly in the townships.

Alexandra is one of Johannesburg's oldest townships and its location adjacent to the commercial hub of Sandton, Johannesburg's economic hub, made it an ideal subject for urban renewal focus. Furthermore, its underdevelopment, overcrowding and poverty profile juxtaposed against Johannesburg's richest node made it an interesting subject for urban renewal. The population of Alexandra is estimated at 500 000 people, who live in approximately 80 000 formal households distributed over 800 hectares (Stats SA, 2011). In addition, Alexandra hosts informal dwellings or shacks, estimated at over 20 000 units (Rauch, 2002:11). Figure 1.1 provides a map of Alexandra township with all its wards (Wazimaps, 21 December 2017).

The township is densely populated, with ratios reaching more than 10 persons per household estimated in 70% of the 'Old Alex' neighbourhood (Rauch, 2002:11). Socio-economic challenges include an unemployment rate projected at 60%, low education levels among adults, and an HIV infection rate assessed to be 10% higher than the national median (Stats SA, 2011). Alexandra is also generally regarded as one of the high crime nerve-centres of Johannesburg. Based on the above, it is evident that Alexandra township faces challenges of over-population, unemployment,

and historical neglect on infrastructure, housing and other development, which require attention in terms of urban renewal and economic development.

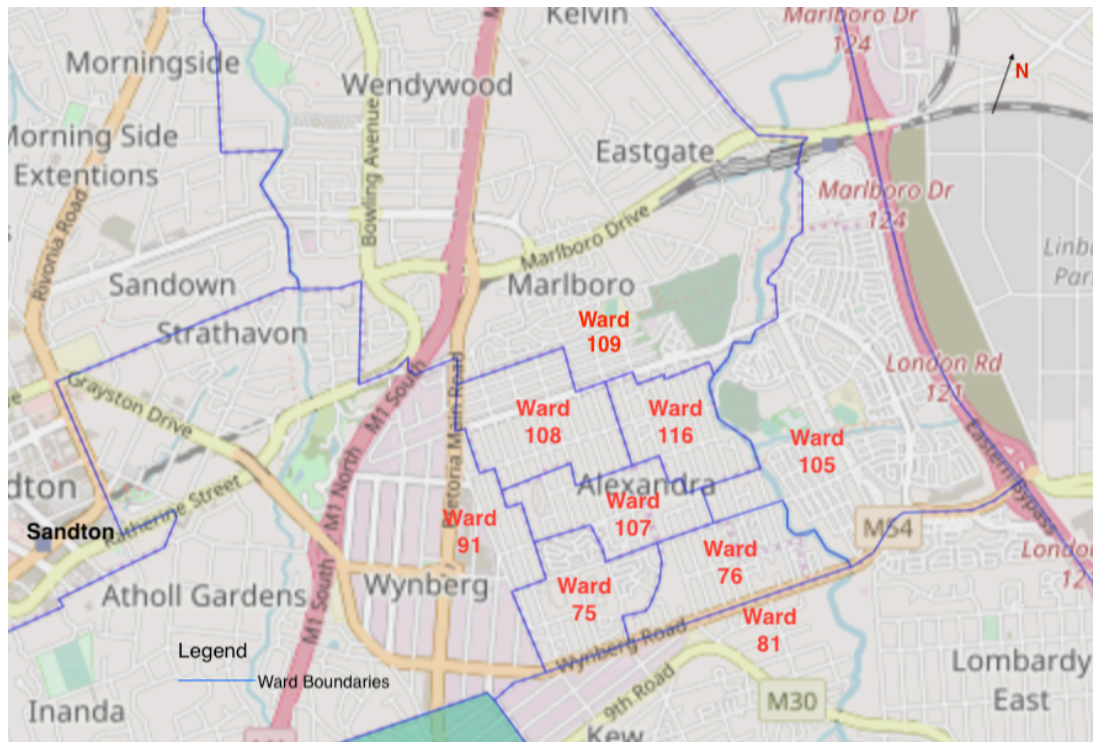


Figure 1.1 Map of Alexandra Township, Johannesburg showing wards and neighbouring suburbs including Sandton, the country's wealthiest commercial hub.

The Alexandra Renewal Programme (ARP) was introduced by government in 2001, and there have been mixed reviews on its effectiveness (HSRC, 2003:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245; Sinwell, 2005:2). The programme was deemed to lack in areas of job creation, the provision of housing and basic services mainly.

The purpose of this study is therefore, to investigate first-hand the impact of the implementation of the Alexandra Renewal Programme on the lives of the township's residents.

This introductory chapter provides the background and significance of the study. The research questions and objectives of the study are presented, and the research methodology and the study format is explained.

1.2 Background to the research

Urban renewal initiatives can be evaluated by assessing improvements to access to public facilities, provision of basic services, effectiveness of community involvement, creation of employment opportunities, provision of business opportunities, and the attention to environmental concerns in the planning and execution of the renewal programmes (Lee & Chan, 2010:260). An observable trend in global urban renewal initiatives is the adoption of sustainable practices, since urban renewal projects seek to achieve social, economic and environmental sustainability (Choguill, 2007:145; Ibem & Azuh, 2011:6; Lee & Chan, 2010:261). Hence, economic viability, environmental compatibility and social acceptability become key indicators of urban renewal initiatives.

The advantages of URPs have been highlighted by several authors. Huang (2008:18) notes that the most productive way to undertake urban development and reduce urban decay is to preserve existing city structures. In Nigeria, various URP strategies range from slum redevelopment and city improvement, to the restoration of physical infrastructure (Olawepo, 2010:275). Besides eradicating undesirable elements such as urban decay, URPs can also be a means of creating employment opportunities (Zielenbach & Levin, 2000:9). In addition, URPs contribute to the provision of sustainable public facilities, improvements in the quality of living environment, the creation of new and efficient economic activities, and to the general socio-economic integration of the urban environment (Dimuna & Omatsone, 2010:6; Kara, 2011:30).

Significant urban renewal interventions have been introduced in Johannesburg, resulting in improvements across several sectors. For example, new roads and highways have been constructed to link the previously marginalised locales with the hives of economic activity (GDHS, 2016). Housing and public facilities construction in Johannesburg has also resulted in improvements to areas such as Alexandra, Soweto and Diepsloot. New cities have been established, for example Mogale City in northern Johannesburg. The urban improvements have also extended to other South African cities such as Bloemfontein, Cape Town and Durban, which is evidence of the national commitment to urban renewal (GDHS, 2016).

Despite the attributes offered by the renewal projects in South African urban locations, there may be adverse effects on people already settled in the old townships and cities. For example, large-scale developments may result in the relocation of people from affected areas, to create space for new development, or because the old locale may not be environmentally sustainable. In the case of Alexandra, residents may resist relocation as the township offers a short commute to places of employment in the Sandton and surrounding commercial hubs. Therefore, town planners have to consider environmental, logistical and other factors affecting the daily habits of dwellers, to ensure the successful introduction of new initiatives.

Therefore, this study explores how the government's initiatives in the ARP have impacted on people's lives. What has been the experience of the residents affected by the large-scale redevelopments? How can these effects be improved, or ameliorated, for future URP projects and policy arrangements?

1.3 Problem statement

Since 1994, there has been greater emphasis on access to public facilities, community involvement and the creation of job opportunities in South Africa. The URP policy aims to deploy government resources in an integrated manner to address the underdevelopment cycle in some urban areas. The legacy of neglect and the increasing demand on social service delivery have created pressure on government to meet its identified goals and developmental plans. Therefore, urban renewal aims to provide long-term improvements economically or socially. An examination of the impact of such projects on residents is imperative.

Several studies have reviewed the impact of urban renewal projects in South Africa (Donaldson, Du Plessis, Spocter, & Massey, 2013; HSRC, 2003:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245; Sinwell, 2005:2). There are varying opinions about the success of the of the programme particularly on aspects such as job creation and improved infrastructure. These studies are useful as interim evaluation, however, further evaluation from different perspectives is required. The present investigation makes contribution to this gap in knowledge by examining impacts of urban renewal

initiatives on peoples' lives through intimate, small scale interviews whose success relies in part on the researcher's affinity with the people and the place as a former resident of Alexandria.

1.4 Research objectives

The primary objective of the study is to evaluate the socio-economic impact of the Urban Renewal Project (URP) on the residents of Alexandria.

The second objective is to ascertain whether the URP has led to improved access to public facilities, to the provision of basic facilities such as housing.

The third objective is to determine if the URP has enhanced employment creation and business opportunities in general;

The fourth objective is to evaluate whether the URP has increased the communities' involvement and sense of ownership of the renewal programmes.

The fifth and final objective is to recommend solutions and possible improvements for URP initiatives in the future.

1.4.1 Research questions

Against the backdrop of the objectives outlined above, this study addresses the following questions:

- What kind of impact has the ARP had on the residents of Alexandria?
- Has the URP led to inclusive economic growth for the residents of Alexandria?
- Does the URP improve or exacerbate the socio-economic challenges faced by the residents of Alexandria?
- Does the urban renewal project increase community involvement and a sense of programme ownership?

1.5 Significance of the research

This study contributes knowledge that can assist government's developmental structures to evaluate the impact of urban renewal projects, from the perspective of the residents of Alexandria. The study also highlights areas of progress and offers solutions for areas experiencing challenges. The study also offers solutions on how government can ensure the community's involvement in renewal projects, if they are to become sustainable in the long term.

1.6 Outline of the research study

The study is presented in five chapters. Following this introductory chapter, the literature review in Chapter 2 outlines the relevant concepts and literature, and proposes a theoretical framework as a guide to the study.

Chapter 3 explains the research methodology, and provides the research design and research process that was followed. Chapter 4 presents the results of the study, followed by a discussion. The final chapter, Chapter 5, concludes the study and makes recommendations for future study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Introduction*

This chapter reviews the literature underpinning the concept of urban renewal. The theoretical concepts underlying the discussion are underpinned by the ideologies of Neo-Marxism and Neoliberalism. Related themes include poverty alleviation, social improvement, environmental awareness, and physical upgrading. Approaches to urban renewal are also discussed, drawing on global and South African case studies. The history and evolution of cities have a bearing on the type of urban renewal programmes introduced. Alexandra township is no exception. Finally, this chapter presents a conceptual framework, which this study is based on.

Government policy plays an important role in shaping the transformation of cities and the relationship between what is on the ground compared to what policies advocate. In democratic South Africa, discussion on urban renewal is shaped by the country's two economic worlds, one a prosperous first world economy, and the other a third world economy of poverty and under-development (Mbeki, 2001). Political focus, public policy and local government initiatives reflect the conflicts of juxtaposing the two worlds in one country, while still growing the national economy.

This chapter is structured as follows. First is a historical background of Alexandra Township, which provides a context for the development of urban renewal policies, and their evolution in South Africa. The chapter then reviews the different interpretations of urban renewal. Concepts investigated are informed by the evolution of cities over time, public policies, and the causal relationship between urban renewal and urban development in respect of socio-political aspects and economic growth. Global and local case studies on urban renewal are referenced throughout the discussion. The discussion also draws on how the themes and concepts apply to urban renewal projects in South Africa.

2.2 The evolution of Alexandra Township

Alexandra township was established in the early 1900s, when a wealthy white farmer created a native settlement for black people and named the township after his wife, Alexandra. The township area measures approximately 800 hectares (City of Johannesburg, CoJ, 2014). The township quickly became a residential magnet for rural people and for migrants from neighbouring countries looking for work opportunities in the mines. In later years, Alexandra's location made it even more attractive to migrants as wealthy northern suburbs developed around the area. By 2014, the population of Alexandra was estimated at 500 000 people, in an area originally designed to accommodate 70 000 people (CoJ, 2014).

Present day Alexandra is surrounded by the suburbs of Marlboro, Kew, Lombardy and Sandton. The suburb of Sandton houses the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and large financial, mining and general commercial headquarters. Alexandra is also adjacent to main arterial roads, which provide easy access to Johannesburg Central and Pretoria, all of which offer employment and other economic opportunities. Finally, parts of Alexandra township are located on the banks of Jukskei River, which results in challenges related to environmental hazard, among others.

The rapid population growth of Alexandra resulted in overcrowding and an increased number of shacks erected in backyards and over servitudes as space became scarce. The outcome of this has been overburdened infrastructure that cannot service the entire community (Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, GJMC, 2000:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245). Furthermore, Alexandra typified the consequences of apartheid and the segregation and marginalisation of black people. The legacy of disadvantage resulted, for black people, in poor urban planning, poor housing, schools that were insufficient and impoverished, large backlogs in the provision of basic services, lack of job opportunities, high crime and a general degradation of the environment (City of Cape Town, COCT, 2011:1; Donaldson & Du Plessis, 2011:2; Donaldson *et al.*, 2013:629; HSRC, 2003:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245). Consequently, Alexandra reflects high levels of poverty, under-development and related socio-economic challenges.

Key to the decision to initiate an urban renewal programme in Alexandra township, was the need to address the deteriorating socio-economic conditions that put Alexandra Township in the spotlight (Mbeki, 2001:1). One trigger event was the damage caused by the flooding of the Jukskei river, coupled with tragic shack burnings that occurred in 1999 (HSRC, 2003:3). These events necessitated urgent government intervention to enable redevelopment of affected areas and general improvement of the livelihoods of people.

The challenges of Alexandra are reflected in several South African townships, including Khayelitsha (Cape Town), Mamelodi (Pretoria) and parts of Soweto (Johannesburg). Therefore, the urban renewal intervention in Alexandra was part of a broader programme initiated by government first in 2001 (Donaldson & Du Plessis, 2011:2; Donaldson, Du Plessis, Spocter & Massey, 2013:629; HSRC, 2003:3; Mbeki, 2001:1).

2.3 Definitions of Urban Renewal

The concept of urban renewal originates from the need by cities for development brought about by changing environmental needs. The urban challenges may relate to area degeneration, overcrowding, deepening levels of poverty and lack of access to health services and economic opportunities (Donaldson & Du Plessis, 2013:295; Zielenbach & Levin, 2000:4). These issues are common characteristics between historical and modern era challenges that require urban policies to resolve.

Definitions of urban renewal point to the several common themes, as follows:

- “an integrated process that specifically targets the regeneration of purposefully identified underdeveloped geographic areas to achieve sustainable development by bringing a balance between the social, economic, environmental and infrastructural aspects of city life” (Donaldson & Du Plessis, 2013:295).
- a set of plans and activities to upgrade neighbourhoods and suburbs that are in a state of distress or decay (Michalos, 2014:6867).
- strategies for removing undesirable elements and creating employment opportunities (Zielenbach & Levin, 2000:6).

- systematic and sustained intervention to alleviate poverty and to significantly address underdevelopment (Department of Provincial & Local Government, DPLG, 2002).

In urban renewal, the environment is viewed as a living entity that goes through changes, and through the natural process of environmental transformation. According to Roberts (2000:9), urban renewal refers to issues pertaining to the need to attend to housing and health matters in urban areas. Roberts links social improvement with economic progress, and to the relationship between the physical conditions evident in urban areas and the nature of the socio-political response, as key themes running through urban renewal programmes. Huang (2008:2) states that urban renewal retards urban obsolescence, helps clear blighted areas, and upgrades dilapidated buildings, infrastructure and the physical environment. It is evident from these definitions that urban renewal encompasses the notion of physical upgrading as well as socio-economic improvement.

Common to the definitions highlighted is that urban renewal is not defined as an isolated concept. Rather, urban renewal is a composite of related strategies and mechanisms for the upgrade of the physical environment, and the general holistic improvement in the lives of people.

In the case of South Africa, the concept of urban renewal extends beyond physical upgrades and specifically targets the alleviation of poverty. The legacy of segregation of communities on racial lines, and the resulting neglect of black townships, are well-documented (HSRC, 2003:3; Mbeki, 2001:1; Zack 2002:2). Hence, the government's definition of urban renewal emphasises deliberate and planned public intervention to address poverty and eradicate the underdevelopment prevalent particularly in the black townships. Furthermore, the URP in South Africa seeks to restore people's dignity by restoring and building their self-worth and approach to life in an urban environment (Zack 2002:2).

2.4 Urban Renewal Related Concepts and Models

Literature on urban development refers to urban renewal, regeneration, redevelopment, revitalization, gentrification, neighborhood renewal, rehabilitation, and renovation, and the terms are often used interchangeably (Tallon, 2013:3). Longa (2011:2) identifies the same terminology for the classification of urban interventions. However, Longa notes that there may be overlaps in the way the urban transition terms are used, based on the peculiarity of a city space, such as its composition. The varying models of urban renewal are informed by the evolution of cities over time. Hence, although similar terminologies may be used with regards to urban renewal, different meanings may apply because cities have different profiles and characteristics (Longa, 2011:2).

It is noted that in debates and discussions concerning changes within a city and a territory, interventions and initiatives tend to start with the prefix “re”. This points to new thinking and new processes around something that already exists or that which used to exist (Longa, 2011:3).

Therefore, by its nature, urban renewal is linked to history or evolution. Furthermore, most urban renewal initiatives tend to trace their origin to a historical moment or event. According to Lees (2003:61) urban renewal in the 1960s was largely public-sector driven and mainly concerned with large scale redevelopment of overcrowded inner-city slum areas in Europe and the United States of America (USA). By contrast urban regeneration in the 1980s was more concerned with economic growth and property development through leveraging off undirected public funds towards investments in markets (Lees, 2003:61).

The model of urban renewal for Alexandra township is more in line with Lees assertion, as the focus was on the redevelopment of an area that had become overcrowded. As noted, several historical events triggered the momentum for change in Alexandra. The initiative was therefore public sector driven, following the presidential announcement of 2001, on urban renewal programmes.

Although urban renewal development in South Africa had national focus, there were differences in application of urban renewal in cities. For example, the Cape Town programme for Khayelitsha township focused on private and public-sector partnership to achieve urban regeneration, and with heightened environmental awareness. Although the Cape Town programme was public sector driven, a special unit was established to solicit private investments (Donaldson & Du Plessis, 2013: 298; Tallon, 2013:4).

In their discussion of urban renewal in South Africa, Donaldson and Du Plessis (2013:296) refer to underdeveloped geographic areas, and the notion of creating a balance in society. They observe that the City of Cape Town’s urban renewal programme spanned over several years (5 to 10-year programme). Furthermore, the Cape Town focus was not only on infrastructure upgrading and improved service delivery, but aimed to empower disadvantaged communities through the provision of improved access to city opportunities on various development programmes. Therefore, urban renewal in Cape Town has involved public private partnerships which encompass government, business, community and the donor community.

By contrast, the Alexandra renewal programme has been largely government driven, with an active role at the provincial and local government levels. The ARP has encompassed about 200 projects, several of which were launched simultaneously. The Alexandra projects covered a broad spectrum (see Table 2.1) including environmental and human skills development, and the upgrading of housing and services within the township (GJMC, 2000:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245).

Table 2.1: Scope of urban renewal intervention in Alexandra

Project Description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing – new housing units, relocation from shack dwelling, upgrade of flats • Water and sanitation • Infrastructure improvement - roads, lighting • Recreation areas • Introduction of new service facilities – shopping malls, community areas

- Renovation of existing facilities – schools, clinics
- General welfare – cleaning and upgrade of public areas
- Provision of management services and community assistance
- Employment creation
- New business development

Several authors have observed that although there were numerous projects launched, there have been differences in the implementation and coordination of projects (GJMC,2000:3; HSRC,2003:10; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245). This appeared to be mainly due to a lack of central policy guidelines that opened the door to many approaches that would form part of lessons learnt.

The next section examines the main theoretical concepts underpinning urban transition and urban development. Contextualizing disparities in developments across cities using concepts and theories assists in understanding the choices made by governments and public authorities, in addressing urban development.

2.5 Theoretical Concepts underpinning urban renewal / development

The concept of urban renewal in South Africa has been influenced by a combination of Neoliberalism and Neo-Marxism ideologies. Developmental governments aim to tackle the dual nature of cities by focussing on issues of social justice and putting in place policies that support developments for the poor while bridging the gap between the poor and the rich. Neo-Marxists on the other hand, are concerned about the impact of capitalist policies on urban development and the consequent increase in inequality, between the North and the South (Pieterse, 2008:3).

Harvey (2005:1) describes “neoliberalism” as a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. Neoliberalism is also described as a political philosophy giving priority to individual freedom and right to private property. According to this theory, state intervention must be minimised, because powerful interest groups would interfere with state programmes, particularly

in democracies, for their own benefit. Neoliberalism is thus viewed as moulding the concept of 'urban' while simultaneously intensifying inequality in urban development (Banerjee-Guha, 2009:95).

Figure 2.1 (Own, October 2017) depicts the relationship between neoliberalism and Neo-Marxism and how the two influence urban development policies in South Africa.

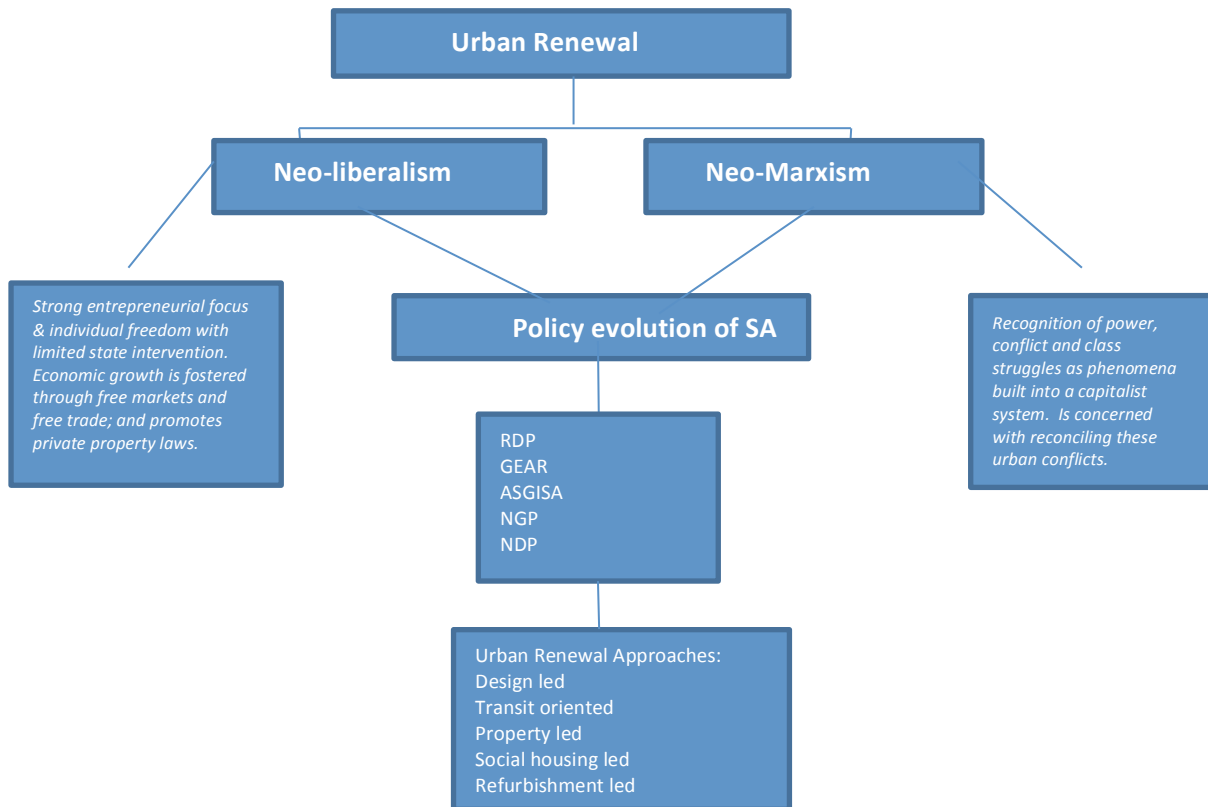


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework for Urban Renewal.

The ruling African National Congress GEAR policies combine neoliberal principles with an orientation for developmental local government, in which local governments are required to take a leadership role in the development process in close cooperation with citizens and stakeholder groups, as opposed to the top-down approach (Pieterse, 2008:3).

Urban renewal in South Africa is informed by developmental policies that encapsulate certain aspirations of neo-liberalism as well as Neo-Marxism. South Africa is a developmental state that is characterised by inequality. On one extreme is the rich in wealthy suburbs, and on the other, are poor communities spatially located in and around the urban node far from opportunities.

Two of South Africa's early economic policies, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP, of 1996) and the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR, of 1996 - 2006), defined economic policy for the country. The RDP advocated for state-centred and an equity driven policy framework in response to the country's legacy of discrimination. However, the GEAR programme focused on an efficiency-driven process of development, based on public- private partnership and which followed more capitalist policies than the RDP. Therefore, whereas the RDP promoted growth and development through reconstruction and redistribution; the GEAR policy presented a shift from redistribution and reducing the role of the state to facilitator in growing the economy. These shifts were thus seen as widening the gap between rich and poor, fueling social and economic ills, including job losses leading to high unemployment and increased poverty (Bond, 2005:337).

The GEAR policy was complemented by the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) which sought to balance the strong orientation of RDP on social aspects of society (South African History Online, 2017). The ASGISA focused on delivering a macro- economic policy that propelled the economy to grow through increased tax base, and to ensure sustainable government through social investment. The creation of jobs and reduction of poverty remained a challenge that ASGISA sought to prioritise by developing specific targets of reducing poverty and halving unemployment within a 10- year period, from the date of policy adoption (South African History Online, 2017).

In 2010, the New Growth Path (NGP) economic policy was adopted. The NGP policy intended to address structural challenges in the economy that seemed to deepen inequality and poverty, despite the policy stances taken and implemented since 1994 (South African History Online, 2017). In 2013, the New Development Plan (NDP) was adopted as a 'blueprint' for socio-economic growth that targeted poverty reduction and growing the economy to newer heights. The policy created a roadmap articulating specific things that had to be done to achieve faster economic growth that is inclusive. The NDP is the current national economic policy as at 2017.

South African scholars draw on the neoliberalism theme to describe the transformation of post-apartheid macroeconomic policies and their social

consequences. Analysis is also made of the financialization of the South African economy through neoliberal policies (Bond, 2005:337).

Neoliberalism

The characteristics and definitions attributed to neoliberalism are reflected in diverse spheres such as economics, politics, international relations, urban development and culture (Harvey, 2005:10). The identifying characteristics of neoliberalism vary in the explanations, yet are recurrent recognisable characteristics. Crucial among these are unregulated markets through which economic growth is fostered, and the advancement of limited state power. Another element of the concept is the requirement for the state to play the role of enabler by introducing conditions and policies that enable free markets to thrive. Therefore, neoliberalism creates and preserves an institutional and legal framework appropriate to neoliberal practices which enforce private property laws (Harvey, 2005:6).

Globally, cities have become key for the implementation and adaptation of neoliberalism. The cities provide new and significant territorialisation of the world economy (Robinson, 2006:9). Furthermore, a new spatial fix becomes the scale by which the impacts and outcomes of neoliberalism are felt in everyday life (Brenner & Theodore, 2002:349; Jessop, 2002:452; Purcell, 2008:3). As cities develop, urban development policies have been rearticulated, with a concomitant shift in the discourses and practices of how urban problems should be responded to (Jessop, 2002:452).

States and local governments have responded to emergent conditions of urbanisation, and the prospects of worsening urban poverty and inequality, by adopting neoliberal frames of reference for urban development policy (Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2002:15; Pieterse, 2008:3). These policies have been largely defined by the opportunities provided by a service orientated, specialised economy which serves a private and small elite rather than a global majority (Swyngedouw, 2000:3; Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2002:15; Zetter & Hassan, 2002:169; Pieterse, 2008:13). It is assumed that the implementation of such policies would bring about improved conditions through the trickling down of benefits from an improved economy to the daily lives of urban communities.

Agendas for the resolution of urban problems in the South have continued to emphasise the extensive list of needs in developing world cities –poverty alleviation through to the provision of housing, water, healthcare and other basic needs; improved land tenure, civil rights and education (Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2002:15). Urban development agendas have also come to focus directly on concerns about the exponential growth of urban slums and their related marginalisation and sustainability (Kramer, 2006:12; Pieterse, 2008:13; Robinson, 2008:74; Zetter & Hassan 2002:169).

Shifts in urban development policy leave cities, especially within the global South, with a development dilemma. Despite having a plausible agenda to address inequality in its many forms, cities have become focused on development which primarily addresses connectivity and positionality in the global economy (Sellers, 2002:22; Zetter & Hassan 2002:169; Parnell & Robinson, 2006:337). As Pieterse (2008:13) states, [“pursuing these infrastructures], the location and infrastructure needs of the poor take a back seat to what the city may need to become competitive, and more recently ‘creative”.

The situation applies particularly in cities where resources are limited and populations that need support are growing faster, and in cases where urban elites prefer to push an agenda of competitiveness which avoids or conquers alternatives (Swyngedouw, 2000:63; Zetter & Hassan, 2002:169).

Some researchers contend that the benefits of adopting a neoliberal approach to urban development have yet to be proven. In cases where urban development in the South is increasingly guided by practices of entrepreneurialism and regeneration originating from the North, the promises of trickle down of benefits are still contested (Bond, 2005).

Neo-Marxism

Neo-Marxists are concerned about the impact of capitalist policies on urban development and the consequent increase in inequality between the North and the South. They recognise that issues such as power, conflict, economy and politics are

the core of urban renewal. Neo-Marxists see urban conflict and problems as phenomena built into the capitalist system, originating from contradictions and limitations of capitalism, which could be managed temporarily, but not eliminated until new modes of production are in force (Logan & Harvey, 2007:5).

Urban Neo-Marxism is defined as accumulation of capital, class struggles or conflicts and the reproduction of labour power in the urban area. The surface appearance of conflicts or struggles against the landlord or against urban renewal conceals a hidden essence that indicated the struggle between capital and labour (Logan & Harvey, 2007:5). Neo-Marxism was influenced by signature scholars such as Harvey and Castells, who explored the concept during the 1970s and 1980s, the period when the requirements for structural change shaped the global economy. However, Castells did not reduce urban social conflict to an aspect of the class struggle. Instead, he criticised fellow Neo-Marxists for the tendency to reduce the city and space to the logic of capital (Castells, 1976a: Logan & Harvey, 2007:5).

What distinguished Neo-Marxist urban analysis from conventional work was that early sociologists regarded urban planning as a constructive, rational, and objective attempt at solving urban problems in a comprehensive metropolitan approach (Logan & Harvey, 2007:5), whereas Neo-Marxists viewed urban structure and problems as mainly the product of the capitalist mode of production. This is consistent with other contemporary Marxist theorists. Neo-Marxist urbanists often argue that the social relations of production have primacy and that the forces of production and the urban environment itself are used to reproduce capitalist social relations.

Hackworth (2007:65) reviewed the 1979 work of Fainstein & Fainstein on urban development. Fainstein & Fainstein had highlighted the problems in specifying aspects of urbanization directly determined by a given mode of production, and the variation in urban phenomena in capitalist societies. They also outlined a model explaining how urban development is constrained but not determined by the capitalist mode of production. The model suggested that structural factors found in capitalist social relations of production, the specific functional requirements of capitalism, and technological capabilities together create tendencies in urban

development. However, Hackworth concurred that such models could vary or be modified by factors such as a society's earlier urban solutions and forms, or its institutional arrangements for maintaining class privilege (Hackworth, 2007:65).

Phenomena and issues studied by conventional urban researchers were also central to the Neo-Marxist urban research. These are studied with different analytical concepts, and often new results are produced; but there are also areas of agreement and convergence with conventional work. For example, conventional explanation of US urban growth emphasizes major changes in technology and population migrations as principle causes of urban structural change or development. In Neo-Marxist analysis, however, these factors are not the underlying causes but instead are intermediate factors produced by the basic requirements and social relations of capitalist production (Paris, 2013:162).

Neo-Marxist urbanists have been critical of studies on urban renewal or regeneration. This is especially when a city or some aspect of it is viewed as separate from and independent of the larger society, when urban problems are viewed as discrete, isolated phenomena, and when certain urban forms or processes are considered inevitable or universal.

2.6 *Neoliberalism, Neo Marxism and Urban Renewal in South Africa*

In 2016, the Gauteng Provincial government adopted a ten-pillar programme of radical economic transformation, modernisation and re-industrialisation (TMR) derived from the objectives of the NDP. The objective of the TMR was to propel the Gauteng City Region Economy into a high-growth and inclusive trajectory (South African History Online, 2017). One of the key things the programme has sought to do is to correct the unbalanced spatial pattern that was created through apartheid policy. In this regard, urban development and the establishment of new cities have been at the top of the agenda to foster equality and deliver urban renewal in previously disadvantaged areas.

According to Robinson (2008:74), the post-apartheid transition in South Africa has resulted in the infusion of the urban and national development agendas, with a mix of

growth-oriented and socio-spatial redress-oriented goals and practices. The pressure to respond to this dual agenda has, arguably, been exacerbated by shifts to a new globalised division of labour, shifting economic experiences and moves toward neoliberalism within international and state-led policy (Robinson, 2008).

The gradual embracing of neo-liberalism in South African economic policy promoted a capitalist agenda which was inconsistent with the aspirations of the RDP and whose outcomes were largely supported by labour organizations. GEAR was criticized for failing to present an analytically sound and empirically justified policy scenario that integrated social objectives of the RDP and that supported urban renewal programmes (South African History Online, 2017).

Alexandra urban renewal is constructed on the following adopted principles (HSRC, 2003:4):

- Spatial and socio-economic integration;
- Improve access to services and infrastructure;
- Enhance human and social capital

The Programme is driven by government and is anchored on values of the constitution that prioritise access to basic services. Focus resonates with the ideals of the RDP that prioritised a mixture of social development alongside economic development. The URP is concerned with the development of long lasting and tangible impacts that foster the creation of cohesive and integrated communities, and that are ultimately transformed into liveable communities (Donaldson & Du Plessis, 2013:299). The programme aspires to be people driven in a decentralised approach that allows communities to participate in the development of their urban spaces (HSRC,2003:10).

The ARP objectives are derived from the national agenda for URP. There is concerted effort in the programme to respond to challenges faced by the poor through provision of basic services and provision of access to housing, healthcare and other social amenities. The spirit of the programme encourages a bottom up approach where residents are given an opportunity to participate in decision making.

People are recognised as important capital and thus there is strong emphasis on community empowerment so that they can pool partnerships that can be gainful both economically and socially (HSRC, 2003:10).

In summary, the concepts and theoretical philosophies of neo-liberalism and Neo-Marxism have been applied in relation to urban development principles. Institutions, states and local governments have responded to emergent conditions of urbanisation by implementing several of the theoretical urban development guides.

It would appear that Neoliberalism emerges as the dominant doctrine globally, its impact whether positive or negative is felt by most in everyday life and privatisation is an integral characteristic in theory and practice. Although the RDP and GEAR policies were replaced by policies such as the ASGISA, New Growth Path and the NDP, nevertheless, the principles underpinning neoliberalism still find relevance in South Africa's current policies.

2.7 *The Impact of Urban Renewal Designs and Programmes*

The success of, or impact of, urban renewal programmes globally has been mixed, and dependent on several factors. Tailor-made solutions for urban renewal initiatives have been found to be effective in several cities. Different types of urban renewal models and strategies were employed by urban districts globally, to achieve the rehabilitation in failing neighbourhoods.

On the one hand, Turok (2004:1) observes a high failure rate of urban renewal programmes, in a review of several global city initiatives. According to Turok (2004:1), urban renewal has no established, proven successful record. Different problems require tailor-made solutions that consider the structure and processes of a city. The success of urban renewal activities may be influenced by different historical backgrounds of cities, which in turn determine strategies that are suited to specific situations (Turok, 2005:57).

The next section describes these models and their effectiveness, and the applicability of such models to the Alexandra Renewal Programme.

2.7.1 Design-led urban renewal

Property values can be influenced by the architectural design of buildings and their immediate physical environment. In design-led urban renewal, design is an important aspect of competitiveness and is promoted as a motor for social and economic renewal. Design-led development is attributed to the success of the urban renewal approaches applied to US cities such as New York and Chicago (Winkelman, Bishins & Kooshian (2010:575).

For Alexandra, this approach has not applied as the apartheid policy on land took away freehold rights from black people who owned land property. The design of housing and other facilities in townships tended to be crowded, and of uniform minimalist style, with little regard for architectural aesthetics (Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245). Evidently, attention to the creation of sustainable living communities and environments were not given priority in historical urban township design.

2.7.2 Transit oriented urban renewal

Transit Oriented Developments are developments centred on transport nodes to stimulate inner-city developments. The intended outcome is to expand lifestyle choices beyond property values, tax, economic activity, and densification (Moore, Staley & Poole, 2010:565).

Authorities in Brazil have applied the transit-oriented model through the promotion of the use of public transport, as a means of curbing urban sprawl and containing city boundaries (Winkelman, Bishins & Kooshian 2010:575). The Brazil model aims to promote vibrant mixed-use developments that cater for both living and working spaces, while deliberately promoting walking and cycling with the intention to reduce car dependence. The Brazilian city of Curitiba is regarded as one of the early and successful examples of transit-oriented development (Winkelman, Bishins & Kooshian 2010:575). Curitiba was organized into transport corridors very early on in its history. Over the years, the city has integrated its zoning laws and transportation planning to place high-density developments adjacent to high-capacity transportation systems, particularly its Bus Rapid Transit which was implemented from 1974.

According to Moore *et al.* (2010), opponents of compact, or transit oriented development (ToD) argue that the general preference of city dwellers across the world is for low-density living, particularly in the USA. Moore *et al.* further observe that policies which encourage compact development result in substantial utility decreases and consequently, large social welfare costs. However, the proponents of ToD argue that there are large, often unmeasured benefits of compact development. For the opponents of ToD, the American preference for low-density living is a misinterpretation made possible in part by substantial local government interference in the land market (Winkelman, Bishins & Kooshian 2010:575).

Alexandra township has incorporated aspects of a transit-oriented model of development, given its proximity to major highways and easy access to economic nodes. The high densities of Alexandra are suited to large movement of people in public transport systems. Over a period of 10 years, roads have been upgraded and new shopping malls now provide space for taxi ranks (GJMC, 2000:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245). The city of Johannesburg has also been rolling out a bus rapid system that will link Alexandra residents to neighbouring Sandton. However, the challenge remains of the spatial layout of Alexandra, which limits the extent to which the transit-oriented can be implemented (GJMC, 2000:3).

2.7.3 Property led urban renewal

Property-led regeneration makes the real estate and property development industries lead players in urban renewal (Sager, 2013:146). The property-led initiatives are forms of supply-side intervention which facilitate economic development, and assume that the development of property can trigger demand for inner city sites and enhance economic activity. Sager further states that urban competitiveness is directly influenced by property development through the model's provision of suitable accommodation for economic activity. Ongoing maintenance of property is therefore key to upholding the value of the initial investment as this reduces decay and decline.

In South Africa, property-led development is prevalent in the affluent suburbs of most cities (GJMC, 2000:3). The property-led regeneration model suits areas where the demographics are comprised of mainly middle-income households, who have tenure of property. However, for Alexandra, the model is not as applicable, due to the lack of tenure of most residents. High poverty levels in Alexandra among most households result in people unable to own property, let alone meet their basic needs. This situation therefore requires intervention by government to provide services such as housing for residents.

2.7.4 Social housing-led urban renewal

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 states that every citizen has the right to access adequate housing. The notion of urban restructuring dates to the 1980s when city planners began to exert pressure to reverse discriminatory policies of urban planning (Housing Development Agency, HDA, 2013:10). In the 1990s changes required in urban spaces were incorporated into urban development policies. Consequently, urban restructuring became one of the key elements of post-apartheid urban planning (HDA, 2013:10). Evidently, the provision of housing in democratic South Africa, and urban renewal in general, has served the additional purpose of redressing the past inequalities.

The social housing policy of South Africa states that social housing in urban restructuring should be used as a catalyst for economic growth in underperforming neighbourhoods. The aim is to create inclusive human settlements and economic development that promotes job creation. Therefore, social housing is integral to the objectives of urban restructuring. According to Longa (2011:5), social housing policy distinguishes between urban restructuring and urban regeneration according to the principles of moments in time.

Whitehead & Scanlon (2007) observe that social housing may be used to serve different social classes from low-wage earning families and the middle class, while the poor are served through other programmes. The national Social Housing Policy of 2003 further states that social housing is not a realistic option for the very poor (HDA, 2013:10) This means that people who wish to secure accommodation in social housing projects have to fall within a secure income bracket which enables

them to afford to pay for rented accommodation. Consequently, the Alexandra renewal programme demonstrates a mixed approach to housing development, through the provision of owned, rented and subsidised accommodation for the residents, depending on their income and economic ability.

2.7.5 Refurbishment or Rehabilitation Led Urban Renewal

Urban refurbishment or rehabilitation-led renewal is regarded as a cheaper, faster, less disruptive option than demolition and redevelopment. This approach addresses the need to acknowledge the demand for limited land resources (Turcu, 2012:101).

Rehabilitation is based on preserving, repairing, and restoring the natural and man-made environments of existing neighbourhoods and is applicable to areas where buildings are generally in structurally sound condition, but have deteriorated because of lack of maintenance. It takes advantage of the existing housing stock as a valuable resource and adapts old houses to present-day life and acceptable standards by providing modern facilities (Zheng, Shen & Wang, 2014:272).

The need for urban rehabilitation and adaptive re-use has been explored through a number of cases from developing countries (Zheng, Shen & Wang, 2014:274). The residents' participation is pivotal throughout the refurbishment or rehabilitation process. In China, people organise themselves into neighbourhood associations which lobby local governments to provide technical and financial assistance, to improve public services, and to encourage other residents to maintain their housing. The security of tenure and homeownership is considered essential in encouraging self-help and community-based upgrading efforts.

One example is the rehabilitation of a residential building in Dhaka, Bangladesh, which demonstrated the local adaptive re-use process (Zheng, Shen & Wang, 2014:272). In the United Kingdom, Power (2008) observed a holistic perspective of sustainable urban renewal, by looking at the social, economic and environmental benefits of refurbishment compared with demolition.

In developing countries, upgrading generally refers to a comprehensive developmental process during which the *in-situ* population remains and incrementally upgrades the neighbourhood, with or without public assistance (Broudehoux, 1994). By treating the resident population as an active force in the housing process, this approach generates pride in the neighbourhood and halts the deterioration caused by a lack of investment and environmental concern (Broudehoux, 1994). It also respects the social links that have formed within and among the communities over the years.

In South Africa, refurbishment and renewal of existing infrastructure has been integral to urban development policy. The government focus has turned to restoring existing buildings such as schools, clinics and community halls, including in Alexandra (CoCT, 2011:1; Donaldson *et al.*, 2013; HDA, 2013:10; HSRC, 2003:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245).

2.8 Urban renewal projects introduced in Alexandra

In February 2001, the ARP initial budget was R1.3 billion to be used over seven years for the integrated development programme that would address housing, roads, water supply, sanitation and other infrastructure in the township (Johannesburg Development Agency, 2014). By 2012, the project had spent R2.1 billion on the Alexandra renewal projects (see Table 2.2). It was also estimated that it would cost another R2.3 billion to build an additional 29,000 housing units necessary to adequately address the housing crisis in the township (Clamo, 2017:76). Evidently, the public authorities underestimated the scope of the challenge for urban renewal in Alexandra.

Table 2.2: Urban renewal projects completed in Alexandra since 2001

Period	Projects completed
Housing 2001 to 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 880 houses in River Park; • 181 houses in Extension 8; • 1400 units in Extension 7; • 520 rented rooms on the East Bank; • 52 RDP flats in Marlboro; • 350 social housing units in Old Alexandra; • 298 hostel rooms converted in Old Alexandra.
Housing 2005 to 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 250 housing units including 9500 RDP houses; • 5700 affordable rental houses; • 2500 upgraded hostels; • 2850 social housing units; • 950 bonded and credit-linked houses to meet the original target of relocating 25 000 households from Old Alexandra these construction projects benefitted over 50 000 residents thus creating 22,000 construction jobs since 2001.
Jobs created since 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22,000 construction jobs.
Public facilities infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of roads, parks, schools and clinics; • Improvement of water and sewer system had been upgraded; • New Linbro Park reservoir completed in 2010.
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of the Alexandra Stadium, the KwaBhekilanga athletic / rugby facility, and the

	Altrek sports facility.
Business and shopping facilities improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandra Plaza (2005); • Pan Africa Mall (2009); • Alexandra Plaza and Pan Africa Retail Centres.

Source: Johannesburg Development Agency, 2014

Between 2001 and 2004, several housing projects were completed, including building 880 houses in River Park, 181 houses in Extension 8, 1400 units in Extension 7, 520 rented rooms on the East Bank, 52 RDP flats in Marlboro, 350 social housing units in Old Alexandra and 298 hostel rooms converted in Old Alexandra (Johannesburg Development Agency, 2014). From 2005 to 2010, the project built 11 250 housing units including 9500 RDP houses, 5700 affordable rental houses, 2500 upgraded hostels, 2850 social housing units and 950 bonded and credit-linked houses. The original target was to relocate 25 000 households from Old Alexandra.

Construction projects benefitted over 50 000 residents and created 22,000 construction jobs since 2001 (Clamo, 2017:74). However, most jobs are not considered sustainable except for those employed outside the project in the private sector (Clamo, 2017:74). Other infrastructure developments included roads, parks, schools and clinics improvements. The sewer system was upgraded and a new Linbro Park reservoir completed in June 2010, a move that has stabilised water supply in Alexandra (Davie, 2012:3).

The ARP has also delivered decent recreational facilities. The Alexandra Stadium was refurbished and the KwaBhekilanga athletic/rugby facility and the Altrek sports facility were upgraded between 2005 and 2010. Renovations were made to several schools including Ekukhanyisweni Primary School completed in January 2007. Most of the schools now have multi-purpose netball, volleyball and basketball courts.

The spin-off of the ARP is evident in private sector investments in ARP. For example, the Alexandra Plaza and Pan Africa Retail Centres, which is a large employer, benefited from an investment of R417 million. Similarly, Alexandra Plaza was completed in October 2005 at a budget of R80 million and has contributed to the economic growth of Alexandra (City of Johannesburg, 2008).

A notable development was the completion of the Pan Africa Mall in March 2009 at a total cost of R245 million, and the leasing of over 60 stores. The centre was the first of its kind in South Africa, built with a fully integrated public transport ideally placed in one of Alexandra's busiest hubs, corner of 3rd Avenue and Watt Street. The site is a natural transport node on the historic site formerly known as Pan Africa (City of Johannesburg, 2014). The ground-breaking shopping centre has reported increased turnover for tenants. Pedestrian and taxi traffic show an upward trend with more than 50,000 people using the area daily, supported by some 1,500 taxis.

The public investment in urban renewal in Alexandra has resulted in challenges of implementation across various local, regional and national authorities. For example, the initial grant for the ARP was provided by the then National Department of Housing. This grant was allocated to the Gauteng Provincial Government, who in turn transferred implementation to the City of Johannesburg. Although the City created offices to manage the funds, the provincial government retained areas of direct responsibility, resulting in duplication of functions in some projects. The challenge of project coordination and accountability appears to still persist (JDA, 2014).

In his review of the ARP, Sinwell (2005:69) observes that residents did not appear to have been properly consulted on the renewal project. Sinwell found that there was no effective participation by the residents of Alexandra in the ARP processes towards achieving greater social justice, particularly for those who were poor. He commented as follows:

“I have concluded that a weak form of participation, in this case consultation, has led to the legitimization of the interests of those in powers of the state. I have suggested that since the kind of participation on the ARP is simply a technical one meant to

ensure project success, it therefore does not and will not lead to achieving greater social justice” (Sinwell, 2005:90).

The above discussion has highlighted many and significant interventions by South African authorities to address urban renewal in Alexandra, and in South Africa in general. Several themes permeate the public approach to urban renewal, such as the need to create a balance, political expediency and racial redress, economic growth, acceptance of citizens in circumstances where they are unable to provide for themselves.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented various interpretations of urban renewal. Lack of decent housing emerged as one main common problem across various definitions. This is not surprising, considering that shelter is a fundamental requirement for decent life. The main ideological conceptualisations of urban development and how these have developed over the years in different countries was also noted.

The theories and concepts of urban development presented in neo-liberalism and Neo-Marxism were explored as applied to policy development and resolution of problems in countries, states and local governments. Neo-liberalism appeared to have a more global application, with respect to urban development.

Five different models of urban renewal namely were discussed. The property-led and social-housing- led models appeared similar to approaches that related to the ARP’s objectives, especially in relation to problems of lack of decent housing. In addition, the adoption of urban renewal programmes is context based, in that the success or failure of relevant programmes depends on the socio-economic climate of a region or city. The mix of both property- and social-led models also play a major part in re-modelling the institutional arrangements that presently exist.

Previous studies show that the ARP has resulted in the introduction of significant projects in Alexandra. The impact of projects has been varied and not beneficial to all residents. Despite the interventions outlined above, the challenges of Alexandra

renewal remain, which this research will investigate. Finally, this chapter provided a theoretical context for the impact of the urban renewal programme on Alexandria, which addresses the purpose of this study. The next chapter, Chapter 3, focuses on the research methodology and research approach and design adopted for the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study evaluated the socio-economic impact of South Africa's urban renewal projects on the lives of residents in four wards of Alexandra township in Johannesburg. The study also assessed whether the implementation of the URP addressed the expectations of the residents of Alexandra. The research approach was a qualitative study through focus groups. This was a new way of assessing the ARP.

3.2 Research Design

Research design involves mapping out the process of inquiry, and thinking through specific research methods to be adopted in a study. This is informed by the nature of the problem selected for research. The research approach is guided by the philosophical assumptions that the researcher makes about the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2014:32). The research design diagram (Dissertation Author's Own, December 2017) below outlines different stages of the research process encompassing the following– the research objectives, the conceptual context of the research, the research paradigm and the method of data collection and analysis.



Figure 3.1: The research design process.

Chapter 1 provided the research aims as follows:

- To evaluate the socio-economic impact of the Urban Renewal Project (URP) on the residents of Alexandra.
- To ascertain whether the URP led to improved access to public facilities;
- To determine if the URP enhanced employment creation;

- To evaluate whether the URP increased communities' involvement and sense of ownership of the programmes.
- To recommend solutions and possible improvements for URP initiatives in the future.

Chapter 2 presented the conceptual context for the study, and theories underpinning the concept of urban renewal. This third chapter discusses the two remaining aspects of the research design, namely, the research paradigm governing how the research was conducted, and the methods applied in the data collection and data analysis.

The chapter is structured as follows. First is a discussion on the rationale for the choice of research method. This is followed by the various stages of research that were undertaken, including selection of the population and sample frame, the development of the interview guide, data collection and data analysis. Finally, the chapter ends with a discussion of the validity of the data collected, and the ethical considerations made during the research.

3.3 *Suitability of the qualitative approach*

The research in Alexandra took a qualitative research approach because the nature of the problem was a social one, meaning that the study sought to understand the experiences and perceptions of people on a subject affecting their daily living. In this case, the context was quality of life in urban renewal zones, views on service delivery, and whether the results of URP projects met residents' expectations.

Research can either be basic or applied. Basic research is theoretical and may be used to improve the general understanding or interest on a subject matter (Merriam, 2009:3). On the other hand, applied research is undertaken for purposes of improving quality of life by influencing policy change and changes in the way certain things may be done (Merriam, 2009:3). Furthermore, action research takes place in a specific real-world setting with the intention of addressing a localized problem by instituting measures to address the problem (Merriam, 2009:4). The Alexandra inquiry leans towards applied research as a form of qualitative methodology, as the

research sought to uncover experiences and describe perceptions about urban renewal service delivery in Alexandra Township. The research also directly focused on factors impacting on the quality of life of the residents.

The qualitative method was also appropriate as it enabled the researcher to interpret and give meaning to interactions with the subjects under study. The researcher was then able to shape interpretations of data collected through the personal experiences of participants (Creswell, 2014:4). Qualitative research is concerned with analysing behaviour and language observed in a natural setting. In Alexandra's case, the setting was the homes and neighbourhood of the participants. In this way, the research could capture expressed information about beliefs, perceptions, feelings and motivations that underlay certain behaviour (Creswell, 2014:5). Given the socio-economic dynamics of Alexandra, this approach enabled a descriptive approach which unlocked the experiences and perceptions of the study participants.

In contrast, quantitative research is concerned with analysis and production of statistical data using empirical evidence gathered from an observed setting (Creswell, 2014:4). Research results emanating from a quantitative method are structured, as opposed to the flexibility of document structuring which a researcher has, when undertaking qualitative research. A quantitative approach was therefore found not to be ideal for the research study.

A case study approach was employed for this research. The case study allows for a comprehensive and in-depth investigation of a subject (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:6). However, one disadvantage of the case study approach is that the results may not be generalisable. Nevertheless, the case studies provided the researcher with tools to understand a complex social phenomenon, while still retaining the broad nature of the real-life setting or events (Creswell, 2014:4).

The collection of data was through focus groups. Focus groups are useful for studying a limited number of cases in depth. The method helped the researcher to inductively generate a tentative but explanatory theory about the phenomenon under study (Baškarada, 2014:1). The research tool was an interview guide outlining themes and questions. Through focus groups, the researcher could determine how

participants interpreted constructs, for example, self-esteem. Hence, the research method selected enabled the researcher to gather data while in direct contact with subjects, and observing their behaviour.

It is recommended that a homogenous group be identified to maximize disclosure among the participants in a focus group (Eliot & Associates, 2005:3). Guidelines for conducting focus group discussions recommend between 6 and 10 people, supported by a skilled moderator (Eliot & Associates, 2005:2). A time allocation of between 45 and 90 minutes is deemed sufficient for the moderator to gain the maximum number of different ideas and opinions from the group. Therefore, focus group discussions were an ideal way of getting people in the same community to converse about their beliefs, opinions and experiences about a topic or community issue that affected them. This study followed the guidelines discussed above, on the size of group and duration of each focus group session, as discussed in the next section.

3.4 *The research steps*

3.4.1 The research setting

Alexandra township presented an ideal setting for a case study on urban renewal. Its dense population, socio-economic challenges (unemployment, over-population, crime) and location next to highly successful neighbourhoods (Sandton, Marlboro) provided a view of the challenges that democratic South Africa grapples with. As noted earlier, the township hosts nearly seven times the recommended capacity of residents for its area size. The result is overcrowding and dangerous living conditions, such as crime, pollution and disease (GDHS, 2016). Therefore, rectifying the shortcomings of the present infrastructure and addressing the needs of the current population were a priority for government. And measuring the effectiveness of such intervention provided the context for this study.

The researcher's grandfather was employed as a cook in the original white farmer's home in 1905, and he was one of the first residents of Alexandra township. Being a former resident of Alexandra with a rich family history in the township, the researcher

could exploit local knowledge and perspective in accessing government, council and community networks, identifying the sample frame and committing residents to participate in the study. From a positionality point of view, I acknowledge that this has potential for bias and may limit the effectiveness of this study; as do environments, background, beliefs and social status of any researcher conducting qualitative research. No researcher is 100% objective. Acknowledging this positionality as well as power dynamics and relation between researcher and the participants is critical in pursuit of undertaking ethical research. Furthermore, acknowledgment of positionality and potential bias can serve to strengthen commitment to conduct good ethical research and provide a way of critically responding to the research.

3.4.2 The research population and sample for focus groups

The research population for the study was defined as the total population of Alexandra, comprising about 500 000 residents. The criteria for inclusion in the study was that (a) persons had to be citizens of South Africa and (b) persons had to live in a household unit, formal or informal, within the township. The designation of the population therefore excluded dwellers of foreign origin, with temporary or illegal residence in South Africa, as they (foreigners) were not the intended beneficiaries of the ARP. There does not appear to be data available on the volume of foreigners living in Alexandra. Furthermore, large numbers of foreigners left Alexandra, following violent xenophobic attacks in 2011. Nevertheless, official statistics indicate that the majority of residents of Alexandra are South African citizens (CoJ, 2014).

3.4.3. Selection of sample

A stratified sampling method was adopted. The population was divided into smaller groups, and then samples were randomly selected from the various sub-groups, as suggested by Scheaffer (2006:15). For administrative purposes, Alexandra is divided into 9 wards, zoned geographically, and each represented by elected Councillors. Desk research and consultation with local government offices established a profile of the wards in terms of residents and demographics. A purposive sampling approach was then applied to select the wards for inclusion in the research.

This method of sampling in a qualitative investigation does not yield representativeness. However, the sampling had to relate in some manner to the phenomena under study (Scheaffer, 2006:15), which was the case for Alexandra, as specified below.

Four wards (40% of total wards) were selected as the sample frame. The research intention was to obtain participants who presented a varied profile as follows:

- Location, representing different areas of Alexandra;
- Accommodation, representing formal and informal housing;
- Gender mix;
- Age mix, representing young and older participants;
- Income activity, representing employed, non-employed persons and students;
- Residency in Alexandra, representing variety of duration of residency in the township.

The sample for this research therefore consisted of participants chosen from various strata, such as community groups, social clubs, students, pensioners and other interested professional forums. The final sample of 32 participants from four wards met the desired composition for each group in terms of a fair distribution of representation according to the variables identified during the sampling method. Furthermore, the final sample enabled the researcher to study the smaller groups and produce generalisations that could be applied to the larger population.

3.5 Data collection

As a point of entry, the researcher obtained the cooperation of a local councillor who assisted in accessing the communities. The community leaders who responded were met for a briefing session to elicit their support in reaching out to community members in their ward to be research participants. The briefing meetings clarified that the focus group forums were not political and that the attendance of the community leader was not required as this could affect the willingness of participants to speak openly. Furthermore, the criteria for recruiting focus group members was

outlined so that the target sample was engaged. The reason for engaging community leaders as entry points was to avert any potential threat of disruption of the forums, given the political volatility of Alexandria.

It was clarified in the briefing sessions with community leaders that a small participation fee would be offered to research participants. The fee was R50 per participant, plus a further R50 for the person that offered a meeting place. The community leader was paid R1 000, to compensate for their assistance and time spent on the project. In total, a budget of R5 000 was spent, self-funded by the researcher.

Given the income profile of Alexandria residents, the payment of respondents was considered optimal to obtain research data. Payments are viewed by some scholars as unethical, while others maintain that it can be ethical and justified (Sarantakos 2013:201). Payments used to encourage participation and to cover the costs of expenses incurred by respondents have been found to increase participation (Sarantakos 2013:201). Interestingly, four additional persons who tried to join the first focus group left without participating, when they were advised that there was no additional payment available, as the target number of participants had been reached. The researcher's observation was that the payment of respondents was viewed as a sign of respect and appreciation, by the respondents, and would not have influenced respondent views.

The final size of each focus group was eight, making up the total 32 respondents. The final sample size met the objectives of the study in terms of size and mix of profile of participants.

3.5.1 Pilot study and focus groups

All four focus groups were conducted on three consecutive days between Christmas Day and New Year's Eve of 2016, to maximise on obtaining participants during the quiet holiday season. A moderator was employed to chair the focus groups. It was important that the moderator have the ability to establish rapport with the interviewees, provide a sense of comfort with the respondents, and be proficient with

local African languages. The moderator selected was a female social worker who had previous experience working with township communities. A data capturer ensured that the discussion was recorded on audiotape accurately.

The researcher acted as a co-moderator and focused on observing the discussion and taking notes. It was important that she remained a neutral observer.

The first focus group served as a pilot study, in that the lessons learnt were applied to subsequent groups. For example, in the first session, participants were asked to speak about their personal background (education, employment). However, it was subsequently decided to provide a short questionnaire for self-completion, to ensure the comfort and confidentiality of respondents. The short questionnaires were anonymous and participants were not required to include their names.

Two of the four sessions were conducted in homes of participants while the other two were conducted outdoors, one in a family garden and the other on the premises of a community hall. The latter was an ideal venue for residents of informal shacks, whose small homes would not be able to accommodate the focus group size. The meetings were designed to take place within the participants' neighbourhood areas to reduce transportation costs which could have been a barrier to attendance.

The meetings started with a briefing on the research objectives, duration of the meeting, explanation of the short forms and structure of the proceedings. The participants were assured of confidentiality of their contributions (Merriam, 2009:5). They were also advised that once the research study was finalized, copies would be made available to them should they be interested in viewing the final document. A total of 3 participants expressed interest in reading the final research document, while the remainder of the participants expressed general interest in receiving feedback on how the research may influence decision makers and implementers of the ARP. The attendance register was only signed as evidence that focus group sessions were held.

3.5.2 Interview guide and support questionnaire

The main tool for data collection was an interview guide, used by the moderator. Primary data was gathered during the discussions and through the use of open-ended questions. As noted earlier, biographical data of the participants was captured using self-completion questionnaires (see Appendix 1).

3.5.3 Interview questions

Table 3.1 provides a sample of the interview guide and shows how the questions linked to themes and objectives of the research. Each of the fifteen questions related to a theme which stated what the question was exploring. The themes were awareness, service accessibility, project impact, impact on self, consultation and participation, perception of project performance based on implementation method, and quality of life.

Table 3.1: Focus Group Questions

Q. No.	Focus Group Questionnaire	Theme
1	What is your understanding of the Alexandra Renewal Programme?	Awareness
2	How did you come to know about it?	
3	What is your understanding of the role of government in the programme?	
4	Since the start of the project, how would you describe access to government facilities and services?	Services accessibility
5	In your opinion, has the project made a difference in a) availability of jobs; b) availability of infrastructure like roads, lighting, recreational amenities, water and toilets; and c) availability of housing and business opportunities? <i>(Asked and answered serially)</i>	Project Impact and quality of life
6	Are there any changes in your day-to-day life that you see since the start of the project? Please explain further (How would you describe the changes? Please provide	Impact on self

	example/s)	
7	Were you ever consulted about the project?	Consultation and Participation
8	Was there an opportunity to express your desired / needed outcomes from a project like this as a community?	
9	How would you get involved with the project?	
10	What role would you play in a project like this?	Outcomes desired
11	What do you want to see once the project is implemented?	
12	In your opinion, does it make a difference to you that government champions / leads the Project? Please explain	Perception of project performance based on implementation method
13	What would you do better to make the project responsive to any unmet expectations?	
14	How should government assess the impact they are making on the lives of people through the Alexandra Renewal Project?	
15	How has the project responded to your needs as a community?	Quality of life

Source: Own, December 2016

Through a process of probing, the moderator explored areas of interest to the research relating to how people lived, worked and interacted with their environment. The discussions also sought to identify indicators of changes to the way of life of the residents of Alexandra, their political systems, their environment, their community and culture. The inquiry addressed the extent to which people were able to influence decision-making processes and the extent of their participation in the processes. The nature of the questions was designed to explore perceptions about the impact of a policy intervention and to establish what physical and environmental changes came about as a result. This approach of questioning therefore sought to identify changes and indicators that could be used to assess the social impacts of the ARP (Vanclay, 2003:5).

Sensitive to local conditions, the questions posed were designed not to judge private lives, nor to relate to sensitive topics of race, sex or religion, and not to expose individuals to ridicule or recrimination.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

The focus group method ensured dependability and credibility of the research process. The interview platform provided an opportunity for the researcher to gain insight and to test inconsistencies that may have arisen during discussions. The detailed note-taking and audio recording also ensured accurate capture of the views of the participants. Therefore, the research process was designed to withstand scrutiny and criticism on research bias and subjectivity and the research approach ensured replicability of the research process (Noble & Smith, 2015:1).

3.7 Data analysis

Data collected were analysed using thematic content analysis. Arising from the grounded theory, thematic content analysis involves the analysis of transcripts, identification of themes within data and gathering examples of themes from field notes (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008:4). The data were analysed manually and the following steps were followed (Burnard *et al.*, 2008:5):

- a. Raw data familiarisation;
- b. Identifying themes;
- c. Indexing;
- d. Charting;
- e. Mapping and interpretation.

Analysis began during data collection as the researcher, through engagements with the participants, became familiar with the raw data. After the fieldwork, the researcher listened further to the audio tapes and read notes and transcripts several times until the data become familiar. Through this exercise, key concepts and issues began to emerge. Themes were then developed through which data could be examined and cross-referenced against the study objectives (Burnard *et al.*, 2008:5). Indexing themes helped to code the data systematically. Through charting, data

were rearranged according to themes, leading to the development of analytical and interpretation charts. Data interpretation then mapped the range and nature of the phenomena, and identified associations between themes with the aim of providing explanations for the findings (Burnard *et al.*, 2008:5).

3.8 Conclusion

Alexandra township was the focus for this research. The link between its overburdened infrastructure and government objectives on improving service delivery was shown. The focus group approach allowed for thick descriptions of participants' experiences, feelings, perceptions and beliefs. Members of the community of Alexandra facilitated in contacting potential participants and in supporting the research process in general. Participants were identified through a stratified purposive sampling method which augmented the authenticity of the research findings. An interview guide was developed with open-ended questions, for use by the moderator. Data were recorded by an assistant moderator and captured by recording to ensure accuracy. Ethical considerations were observed to ensure that the research was accurate and that it followed existing codes for good research.

This chapter has demonstrated that the research objectives were followed in terms of methodology, the sample and the data collection and analysis. Furthermore, the chapter demonstrated the suitability of the qualitative approach for this investigation. The research findings are presented in the next chapter, Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of Chapter 4 is two-fold. First, the chapter presents the results from the qualitative content analysis of focus group interviews conducted with 32 residents of Alexandra township in Johannesburg. The methodology followed in the sampling, collection and content analysis of the focus group data was provided in Chapter 3. Secondly, the chapter interprets and discusses the findings, based on the evidence and in response to the objectives of the study.

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to assess the socio-economic impact of government-led urban renewal initiatives through the lens of the residents of Alexandra, which has undergone an urban renewal programme. The first objective of the focus group interviews was to determine how the residents perceived the Alexandra Renewal Project. The second objective was to measure the level of contentment with the Alexandra Renewal Project, and the impact of the project in general, as perceived by the respondents.

Chapter 4 is structured as follows. The first section presents the research findings. The second section discusses the findings in the context of the research objectives.

4.1.1 Thematic content analysis

Chapter 3 described the steps taken in the thematic content analysis of data. As Table 4.1 shows, the main themes emerging from the data analysis were as follows:

- Current living conditions;
- Introduction and views on the ARP;
- Impact of the ARP;
- Residents' support for ARP;
- The role of government in the ARP.

Table 4.1: Themes emerging from the data analysis

Interpretive coding	Main themes
Housing Income Activity	Current living conditions
Knowledge on the URP Consultation on the ARP	Introduction of the ARP
Objectives of the ARP What government promised	What ARP is about
What has worked What has not worked Impact on economic activity Impact on broader community	Impact of the ARP
Residents contribution to ARP success	Residents support
Communication and consultation Initiatives	Role of government

Source: Own, October 2017.

Each of these themes is presented in the following discussion, beginning with a profile of the participants.

4.2 Profile of the respondents

The 32 participants in the study were from four geographical wards of Alexandria, namely ward 81 (6 participants), ward 105 (9 participants), ward 107 (8 participants), and ward 108 (9 participants). However, each focus group had 8 participants. The location of the wards ensured a reasonable mix of representation of the residents of Alexandria. For example, one focus group was comprised of residents from an informal settlement, or shacks. Furthermore, the participant profile provided a reasonable mix of respondents by gender, age, income and activity, as discussed next.

Figure 4.1 depicts the gender profile of the participants. Of the 32 people who people participated in the focus groups, 20 (63%) were female, and 12 (27%) were male. The participants were all adults aged over 18 years.

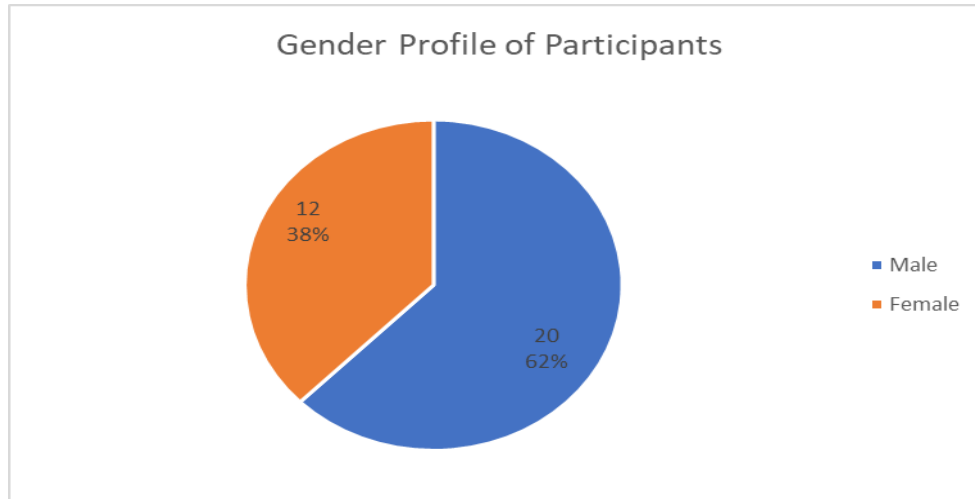


Figure 4.1 Gender profile of the participants (N = 32)

4.2.1 Age

Figure 4.2 shows the age profile of the participants. Eight (25%) of participants were aged between 18 and 30 years; 15 participants (47%) were aged between 31 and 45 years; and 9 (28%) were over 46 years of age. Evidently, the number and age profile of the participants met the study criteria, as recommended by Eliot *et al.*, (2005:2). Participants were selected based on their location in Alexandria so as to represent different areas of Alexandria; their type of dwelling (informal or formal); gender mix; income activity and source of income. The study did not make a deliberate attempt to measure the perceptions of retired persons. It was assumed that the age range of persons 46 and above will cater for the views of all older persons whether retired or not as representation of general views by members of the community.

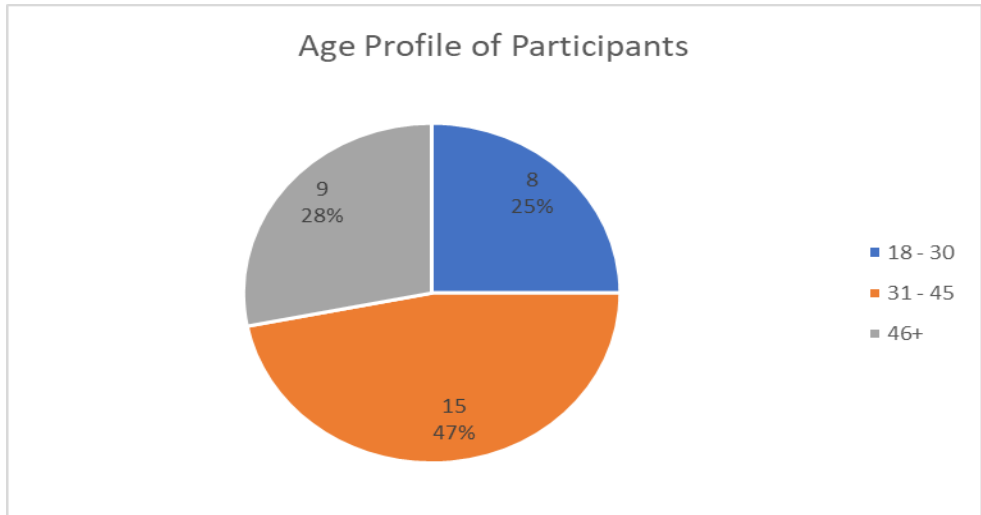


Figure 4.2 Age profile of the participants (N= 32)

4.2.2 Level of Education

Figure 4.3 shows the education profile of the participants. Half of the participants (16) had enrolled for secondary education but not completed matriculation. Nine (28%) participants completed secondary education while only four participants (13%) held a tertiary qualification. Of the remaining three, who were all female, two had no formal education, and one participant had only completed primary education.

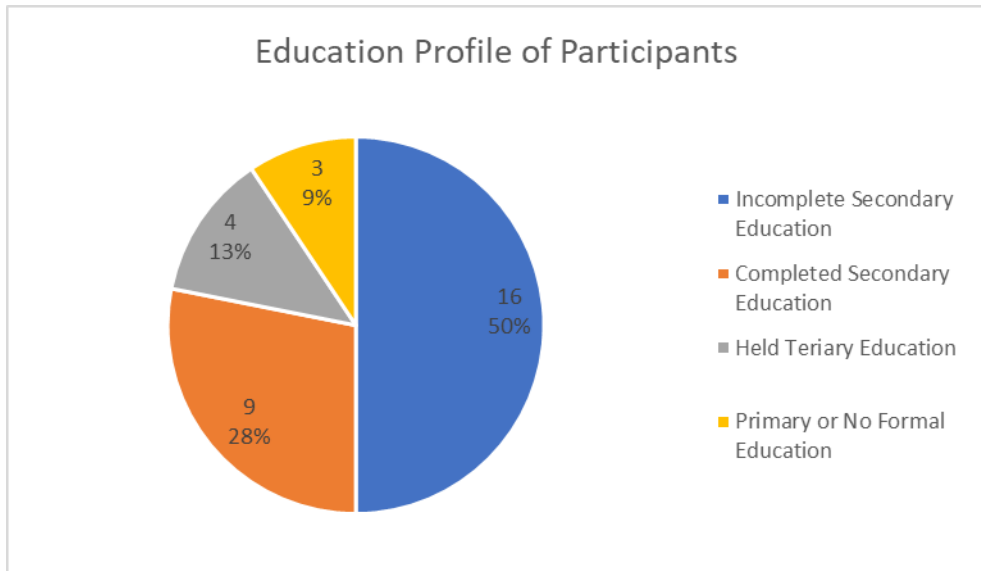


Figure 4.3 Education profile of the participants (N=32)

The results show that over 90% of participants had some form of secondary or formal education, and were therefore literate and able to engage on the topic of

Urban Renewal programme for their area. Furthermore, having an education establishes a good platform from which one can seek employment and earn an income and possibly take advantage of opportunities presented through the ARP projects. The economic activities of the participants, and their levels of income, are presented next.

4.2.3 Economic Activity and Income

As Figure 4.4 shows, 20 participants (65%) were not employed, while two participants were undertaking full-time study. Only nine participants were in full employment, of which seven were female. One participant did not disclose their employment status.

The participants, both the employed and unemployed, indicated that they relied on government grants as their primary source of income or as additional household income. Including income from employment, the levels of income per household were as follows:

- 11 participants (34%) received less than R1000 per household per month in household income;
- 7 participants (22%) received between R1001 and R3000 monthly, in household income;
- 9 participants (28%) received between R3001 and R5000 monthly, in household income;
- 5 participants (16%) received income over R5001 per month in household income.

Furthermore, the data showed that women participants were more economically active and generally earned more income than their male counterparts.

A related factor was the number of dependants for whom each participant was responsible in a household. The analysis also indicated that 12 participants (38%) had three or less dependents; 4 participants (44%) had between 4 and 5 dependants; and 6 participants (19%) had between 6 and 9 dependants in their

household. The participants with a higher number of dependants indicated that they lived with members of their extended families.

Table 4.2 provides an insight into the living conditions of the respondents which confirms the low socio-economic profile of the residents, as highlighted in several studies (HSRC, 2003:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245; Sinwell, 2005:2). The high dependence on social grants was evident, with some participants indicating that they supplemented incomes through vendor selling activities in the streets. Throughout the interviews, participants also alluded to crowded living conditions and high levels of crime in Alexandra.

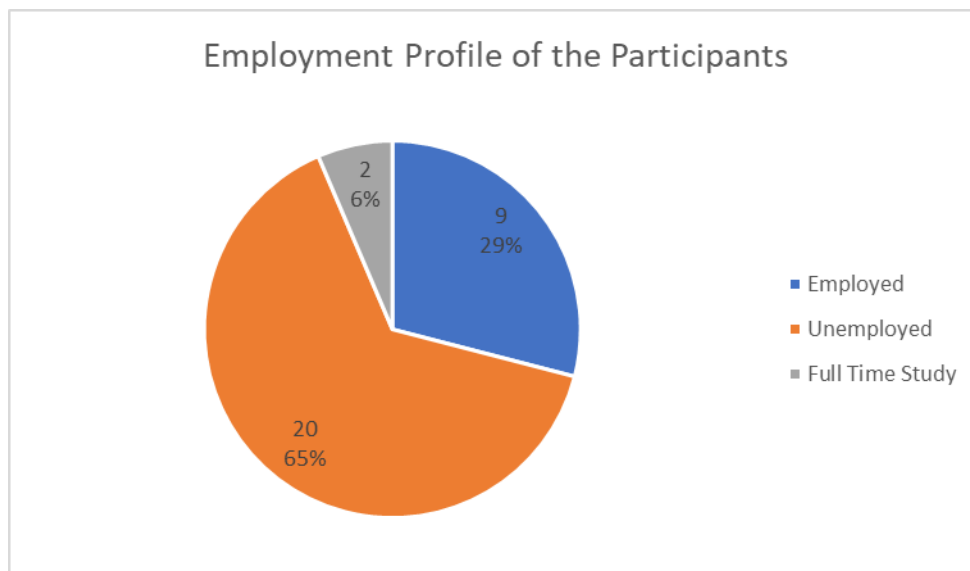


Figure 4.4 Employment profile of the participants (N=31)

It is evident that the income earned by the participants and the grants from government had a significant role to play in the quality of life of the participants. Considering that nearly 60% of the sample population was unemployed, the ratio of grants to dependents per household suggested that little disposable income was available for these families. In fact, it is likely that more than half of the respondents were living in households that would be globally classified as living in extreme poverty, that is in possession of less than USD1 per person per day (UNESCO, 2016).

Table 4.2: Current living conditions of respondents

Code	Description of living conditions
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some participants have lived in Alexandra since birth -were permanent residents• One participant more than 35 years resident in Alexandra• Some waiting to be relocated to another area• Some relocated from a squatter camp to rented housing in Alexandra• One participant - household inclusive of grandchildren• Some live in their parents (inherited) house, or still living with parents
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Types of grants - child grant, disability grant, old age grant;• Some make living through casual selling – tomatoes, goods on the street;• Get rental income from 6 rooms in a yard;• One Focus Group - live in shacks, mainly represented by women, uneducated.
Activity in Alexandra	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High level of unemployment;• High level of crime;• No recreational facilities for kids;• Reliance on extended family.

Source: Respondents, December 2016.

In summary, the profile of the participants indicated a lifestyle characterised by poverty. The sample population reflect average levels of education, lower levels of employment, high levels of dependants per household, and a high dependence per household on government assistance through grants. The socio-economic status of the participants was therefore likely to influence their attitudes towards an urban renewal programme which promised to address the basic needs of shelter, water and electricity and more. This is discussed next.

4.3 Views on the Urban Renewal Programme

This section presents the views of the participants on the URP and its impact on their communities.

4.3.1 Awareness of the Urban Renewal Programme

All the participants in the research were aware of the Alexandra Renewal Programme, with some recollecting the initial launch of the programme in 2001 by then State President Mbeki (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Introduction and communication of the ARP

Knowledge of urban renewal project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants were aware of Alexandra Renewal Project; • Programme was launched in 2001 with over R1bn budget to improve socio economic conditions and local economic development in Alex; • Programme was announced by former President Mbeki.
Consultation on the ARP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most participants - were consulted, invited to meetings; • Some - there was no consultation, just see things happening; • Most people in Alex know about the programme; • It was announced and published in local newspapers; • Word of mouth and television adverts; • Door to door campaign to inform residents was conducted; • Some were called to a meeting by ward councillors at a community hall and residents were asked about the difficulties and needs; • Heard about it in news from allegations of corruption.

Source: Respondents, December 2016.

A number of participants stated that they heard about the ARP from television, radio and word of mouth, and from other Alexandra residents. One participant became aware of the programme after receiving a house built through the programme. As the participants stated,

“Yes...we know about the programme. It was introduced by government some years ago...I attended a meeting at the hall to hear about this programme.” (Focus Group FC1).

“We all know about the Alex renewal programme. The officials came door to door in my area explaining what was going to happen.” (FC3).

It was also evident that knowledge about the URP was derived to a large extent from news bulletins and public media, as one participant stated,

“I first knew about the programme when they were discussing corruption on the radio. They said that some officials were giving out houses to people who were not on the queue...” (FC3).

The participants' responses indicate that the ARP was well publicized through public media since its inception.

4.3.2 Benefits of the Urban Renewal Programme

Not only were participants aware of the programme, they also understood the intended outcomes of the programme. The participants stated that the objectives of the URP included the following benefits (Table 4.4):

- Provision of better houses and access to public facilities;
- Repair and improvement of existing facilities;
- Construction of new public facility structures;
- Provision of better ablution facilities, roads and water systems;
- Employment creation;
- General improvement of the lives of residents.

Table 4.4: Benefits of the URP

<p>Objectives of programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme promised to bring about changes in Alex; • Improve the lives of people; • Meant to fix township facilities to enable Alex residents to make a living; • Reduce crowded conditions and bring decent living; • Programme was meant to benefit SA citizens; • Empower people through education and business opportunities; • Tool for residents to advance themselves through opportunities.
<p>What government promised</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide housing, address squalor living conditions; • Relocate people from shacks to houses; • Programme to bring better education facilities and self-empowerment facilities; • Build toilets, build roads, install street lighting; • Bring water and sanitation, toilets; • Eradicate crime; • Clean environment - remove rats from our shacks; • Educate people about starting own businesses and provide support; • To rejuvenate Alexandra in terms of housing, education and infrastructure.

Source: GDHS, 2016.

As the participants explained,

“We are so crowded in Alexandra and government knows that we need more houses...” (FC2).

“We have no jobs... this programme will help us to get jobs because when they build the roads we can be employed” (FC3).

The participants further stated that they welcomed the programme, as they believed that it would improve their lives and the lives of their families in Alexandra.

The perceptions of the participants were consistent with the ARP objectives and intended outcomes of government (JDA, 2014). In addition, the participants' responses about the project's intended outcomes were recurrent throughout all the focus group sessions. This indicated a high level of awareness of the ARP and its intended benefits.

4.3.3 Impact of the ARP

In general, respondents identified more negative than positive impacts of the ARP. The following discussion first provides the areas that respondents identified as areas of improvement from the ARP. The second section then explores the recurring theme among the focus groups, which was the high level of dissatisfaction with the implementation of the ARP.

4.3.4 Positive impact of ARP

The participants acknowledged that there had been positive outcomes from the ARP. The majority of responses indicated that the ARP had improved access to government facilities. Participants stated that most government services were free and easily accessible. They felt that water and sanitation services were being delivered more efficiently than before the introduction of the ARP. The majority of the participants appreciated the positive change in accessibility of government as well as delivery of these services.

Table 4.5: Impact of ARP Programme – what has worked

Improvement of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some - a lot has improved; • Roads and pavements have been improved; • Streetlights have been installed; • Satellite clinic was introduced; • Schools have been upgraded; • Development of parks; • Some installation of toilets; • Water and sanitation services have been delivered;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor people and indigents have been allowed free access to water and electricity; • Painting of the flats in Alex undertaken; • The project has created a few jobs but limited employment.
Government support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most government services are free and accessible; • Government offices are available and accessible; • Some - government officials do not know what they are doing; • Residents are happy with the programme; • Residents know where government offices are e.g., GDE, health and clinics, home affairs and social development are accessible; • Government does make funding available for development in Alex; • The project was a good initiative but has been derailed.

Source: Respondents, December 2016.

As indicated in Table 4.5, some of the specific areas of improvement included upgraded roads, street lighting, painting of areas, installation of toilets, and the construction of a satellite clinic. Some residents received new housing or were relocated to better living areas. As the participants explained,

“The roads are definitely better... they have been tarred. For example, that main road from Wynberg to the highway. that is very nice and very wide now...” (FC2).

“They also repaired the schools. that is good...” (FC1).

“I am happy with the government programme. It has improved my life and the lives of my family...” (FC3).

“Some Alex residents have received new housing with proper toilets... that is good.....” (FC4).

Some of the participants also indicated that government offices were more accessible for them since the launch of the ARP. They also understood that the

project was being implemented through government funding, as one participant explained:

“Look, we appreciate what government has done. There are some areas in Alex that have improved since the programme was launched. but we want more.....” (FC2).

Government was delivering the ARP and meeting the objectives of the programme as outlined in the URP Implementation Framework.

4.3.5 Negative impact and challenges of the ARP

The discussion on areas of perceived failure or shortcomings of the ARP drew some emotional responses from the participants, as the participants displayed high levels of feeling and frustration with government. The areas of slow or failed delivery included – provision of more housing, the relocation of people from squatter camps to rented accommodation in Alexandria, and inadequate road improvement (see Table 4.6). Some residents said they were frustrated because they received no help from government offices and that government officials seemed not to know what they were doing. Notably, one resident said:

“Abazi benzani laba, abanancedo (they don’t know what they are doing, they are of no help)....”(FC4).

4.4 Provision of housing

Provision of housing was a major concern for the residents of Alexandria. Squatter camps, informal settlements and illegal backyard structures were still the main source of shelter for many residents of Alexandria. Some participants felt that due to limited space the ARP should have focused on building flats to alleviate the housing problem. Furthermore, some participants noted that after being relocated and allocated houses they found themselves being made to pay rent to foreign flat owners yet they had been told they were now home beneficiaries of the ARP. As the participants explained,

“The foreigners are getting these houses in Alex but we the real South Africans are not getting them.” (FC4).

“There is no more space in Alex, but people want to stay here because it’s near Sandton and their work areas. The government must build flats so that more people can get houses” (FC2).

Some residents disowned the availability of space issue as one that affects them and rather had this to say:

“This renewal programme started years ago, but we still have people living in crowded shacks... until when?” (FC4).

“The government pulled down our shacks in Stjwetla, and forced us to move here. But when we get here we now have to pay rent to foreign flat owners. They lied to us – we are still poor, we want to go back to Stjwetla....” (FC3).

“What houses, there are no new houses anymore ... these government people are not keeping their promises...maybe we should toy toyi to get their attention. We will burn things to attention” (FC4).

Nevertheless, some participants indicated that they managed to secure housing through the ARP, as one participant explained,

“I received a new house because of the programme and was able to move my family from the shack where we lived, to a proper house” (FC1).

Table 4.6: Impact of ARP Programme – what has not worked

Category	Level of impact
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of housing is a big issue; • Housing and lack of land is a major problem; • Houses have been allocated to people that don’t belong in

	<p>Alex;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The yard belongs to the council and there are a lot of people in the same yard - Anyone can put up a shack; • Promised houses have not materialised.
Relocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents were removed from an informal settlement to new ext. 9 by the ARP project; • Told they were house beneficiaries but find themselves paying rent to foreign flat owners; • They say they have no rights over the properties they are allocated and yet they have told these are their homes; • They feel displaced by their removal from Stjwetla, they are far from everything; • There are divisions in the community - the flat owners group vs those paying rent.
Roads and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For some, the roads have not really improved; • Corruption as the contractors not using correct material; • Continuous road works are disruptive; • Construction business is given to people from outside.
Water and sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of toilets is inadequate; • Some residents still use the bucket system; • Sharing of ablution services - one toilet for high densities; • Taps are leaking and go unfixed.
Health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandra clinic reported to be inefficient; • EMS services should improve emergency response times; • Ambulance services are inadequate and patients transported by private cars.
Recreational facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no recreational facilities, there is no space for parks; • Government has rehabilitated the Jukskei river and surrounding for recreation but this is far for most residents and as a result most children do not access these parks; • Kids play in the streets which is dangerous - exposed to potential car accidents; • Trees were planted but left to die – no one employed people to take care of them.

Source: Respondents, December 2016.

There was a view that some of the available housing was being allocated to non-residents of Alexandra, and to foreigners.

4.5 Provision of water, sanitation, health

On water and sanitation, the participants commented that certain communities did not have access to sanitation services and were still using the bucket system, as one participant stated,

“This is 2016. How can we still use the bucket system, that is not right...!!” (FC3).

“Our area is ok. but I know that there is a serious problem with toilets in Section 12, they have no real toilets there....” (FC4).

Provision of health services was also said to be inadequate, particularly emergency medical services, as one participant explained,

“Alex has very few ambulances and yet we are so many residents. A lot of times residents transport sick people in their private cars. People are dying who should be saved... it’s not right” (FC1).

4.6 Impact on infrastructure

On the availability of infrastructure like roads and lighting, the participants were generally happy with improvements to the roads and lighting, and felt that there had been a positive impact from the project in terms of infrastructure. As some participants stated,

“the lights... that is good, because it helps to keep the crime down and we can walk at night without fear when we come from work” (FC1).

“yes, we are happy with the new roads... it’s much better” (FC4).

Some participants pointed out that they did not know who was responsible for the refurbishment of roads as the Johannesburg Development Agency was seen to also be working on the roads at the same time as the ARP was being implemented.

One project that had been successfully implemented through the ARP was the rehabilitation of the Jukskei River and its surrounding areas. As one participant explained,

“They have cleaned up the river area – that was a serious problem area for us before. Children played in the area near the river and some of them drowned during the rainy season ...it was a hazard, very very bad” (FC2).

However, the participants observed that government had not since allocated any other space for recreational amenities. The rehabilitated area was said to be far from most residents of Alexandra. As such, children had no place to play and resorted to playing in dangerous places such as the streets. In this regard, the view was that the project had no positive impact in providing recreational amenities as these were still not available to the local residents of Alexandra. Respondents did, however, concede that lack of available spaces in Alexandra may also be part of the problem. As one participant explained,

“Alex is too crowded because of the shacks and the houses..., that is why it is difficult to create a separate area for the children’s playground. We understand that... but it is still a problem for children to play in the streets...” (FC3).

4.7 Impact on jobs

The participants were in general agreement that the ARP had made no significant difference to the availability of jobs for the residents of Alexandra. A synthesis (Table 4.7) captures essential resident attitudes.

Table 4.7: Impact of programme on economic activity

Category	Level of impact
Jobs and job creation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project has not created jobs - A lot of people are still not working; • Jobs were promised – residents submitted applications but still nothing; • The ARP project is employing persons not qualified for the job; • The project does not seem to employ people from Alex; • ARP employees do not understand the needs of the community; • ARP employees don't know how to empower communities; • Most employed by the project end up implementing their own ideas which do not meet expectation and requirements of the residents; • Officials employ their friends so there will never be job opportunities for the community.
Small business opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business registration is a problem; people find it difficult to fill in forms; • The idea of paying tax and other compliance fees keep people from formalising or registering businesses – they see this as a liability; • Language barrier because most people are uneducated; • Uneducated people are not able to take advantage of opportunities that are available; • People are not street wise so they miss these opportunities; • Foreigners like Somalis have infiltrated the business market with their skills thus locals find it difficult to compete; • The LED programme should make people understand the opportunities are available and educate people about possibilities that people may get involved with; • The project is unlikely to bring any change.

Source: Respondents, December 2016

4.8 *Impact on business opportunities*

The participants felt there was no improvement in business opportunities, due to difficulties in business registration, and difficulties in completing business registration forms because of language barriers and not being educated (see Table 4.8). Furthermore, the sector programme on Local Economic Development under the ARP which was supposed to educate people about starting their own businesses and provide them with the necessary support to do so, did not run long enough and was not properly published and advertised to local residents to empower them.

Table 4.8: Impact of programme – views by the respondents

<p>Lifestyle changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents don't see a difference in their lives since the inception of the programme; • Their lives have not changed for the better; • The project has not met expectation of the community; • For some, the ARP project is dead; • Some residents have given up hope as the project has not changed lives.
<p>Poor communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project assumed everyone in Alex is literate; • The big mistake was for government to provide all project information on the website in English, which is foreign and makes comprehension difficult. • Community Consultation meeting notices were not seen by most members of the community – most would hear of meetings after they had taken place • Consultation meetings were seen to be meetings to rubberstamp what was already planned – community members did not have confidence that their voices would be considered in the planning and execution of the ARP
<p>Resistance and civil disobedience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents continue to build informal structures on top of existing informal structures because there is no land; • Most residents feel response to government is toy toying and burning tyres in the street; • Civil disobedience - toyi toyi – do wrong to get things right;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise people to close the project because it will never deliver anything for the community; • The project must be stopped, it must be disrupted; the damage has been done; • Relocated shack dwellers want to go back to Stwetla.
<p>Government mismanagement and corruption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government does not consult on allocation of housing; • Bribery is a problem - residents cannot afford to pay bribery; • The ARP project is corrupt - politicians and officials are corrupt; • Government funds for Alex are being diverted; • The high level of changes of frontline staff impede access to facilities; • ARP office is in Sandton – not easy to access from Alexandra; • Staff employed are always in meetings; • Some participants do not know where government offices are; • Lots of empty government promises; • Community Police Forum and crime watch by community members have fallen away; • Distinction between corrupt individuals and government as an institution.

Source: Respondents, December 2016

4.9 Consultation with residents

Some participants stated that they had become despondent with the ARP. According to four of them:

“...we have given up on being heard and getting proper services from government so that we feel the only way to be heard is by toyi-toying; we have to do bad to do good” (FC1).

“government is not doing enough... they just talk. Too much talk, and not enough action...” (FC3).

“we are fed up with government promises... the pace of changing things in Alex is too slow... it’s now over 20 years of democracy...” (FC4).

“This ANC government... they are letting us down... there is too much corruption” (FC2).

There were mixed feelings when it came to the question of consultation about the ARP. Some participants stated that there was adequate consultation and they had been able to attend consultation meetings, while others said they felt there was no consultation as they would hear of the meetings after the meetings had happened and had not seen any notices prior to the meeting. Most of the participants also indicated that they had not been able to participate in the project although they would have appreciated being allowed to play various roles in the project that would have helped bring about more community-based outcomes in the project. The participant views on consultation echoed similar findings by Sinwell (2005:69).

From among the participants who had been consulted it was established that they had been given the opportunity to express their views about what they expected and desired to be the outcomes of the project. Among these desired outcomes were housing and toilets, development of recreational amenities and empowerment centres, and the removal of squatter camps and their replacement with formal settlements. Some participants had lost faith in the project, citing various grievances which included corruption and lack of empowerment from the project. Respondents who felt this way expressed their wish that government would take direct control of the project and involve them in such projects.

Finally, the majority of the respondents indicated interest in receiving feedback on the research. However, the general view was that action from authorities was more important, than a report on the research. The researcher undertook to provide feedback to the participants.

4.10 Discussion

The subject of urban renewal emerged as a topic of contention among the respondents of this study. It was evident that the ARP was a critical intervention that government had introduced. At the same time, it was evident that there were mixed views on the effectiveness of the programme, with more negative than positive impacts identified.

All the participants in the research were well aware of the Alexandra Renewal Programme. A number of participants said that they had heard about it from television, radio and word of mouth from other Alexandra residents. One participant became aware of the programme after receiving a house built through the programme, while another participant first heard of the programme on a news bulletin where there were allegations of corruption in the programme. From participants' responses, it can be generalized (for over 80% of the sample population) that the ARP was well publicized through public media since inception and after its announcement by former President Thabo Mbeki.

The participants were also aware of the intended outcomes of the programme. They perceived these to be to improve the lives of residents of Alexandra by providing better houses and access to public facilities, to fix existing facilities and construct new structures that may help residents of Alexandra to advance themselves and earn an income, and to provide better ablution facilities, roads and water systems. These perceptions among the study population were consistent with the ARP objectives and intended outcomes (Roefs, Naidoo, Meyer and Makalela, 2003:111). In addition, the participants' responses about the project's intended outcomes were recurrent and consistent with the objectives of the project throughout all the focus group sessions; this is testimony to their level of awareness.

The majority of the sample population demonstrated by their responses that they did not fully understand the role of government in the ARP. The respondents would express grievances about implementation of the programme instead of explaining the role of government. Further investigation gave the researcher the impression that the participants understood the questions but were overcome by emotion due to their

dissatisfaction about the implementation of the ARP. Despite being previously informed that this research was strictly for academic purposes, they could not resist the urge to air their dissatisfaction about the implementation of the ARP. Some participants had become despondent about the ARP and one particular participant stated that, “we have given up on being heard and getting proper services from government so that we feel the only way to be heard is by toyi-toying; we have to do bad to do good”. Nevertheless, some participants alluded to the role of government as being to fund the ARP, provide housing facilities and allocate space for these houses, as well as to provide adequate ablution and recreational facilities for the residents of Alexandra.

The majority of responses indicated that the ARP had improved access to government facilities. Participants stated that most government services were free and easily accessible. They felt that water and sanitation services were being delivered more efficiently than before the introduction of the ARP. Despite this improvement, some participants noted that certain communities did not have access to sanitation services and were still using the bucket system. The majority of the sample population appreciated the positive change in accessibility of government as well as delivery of these services, with one participant saying he felt the project had a positive impact on his well-being and that of his family.

On project impact, this was investigated with respect to availability of jobs, availability of infrastructure, availability of recreational amenities, water and toilets, and the availability of housing and business opportunities. The consensus in the sample population was that the ARP had made no significant difference to the availability of jobs for the residents of Alexandra. Some participants alleged that the ARP employed people who were not residents of Alexandra, while local residents were made to submit applications but did not receive any responses to these applications. One participant explained that, “the people employed in various positions within the ARP are unqualified for these positions as they do not understand the needs of local communities and do not know how to empower these communities”. The same participant went on to say that “most (people) employed in the project do not understand the problems of the area and thus end up implementing their own ideas of renewal which do not meet expectations and

requirements of the residents". This may point to possible ineffective consultation processes by government. Alternatively, this may represent a misunderstanding of the needs of the people by those representing government or deliberate avoidance by government to address concerns and needs as raised by communities consulted, possibly due to bureaucratic planning processes.

With respect to the availability of infrastructure like roads and lighting, some participants did not know who was responsible for the refurbishment of roads as the Johannesburg Development Agency was seen to also be working on the roads at the same time as the ARP was being implemented. Despite this apparent shared or ambiguous responsibility, the participants were generally happy with improvements to the roads and lighting, and felt that there had been a positive impact from the project in terms of infrastructure.

The participants confirmed that the ARP had rehabilitated the Jukskei River and its surrounding areas, but the programme had not allocated any other space for recreational amenities. The rehabilitated area was said to be far from most residents of Alexandra. As such, children had no place to play and resorted to playing in dangerous places such as the streets. In this regard, the view was that the project had no positive impact in providing recreational amenities as these were still not available to the local residents of Alexandra. Respondents did, however, concede that lack of available spaces in Alexandra may also be part of the problem.

Although some participants had managed to secure housing through the ARP, it was noted that housing was still a major concern for the residents of Alexandra. Squatter camps, informal settlements and illegal backyard structures were still the main source of shelter for many residents of Alexandra. Some participants felt that due to limited space the ARP should have focused on building flats to alleviate the housing problem. Furthermore, some participants noted that after being relocated and allocated houses they found themselves being made to pay rent to foreign flat owners yet they had been told they were now home beneficiaries of the ARP. The participants felt there was no improvement in business opportunities, due to difficulties in business registration, and difficulties in completing business registration forms because of language barriers and not being educated. Furthermore, the sector

programme on Local Economic Development under the ARP which was supposed to educate people about starting their own businesses and provide them with the necessary support to do so, did not run long enough and was not properly published and advertised to local residents to empower them.

There were mixed feelings when it came to the question of consultation about the ARP. Some participants stated that there was adequate consultation and they had been able to attend consultation meetings, while others said they felt there was no consultation as they would hear of the meetings after the meetings had happened and had not seen any notices prior to the meeting. Most of the participants also indicated that they had not been able to participate in the project although they would have appreciated being allowed to play various roles in the project that would have helped bring about more community-based outcomes in the project. In an article by Sinwell (2005:69) on the ARP, he validates the general feeling of the participants about not being properly consulted and concurs with the participants who say there was no effective participation by the residents of Alexandra in the ARP processes towards achieving greater social justice, particularly for those who are poor. After conducting his research through interviews and other observation methods, Sinwell (2005:69) observes, "I have concluded that a weak form of participation, in this case consultation, has led to the legitimization of the interests of those in powers of the state. I have suggested that since the kind of participation on the ARP is simply a technical one meant to ensure project success, it therefore does not and will not lead to achieving greater social justice" (Sinwell, 2005:90).

From among the participants who had been consulted it was established that they had been given the opportunity to express their views about what they expected and desired to be the outcomes of the project. Among these desired outcomes were housing and toilets, development of recreational amenities and empowerment centres, and the removal of squatter camps and their replacement with formal settlements. Some participants had lost faith in the project, citing various grievances which included corruption and lack of empowerment from the project. Respondents who felt this way expressed their wish that government would take direct control of the project and involve them in such projects.

According to legislative prescripts, summits, public meetings, road shows, and 'izimbizo' are articulated as the main strategies to foster public participation and these should not be organised for the purposes of "malicious compliance", but to embed a sense of ownership into communities. The Gauteng Provincial Government has adopted the Ntirhisano ("working together") approach, which makes community consultation more interactive. Challenges and problems of a community are documented through various community structures and local government. These are analysed through the local 'War Room' and despatched to various portfolio departments that must formulate responses and advance plans to resolve such community challenges. Hence, opportunities and platforms already exist in government that could be applied to the Alexandra case, to improve the effectiveness of the ARP.

4.11 Conclusion

Desk research highlighted the number of completed projects as part of the ARP since 2001 (Table 2.2). However, this study indicates that participants view the ARP as having failed to deliver in some areas, and falling short of meeting their expectations in general.

The participants admitted that some government services had become more accessible because of the introduction of ARP. However, there was still more that had to be done to ensure that the residents of Alexandra were satisfied with service delivery. Furthermore, the impact of the project on residents was a paradox. In some instances, there were residents who had houses or were now able to easily access sanitation services and water while in other cases there were residents who had been evicted from their homes without a well-thought-out resettlement plan, and were thus in a worse situation than before the introduction of the ARP (Sinwell, 2005:21).

Themes associated with local conditions emerged, including over-crowding, unemployment and lack of business opportunities, the prevalence of crime. At the same time, it was evident that residents believed in creating a better life for themselves and their extended families. The frustration and emotions displayed a

passion for better living conditions, and the belief that government could assist to deliver the improved life for Alexandra.

The study provided an insight into the socio-economic fabric of Alexandra township. The voice of women in the community emerged as stronger, as they comprised most of the sample population. The sample also comprised strong representation of the unemployed as well as those who had less than secondary education. These demographics may have shaped the conclusions and the recommendations of this study, which will be discussed in the final chapter, Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 *Introduction*

Chapter 5 summarises the research process undertaken in this study, provides the main findings and main conclusions, and the recommendations for future research.

The chapter is structured as follows. First is the summary of the study, which outlines the research statement, the literature review, the methodology adopted and finally the main findings of the study. The next section presents the main conclusions. This is followed by the recommendations for future study and the limitations of the study.

5.2 *Summary of the study*

Findings are interpreted in relation to the theoretical conceptualisations introduced in Chapter 2. Recommendations are offered in response to the problem statement presented by the study. Having gone through the various urban renewal approaches and methods, the chapter will advance desirable practice that is contextually suitable that may be adopted for urban renewal schemes to best meet the needs of society and specifically yield the desired outcomes of equality, access to social and economic facilities as well as opportunities for those involved with urban renewal programmes. Finally, this chapter will present the limitations of the study.

Chapter 1 outlined the problem statement. The objective of the study was to explore the experiences and perceptions of people who lived in township urban renewal zones, with a focus on Alexandra township in Johannesburg. The study aimed to ascertain from residents their impression of service delivery, and whether the results of the urban renewal projects introduced by government met their expectations and improved their quality of life. The study was therefore a means of establishing people's perceptions and beliefs about the level of access to facilities and economic opportunities in Alexandra Township because of the implementation of the Alexandra Renewal Programme (ARP).

Chapter 2 reviewed literature on urban renewal by analysing the different interpretations of, and approaches to urban renewal. The review provided a comparative analysis of the different concepts related to urban renewal. The chapter outlined a conceptual framework underpinned by neoliberalism and Neo-Marxist ideologies, that have influenced urban development policies over time. Emphasis was placed on contextualizing disparities in developments across cities. Global and local models relevant to the Alexandra programme were discussed. The analysis provided a context and explanation for decision making by governments and urban planners, with regards to urban transition and development.

Chapter 3 presented the methodology of the study. A qualitative approach was applied, using focus groups. The method allowed for descriptions of participants' experiences, feelings, perceptions and beliefs. Members of the community were identified through a stratified purposive sampling method. The main research tool was an interview guide, which had themes and open-ended questions for use by the moderator who facilitated all focus group sessions. In addition, respondents completed their biographical on a short questionnaire, and this provided critical socio-economic insight into the participants. The data was analysed using thematic content analysis, which involved the analysis of transcripts, and identification of themes. Several themes emerged from the findings, in response to the research objectives. Ethical considerations relating to the validity and confidentiality of the research process were observed.

5.3 The research findings

Thirty-two respondents participated in four focus groups. The profile of participants, who were all aged over 18 years of age, reflected average to low education and generally low-income levels, and unemployment levels exceeding 50%, which confirmed findings from previous studies (HSRC, 2003:3; Kotze & Mathola, 2012:245; Sinwell, 2005:2). In particular, the data revealed, and confirmed, the high densities of populations per household, and high dependencies on social grants of the residents of Alexandra.

Views on the impact of the Alexandra Renewal programme were mixed. In general, all the participants were aware of the ARP and the objectives of the programme. They understood the programme was intended to improve their lives by providing housing, basic services and infrastructure to support the creation of economic opportunities within, or in close proximity to, their community. Although they were not clear about the role of government in the ARP, they understood that government was involved and that government was accountable for delivering the programme. The views expressed about the impact of the ARP resonate with some aspects of both Neo-Marxist policies and neoliberal policies in their requirement for the state to play the role of enabler of economic growth. Neoliberals support some state intervention even though it must be limited in an economy that bears strong characteristics of the capitalist system while neo-marxists support increased state intervention in consultation with affected communities to implement aspirations of the urban renewal programme. The state through the introduction of the NDP and TMR in recent years prioritises the engagement of communities and social compacting with affected communities in the design of programmes. This advocacy is in line with the Neo-Marxist approach of placing communities at the center of any agenda of urban renewal in recognition of their role as important partners. This is also characteristic of the URP's .

The respondents conceded that some government services had become more accessible because of the introduction of the ARP. Examples included improvements in public infrastructure such as roads, street lighting, accessibility to RDP housing and flats. Access to decent shelter and/or housing was, however, still of major concern for most community members. Despite all these improvements, residents felt that there was room for government to do more to attain greater satisfaction levels by the affected community.

The findings showed that the ARP had made little or no significant change on the availability of jobs. Employment opportunities in Alexandra appeared subject to a high level of corruption, thus making opportunities generally inaccessible to the community. This is indicative of the class struggles created by the capitalist system which are seen by Neo-Marxists as promoting inequality, conflict and power struggles inherent in urban renewal programmes. The findings demonstrate the

unevenness of the landscape between the wealthy and the poor and how those that own the means of production will always have advantage over those who don't. The capitalist system that South Africa is characterised by, will perpetuate this unevenness and will see the poor getting poorer, unable to access decent education and relevant skilling to be able to participate meaningfully in the economy.

Hence the impact of the project on residents was varied. In some instances, there were residents who gained houses or access to sanitation services and water. In other cases, there were residents who had been evicted from their homes without what seemed like a well-developed resettlement plan, and which had left them in a worse position than they were before the introduction of the ARP, as identified by Sinwell (2005).

Regarding project performance based on the implementation method, most participants perceived that government needed to take direct control of the project and involve them in such projects. Some respondents indicated that it did not make any difference whether government championed urban renewal or not, because of misuse or misallocation of funds by the project leaders, in terms of prioritisation of projects.

Finally, it is worth noting that the demographic profile and the location of the participants in Alexandra had some influence on their perceptions, and may have shaped the study's generalisations and recommendations. However, those perceptions form the reality and the circumstances that the participants reside in.

5.4 *The main conclusions*

Central to the decision to initiate an urban renewal programme in Alexandra township in 2001 was the need to address the deteriorating socio-economic conditions coupled with rising crime that put Alexandra Township in the spotlight. The model adopted for urban renewal in South Africa infuses growth-oriented with socio-spatial redress goals and practices. Pressure to respond to the dual agenda of socio-economic growth that promotes equality and transitions from apartheid spatial pattern to a more inclusive one necessitates this orientation. The initiation of the

Alexandra renewal project was recognition of what the Neo-Marxists refer to as class struggles in a capitalist system. The principles of urban renewal purport to improve the lives of the urban poor in various ways. This type of initiative in South Africa was introduced by government in acknowledgement of the consequences of a capitalist system that creates inequality and leads to urban conflict. Therefore, urban renewal in a township like Alexandra has to be government led.

Although the original budget allocated was R1.3 billion, it has been necessary to inject further and substantial funds into Alexandra over the years. This development indicates the magnitude of the challenge of implementing urban renewal in Alexandra. One conclusion of this study is that government may have underestimated the scope of the task of Alexandra regeneration. Hence the residents' perceptions of incomplete work and some dissatisfaction are justifiable. Evidently, government has not yet met the residents' expectations, for a number of reasons.

The ARP was anchored in rehabilitation with a strong focus on provision of social housing. The social housing policy of South Africa emphasises that social housing in urban restructuring must be used as a catalyst for economic growth. It is a significant contributor to restructuring objectives that aim to reverse the legacy of apartheid spatial planning which was based on policies of segregation and economic exclusion.

This study has shown that the spectre of poverty in Alexandra is broad. Hence the need for effective government intervention to address basic human needs – such as the provision of shelter and water – remain paramount to address the challenges.

It is also evident that elevating the socio-economic dynamics of Alexandra may remain challenging, the findings showed a correlation between the non-availability of jobs and the low levels of education and skills of the residents. The skill profile suggests that residents may only be able to take advantage of lower skilled opportunities. Alternatively, government may need to invest in intensive yet relevant training of residents on job skills and business opportunities.

It is also evident that the lack of a single overarching legislation to govern urban renewal may be contributing to the limited success and impact of urban renewal in Alexandra. Desk research and the findings showed that South Africa has various sets of overarching policies that focus on urban renewal. These policies are sectoral and cover areas like housing, health and education. The findings also showed that government accountability for projects in Alexandra sometimes rested at local, regional and/or national government. Therefore, clarity and coordination among government agencies is crucial for effective delivery.

Finally, the voice of the residents of Alexandra is important for effective implementation. Sinwell, (2005:65) observed that participation by Alexandra residents was not effective and that consultation was a technical exercise meant to only ensure project success. The findings of this study also show that public consultations in Alexandra were not effective. Residents felt that a lot more could be done by government to engage in meaningful consultation that ultimately translated into implementation that echoed their needs and not just the aspirations of project administrators and planners.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Development of tailor-made policies

The government has enacted various legislative frameworks regarding how urban renewal should be implemented in the country. Some of these frameworks are generic in their approach and do not accommodate the specific requirements informed by the local needs. The three spheres of government (National, Provincial and Local) should therefore collaborate and develop tailor-made policies for the URP in Gauteng that will inform the provincial government on how to operationalise, monitor and evaluate the programme. The policies should consider socio-economic challenges such as high unemployment at local level.

It is recommended that government should promote and facilitate the establishment of community representative structures over and above ward councillors to collaborate with local politicians and the municipality on project implementation.

Government needs to resource the community structures and the role of the champions must be to represent the voices of the community. The economic growth of URPs would be at the centre of such initiatives. Furthermore, while government plans to roll out infrastructure in URPs, a new job creation approach is required that would propel the community to assume greater responsibility for its own development.

5.5.2 Institutionalisation of the Urban Renewal Programme

The implementation of sustainable projects is important. Therefore, the Gauteng Provincial Government should institutionalise and strengthen the promotion of urban renewal programmes and incorporate this into all the provincial development policies. The institutionalisation should not only be about building of RDP houses, infrastructure development or upgrading, and creation of employment. Programmes should also be about creating sustainable opportunities for locals to curb the dependency syndrome on government.

It is therefore also recommended that parties to the tripartite arrangements (Government, Labour and Business) and the community, should understand and support the URP within the same context. Furthermore, it is critical that adequate human and financial capital be allocated in support of these programmes.

5.5.3 Public participation and ownership

Public participation as a statutory tool recognized by the South African legal system to involve civil society in decision-making processes is another solution to improving the lives of the poor and to hold government accountable. Government should recognize the importance of public participation and citizen views in different plans of urban renewal programmes to be encapsulated in the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) of municipalities. This will promote social and economic development at local level and enable ordinary people and organized community groups to influence decision-making.

It is recommended that the Gauteng government applies and utilises the public forums and approaches that it has included in policies, such as the 'izimbizo' and the Ntirhisano (working together) approach. This approach encourages meaningful participation and serves to promote a relationship of trust between government and the communities. The same approach should be adopted for urban renewal zones as this would encourage service delivery and implementation.

5.6 Areas for future research

This study has highlighted that the challenge of Alexandra renewal is far from being fully addressed. Therefore, continued research to determine and review the government budget allocation system on URPs and general implementation, is important.

Further research could also examine whether Urban Renewal Programmes contribute towards economic growth or not, by assessing and linking projects to economic growth trends through the implementation of diagnostic tools.

5.7 Conclusion

This study has revealed that the socio-economic impact of government's urban renewal initiatives, in the case of Alexandra township, has been mixed. This is despite the launch of over 200 projects in Alexandra township since 2001, with the objective of improving the livelihood of residents, and generally improving facilities and opportunities, as part of a broader urban renewal. The factors influencing the impact of the ARP include government resourcing, non-monitoring of project performance and impact assessment, the sheer magnitude of the task, as well as inadequate consultation by government and lack of community participation.

The findings presented dovetail with the theories presented. Characteristics of both neoliberalism and of Neo-Marxism were found to be present in South African urban development policies mixing growth-oriented and socio-spatial redress-oriented goals and practices. The findings also show strong presence of the capitalist way of doing things. This is evidenced by the biographical data collected about the

respondents and the findings on level of education which have also impacted on the ability to secure employment.

The study concluded more needs to be done, spearheaded by government, to bring more critical change needed to improve the socio-economic situation in Alexandra. The removal of inequality in South Africa, and poverty alleviation, should remain government priority.

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APPENDIX 1: SELF-ANSWERED INTERVIEW FORM FOR ALEXANDRA RESIDENTS

Location:

Date: _____

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY ALEXANDRA TOWNSHIP RESIDENT

The Socio-Economic Impact of Government led Urban Renewal: The Case study of
Alexandra Township

Personal Data: PLEASE TICK APPROPRIATE BOXES

1. What is your gender?

Male	
Female	

2. What is your age group?

21-25		31-35		41-45	
26-30		36-40		Above 45	

3. How far did you go with your education?

No formal education		Unemployed & not looking for work	
Less than primary completed		Full-time study	
Primary school completed		Less than Secondary completed	
Tertiary (University/ College/ Technikon)		Secondary completed	
Other (describe):			

4. What is your day-to-day activity?

Employed		Unemployed & not looking for work	
Self Employed		Full-time study	
Unemployed, looking for work		Other (describe):	

5. If employed OR self-employed, how far is your place of work / business from home?

Less than 5km		20-29 km		More than 50km	
10-19 km		40-49 km			

6. Are you a South African citizen?

Yes	
No	
If No, State nationality	

7. How many people live in your household? _____

a. How many of these are dependants? _____

b. How many of these are employed? _____

c. How many of these receive government grants? _____

8. What is the average income of your household?

9. How much disposable income do you have after living expenses?

10. Do you own or rent the property you live in?

11. Are you a permanent resident of Alexandra?

12. How long have you been residing in Alexandra?

13. Have you previously relocated from other sections/wards in Alexandra? If yes, why?

APPENDIX 2: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ALEXANDRA RESIDENTS

Location:

Date: _____

The Socio-Economic Impact of Government led Urban Renewal: Alexandra Township Case Study
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1. What is your understanding of the Alexandra Renewal Programme?
2. How did you come to know about it?
3. What is your understanding of the role of government in the programme?
4. Since the introduction of the project, how would you describe access to government facilities and services?
5. In your opinion, has the project made a difference in availability of jobs; Availability of infrastructure like roads, lighting, recreational amenities, water and toilets; and Availability of housing and business opportunities? (*Ask in segments*)
6. Are there any changes in your day-to-day life that you see since the start of the programme? Please explain further (How would you describe the changes? Please provide example/s)
7. Were you ever consulted about the project?
8. Was there an opportunity to express your desired / needed outcomes from a project like this as a community?
9. How would you get involved with the project?
10. What role would you play in a project like this?
11. What do you want to see once the project is implemented?
12. In your opinion, does it make a difference to you that government champions / leads the Project? Please explain
13. How has the project responded to your needs as a community?
14. What would you do better to make the programme responsive to any unmet expectations?
15. How should government assess the impact they are making on the lives of people through the Alexandra Renewal Project?