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**The Domain of the ‘Disconnected’: Struggles Against Cost Recovery
Mechanisms on Water Delivery –**

a study of the low income community of Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain

Suraya Fazel-Ellahi / FZLSUR001

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the degree of Master of Philosophy in Development Studies*

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University of Cape Town

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DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Dissertation Abstract

With the end of apartheid, South Africa underwent a political and economic transition, where democracy coincided with the country's insertion into the global political economy. Consequently, post-apartheid South Africa has come to mirror the global economic transition toward neo-liberalism. This shift has been impelled by international and national forces, with the ideological pervasiveness captured in national and local policy papers.

The policy and empirical expressions of this ideology have emerged as particularly stark in South African water distribution, with the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry implementing intensified practices of cost-recovery to allow local government to become financially sustainable. At the conceptual level of the paper the 'naturalisation of water commodification' serves as the framework through which privatization, commercialisation and cost-recovery are examined.

The policy of cost-recovery has been accompanied by harsh punitive measures, including water disconnection and eviction due to non-payment. This has been widely challenged with critics arguing that there exists a fundamental problem of affordability. This tension has come to be reflected within the policy environment, as punitive measures have been gradually replaced by pro-poor equity measures. However, these continue to be located within a larger cost-recovery framework.

This policy agenda has had serious consequences for the material conditions of the poor, impacting on access to basic services, and relationally functioning as a catalyst toward the formation of contemporary social movements. While, these movements have formed

in response to the domestic context, often surfacing to contest localized issues, the South African insertion into the global economy has further informed their position.

At the empirical level the paper undertakes an analysis of water delivery within the City of Cape Town, with Tafelsig in Mitchells Plain as the site of examination. Based on 10 household interviews, the empirical investigation firstly considers household water struggles, including reasons for non-payment and the related impacts of cost-recovery mechanisms, including those termed as pro-poor 'equity' measures.

This is coupled with a linked examination of emergent public resistance surfacing within Tafelsig in response to the City's debt management initiative and the consequent impact of cost-recovery measures. The analysis carried out on this movement reflects on mobilizing and demobilizing forces, and the geographic and ideological scales of resistance.

The findings reveal that non-payment is linked to high income and employment volatility, resulting in a fundamental problem of affordability. Furthermore cost-recovery practices - including nuances evident in equity measures - are revealed as marginalizing.

In contemplating resistance, movements are shown to be potentially reactive, responding to immediate localized issues, while reflecting a capacity to locate their struggle within a wider structural context. A disjuncture appears between the levels of movement membership - in access to resources and information - and coincides with the scale at which the resistance is framed. Furthermore, the 'newness' of what are widely described as 'New social movements' is examined. Within the context of global neo-liberalism and deepening marginalization, a number of forces coalesce in informing the capacity of the movements to represent a counter-power to dominant political and economic agendas.

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Acronyms

| | |
|---------|--|
| AEC: | Anti Eviction Campaign |
| ANC: | African National Congress |
| APF: | Anti privatisation Forum |
| BLA: | Black Local Authority |
| CMA: | Cape Metropolitan Area |
| COSATU: | Congress of South African Trade Unions |
| DA: | Democratic Alliance |
| DWAF: | Department of Water Affairs and Forestry |
| FBW: | Free Basic Water |
| GEAR: | Framework Growth, Employment and Redistribution |
| ILRIG: | International Labour Research and Information Group |
| IMF: | International Monetary Fund |
| NGO: | Non Governmental Organisation |
| RDP: | Reconstruction and Development Programme |
| SACP: | South African Communist Party |
| SAMWU: | South African Municipal Workers Union |
| SECC: | Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee |
| SMI: | Social Movement Indaba |
| STATSA: | Statistics South Africa |
| UDF: | United Democratic Front |
| WHO: | World Health Organisation |
| WSA: | Water Service Authority |
| WSP: | Water Service Provider |

University of Cape Town

1. Introduction

The legacy of apartheid is evidenced in high levels of poverty, lack of infrastructure, and the lack of basic service delivery to the poor. Apartheid essentially meant inequitable service distribution, with geographic segregation underlined by uneven access to infrastructure. During apartheid, white suburban residents and industry were the main recipients of service subsidies (McDonald, 2002: 16).

White residents benefiting from the skewed economic logic of decades of racial discrimination had “established local authorities that were properly capitalized by an adequate tax base ... and created reliable and reasonably efficient infrastructures” (Horwitz, 1994: 8). In sharp contrast, the Black local Authorities (BLA) had a generally poor tax and skills base, impacting on their overall capacity to provide an adequate service. Furthermore, BLAs were plagued with financial difficulties. This situation was a consequence of a range of factors including the widespread poverty and unemployment resulting in low payment levels and residents falling into arrears; and the politically motivated rent boycotts organized by the township civics as a strategy to undermine the BLAs and apartheid more broadly (Horwitz, 1994).

This historical formation of fragmented service distribution has left a legacy that has become etched into the daily struggles and experiences of urban and rural residents in South Africa; and presented the first post-apartheid African National Congress (ANC) government with immense challenges and a profound burden of delivery.

Within this skewed material context the ANC promised more redistributive state structures (McDonald, 2002), captured in the first major policy paper, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)¹ of 1994. Significantly, both the RDP and the South African constitution provide explicitly for “access to sufficient food and water” as a

¹ The RDP emphasized a desire to address “apartheid created infrastructure disparities” (ANC, 1994: section 2.3.5), and proposed lifeline water and electricity services, tariff structures guided by equity principles, and the underscoring of the relative affordability of services.

human right (RSA 1996: s 27(1) (b); ANC 1994: s 2.6.3 in Hegg & Emmett, 2003:70; Kasrils, 2004).

Underlining these post-apartheid challenges, the water distribution environment was defined by an enormous backlog in water supply. The newly elected ANC government was faced with more than 12 million people without basic access to clean water, and approximately 21 million people without adequate sanitation. The most under-served people were living largely within the mostly black rural areas (Hagg & Emmett, 2003: 67; Kasrils, 2004; DWAF, 2005)². To this end, significant progress has been made with more than 10 million people given basic access³ to clean water, and 6.9 million provided with sanitation facilities by 2004 (DWAF, 2005).

However, the progress reflected in these figures masks two crucial issues. The first relates to the credibility of the delivery figures and the sustainability of the community water supply schemes. “DWAF, and particularly its former Minister, Kader Asmal, have been criticised for inflating delivery figures and underplaying the lack of sustainability of community water supply schemes. Accusations have been made that a large percentage of these schemes deliver irregularly or have dried up completely⁴. However these accusations are difficult to verify as there is insufficient reliable information on these schemes (Hagg & Emmett, 2003).

A second and more fundamental concern is the issue of affordability, as infrastructure alone does not guarantee access to water (Fil-Flynn, 2001; McDonald & Pape, 2002; Xali, 2002; Hagg & Emmett, 2003). Crucial in understanding this issue is the knowledge that the principle of Cost-recovery⁵ is a central element within the Department of Water

² With over 14, 000 rural households dependent on rudimentary water sources such as rivers, wells and boreholes (Hagg & Emmett, 2003: 69).

³ The basic standard of water supply was set at 25 litres per person per day, available within 200m from the home, with the medium term goal of 50-60 litres on site per day

⁴ Wellman (1999) argued that over 50 per cent of the schemes were functioning inadequately, Hemson (2001) referred to a success rate of 33 per cent at RDP level, and Greenberg (2001) cited what he regarded as being misleading numbers provided by DWAF” (Hagg & Emmett, 2003: 73).

⁵ The concept of Cost Recovery is defined as the recovery of all, or most, of the cost associated with providing a particular service by a service provider (McDonald, 2004: 18). Cost recovery defines water

Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) policies, becoming more ingrained after the adoption of Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) as the national economic policy in 1996. DWAF strongly believed that basic services were affordable for all, thereby justifying intensified cost-recovery. In response to this, critics argued that many households simply cannot afford to pay for even the most basic services.

Significantly the DWAF position underwent a shift with Former DWAF Minister Kasrils acknowledging that for many households even the basic tariffs were not affordable, and equity had not been achieved even in 'successful' projects. Hence Minister Kasrils argued that full-cost-recovery was unacceptable. To bridge the issue of affordability in achieving service equity, block tariffs were introduced in 2001 where the free 6 000 litres per household was to be cross-subsidised by consumers who used more than this amount or through the equitable share grant from the National Treasury to local government (Hagg & Emmett, 2003).

Marking a shift from the earlier DWAF position, Free Basic Water (FBW) was introduced as an 'equity' measure, designed to mitigate the effects of cost-recovery. This offer of FBW has been most successful in urban areas where metering is possible. However, most rural households could not benefit from this policy and full cost-recovery still applied to many of them by January 2002 (Merten 2001; Cottle & Deedat 2001 in Hagg & Emmett, 2003:76). Significantly, while the offer of FBW prevents the harsh punitive cost-recovery practice of complete disconnection for non-payment, this has been replaced by the use of water restrictors (Peters & Oldfield, 2005).

With cost-recovery as a central tenet within the South African governmental approach to water provision, the measures employed in its enforcement have evolved from the more overtly punitive measures such as disconnection and eviction to the introduction of the indigence clause, the FBW scheme, and the related use of water restrictors as opposed to outright disconnection.

users as 'consumers'; and commits them to contributing to at least the operation and maintenance costs of delivery (McDonald & Pape, 2002; Smith, 2002; Hagg & Emmett, 2003; Ruiters & McDonald, 2005).

The purpose of this research is twofold. The first is to undertake a conceptual analysis into the South African waterscape. This goal is carried out as follows:

1. We begin by developing a conceptual framework that places the ideology increasingly governing water management nationally and internationally under the proverbial microscope. The framework delineates the competing conceptions defining water as a public, private or merit good, and considers the consequences of the 'private' definition on water delivery and access;

2. Thereafter we carry out an examination of the global, national and legislative forces driving water commercialisation in South Africa, with cost-recovery as a central element. This includes an account of the evolution of the relevant policy steering water delivery, and is followed by an examination of the legislative spaces of contention along the South African waterscape, as well as the emergent tensions concerning the grounded expression of cost-recovery measures⁶.

3. The grounded practice of cost-recovery has had profound impacts on low income communities, and relationally resulted in the emergence of contemporary social movements in the post-apartheid period. These movements comprise a diverse set of organizations at various scales, organizing informally and in a dissipated form or with distinct leadership and membership. They often respond in a reactive manner to immediate community challenges, without necessarily articulating the struggle within a larger counter-project. We carry out an analysis of the issues of movement resistance within the post-apartheid South African context as well as the ideological and geographic scale of this resistance. Furthermore the politics and power of movement membership is considered, as well as the repertoires and tactics of resistance.

The second level of the research undertakes an empirical analysis through an examination of the water struggles taking place within the low income community of Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain. The research case study, unpacks the struggle against cost recovery

⁶ Refers to the employment of punitive measures of enforcement, the consequent introduction of equity measures - introduced to mitigate its harsh effects - and the linked use of a restrictor, as an instrument of enforcement, simultaneously allowing for the delivery of FBW

measures which unfolds at both a private household level as well as in the public domain. This goal is carried out as follows:

4 The empirical investigation considers household reasons for non-payment, and the related impacts of cost-recovery mechanisms within the household, including those termed as pro-poor 'equity' measures. 10 household interviews are conducted with household heads that have experienced water restriction/disconnection.

5. The use and impact of cost recovery mechanisms within households in Tafelsig, impelled the surfacing of public resistance as a collective response – expressed in the public domain. The empirical investigation examines the emergence of public resistance, the formation of a community based campaign named the 'water for all' campaign as well as the convergence of this campaign with the 'Umbane campaign', a pre-existing city wide initiative.

Following a chronological charting of the emergence and convergence of the respective campaigns, the empirical study evaluates these campaigns both within the site of convergence, as well as independently. The investigation goes on to consider the movement profiles; the movement composition – including the politics of movement membership and structure -; as well as the Issues and Scales of Resistance.

This is carried out through document analysis, semi structured depth interviews with movement organizers, and participant observation.

2. Commodification as the philosophy underpinning commercialisation

In this chapter we begin by developing a conceptual framework outlining the competing conceptions defining water as a public, private or merit good, and reflecting on the consequences of the increasingly ‘private’ definition on water delivery and access within the South African context.

In other words this chapter creates a conceptual space within which to begin to understand the South African waterscape, and allows for deeper reflection into how the definition of water as a good affects its delivery.

The definition of water, its classification, is significant in regulating delivery and access. Hence it is the dominance of a market-driven conception that has informed the cost-recovery rationale being promoted by South African national policy, through GEAR as well as DWAF policy documents. However, the South African Constitution also recognizes water as a basic right.

2.1. Water defined as a Trade-able good or human right

At the one end of the spectrum in conceiving the ‘character’ of water, an increasingly dominant world view, is a position, clearly captured by an assertion in the Economist magazine (2003:1-5) (survey on water), declaring that “The best way ... is to treat water as a business like any other” (Economist, 2003 in Bond, 2003a). According to this belief water should be managed as a trade-able good, subject to commercial principles, and reasonable pricing, reflective of at least the marginal costs of delivery. Proponents of this viewpoint support their privatizing designs by appealing to differentiated user concerns around efficiency, cost-recovery, and conservation of scarce resources. The poor can get welfare grants from the state for services, but that should not interfere with the way water is valued and managed as an economic good” (Ruiters, 2001: 17). Advocates of this position point to the failure of governments and aid agencies to achieve universal water supply (Bakker, 2007).

The dominant counter-argument to this position views water as “an essential component of life itself and an integral part of most development activities” (ILO, de Luca 1999 in Ruiters 2001:17). This argument employs a rights-based discourse, conceiving of water as a human-right with delivery to be carried out by governments as a responsibility to their citizens (PWWF, 2003 in Bond 2003a).

The market-based position has been termed as ‘neoliberal’ and the rights argument as ‘progressive’. The conceptual strength of the progressive argument as an effective counter to a neoliberal push for privatization has been critiqued and challenged by progressive and neo-liberal analysts alike. Advocates of the progressive perspective argue that the introduction of market principles into water management is incompatible with guaranteeing citizen’s rights (Bakker, 2007).

A fundamental criticism of this discourse is that “a human right to water does not foreclose private sector management of water supply systems” (Bakker, 2007: 438). In fact the limitations of this discourse were exploited by proponents of private sector water management, following the Kyoto World Water Forum (Bakker, 2007). Role players within the private water sector, argued that “‘water socialism’ had failed the poor, and that market forces, properly regulated, were the best means to fulfilling the human right to water” (Bailey, 2005; Segerfeldt, 2005 in Bakker, 2007: 439).

Hence the pursuit of the rights argument leaves the door open for opponents to subsume their argument by contending that defining water as an economic good is not inconsistent with water as a human right. Furthermore, the rights argument is criticized for resuscitating a public/private binary, masking the potential for the state to employ a market rationale concerned with getting the prices right and recovering costs.

2.2. The Neo-Classical commodification approach - defining water as a private, public or merit good

The above arguments, apparently encircling debates on satisfactory agents of delivery, have deeper philosophical underpinnings that are informing them. The conceptual thread weaving through the definition of water and consequent practices of water delivery is the notion of commodification (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005). We begin with an unpacking of the concept of Commodification, and the definition of commodity, followed by a consideration of how this is being employed in the debate around water privatization.

In neoclassical economic terms a commodity is “anything that can be bought and sold in the marketplace in exchange for another commodity or for money. Relationally, ‘Commodification’ is any act, practice or policy that promotes or treats a good or service as an article of commerce to be bought, sold or traded through market transactions” (Watts, 1999; Brown, 2003; Williams & Winderbank, 2003 in McDonald & Ruiters; 2005: 9).

It is significant however that neoclassical theory sets limitations on the commodification of all goods, by asserting that a good or service must have the characteristics of a ‘private good’- defined as a good that is rival in its consumption and excludable⁷ (Ruiters & McDonald, 2005; Bond, 2003a; Bakker, 2007) – to be defined as a trade-able commodity. The significance of the definition and the consequent commodification of a good or service, is that once commodified, access to a good is determined purely by a ‘consumer’s’ ability to pay.

In contrast to private goods, public goods or services are non-rival and non-excludable and therefore would resist commodification. Due to these characteristics, according to neoclassical theory, “public goods and services are unlikely to be provided by a private

⁷ Rivalry is understood as the diminishing or denial of consumption by one person due to access by another, with exclusion defined as the prevention of access to a good or service because payment is not made.

firm under market conditions because they are prone to ‘free riders’, making it too risky for a private firm to invest in producing them” (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005: 9).

Water does not conform to a polarized definition, as it has properties of both a public and private good. As households may be connected or disconnected from piped water (unlike air) water is an excludable good (Ruiters, 2001: 17). However due to the health and social benefits arising from water access, water has been termed a merit good – “because supplying it to citizens has very wide social benefits” (Ruiters, 2001: 17).

A merit good is a good or service where social benefits counterbalance the capital and marginal costs of consumption. According to neoclassical theory, a merit good would be underprovided if left solely to market regulation, hence equitable distribution of water services to all would require state provision accounting for social costs, “since private firms only take into account their own costs and benefits” (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005: 9). Hence the recognized social benefits of water have been pointed to in challenging the transformation of water into a commodity⁸.

⁸ “ The ILO puts the position well: ‘Water is an essential component of life itself and an integral part of most development activities, from health and sanitation to the location of human settlements, agricultural production, nutrition, and the maintenance of ecological balance. ... As such water, gas and electricity distribution are public services, irrespective of ownership. That is, individuals and individual firms receive directly those services, but in so doing they satisfy some important needs of society’” (Ruiters, 2001: 17).

In reflecting on this argument, a key critique is that it relies on relative measures in defining what is a public as opposed to a private good, with neoclassic economic theory as its foundation. “By having to a) include and exclude certain goods and b) then having to stipulate ‘basic’ amounts of socially necessary services, the public/merit goods argument implicates itself in existing social relations” (Ruiters, 2001:19). Secondly, it is important to recognize that in the definition of water, it is an analytical trap to cast the public and private sectors as polar opposites as agents of delivery. It is significant that contemporary state models can have the state operating under the same principles as the private sector. Hence state delivery should not be conflated with the treatment of a good as a public/merit good.

2.3. The Current neo-liberal approach

2.3.1. Commodification of nature

While informed by neoclassical theory, the current dominant neo-liberal position deviates from its forerunner in the definition of water as a merit good, and is pushing for its outright commodification⁹. “The Economist has gone so far as to call water the ‘first commodity’” (The Economist, 1992 in McDonald & Ruiters, 2005: 9). In reflecting on this growing drive toward the ‘naturalization of water commodification’, progressive analysts argue that this should not be understood in isolation, but as taking place within a larger capitalist transformation, a push toward the neoliberalisation of nature (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005; Ruiters, 2001; Bond, 2003a; Bakker, 2007). In this transformation all goods and services are drawn into the market and assigned a quantitative exchange value (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005: 10).

Furthermore it is argued that the move toward the ‘naturalization of water commodification’, serves as the bedrock upon which commercializing and privatizing designs rest. As only when water is ‘naturalized’ as a commodity “can it be effectively commercialized and, eventually, privatized (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005).

2.3.2. Commercialization and Privatization

The effects of the dominance of neoliberalism are an increasing drive toward commercialization and ultimate privatization, informed by a commodification framework (Fakir, 2004)¹⁰.

The narrow definition of privatization refers to a situation where the state sells its assets, as well as transfers its linked maintenance, planning and operational responsibilities to a private company (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005). However most contemporary privatization schemes do not follow this narrow definition. In this paper a broader

⁹ Strengthened by the analytical weakness of the public goods argument, as well as the flawed employment of the rights based discourse?

¹⁰ Also includes the liberalization of financial and trade markets and the deregulation of certain economic sectors

definition of Privatisation is employed, with the term used to refer to “a continuum of public and private mixes with varying degrees of involvement and exposure to risks by the two sectors (Starr 1998 in McDonald & Ruiters, 2005: 7). This definition recognizes that the state and private sector engage in service delivery, and “it is a conceptual and political mistake to cast the market and the state as binary opposites to each other” (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005: 7).

Of equal importance to privatization is the employment of private sector operating principles and mechanisms. This practice is the commercialization of water delivery and “refers to a process by which market mechanisms and market practices are introduced into the operational decision making of a water service: for example, profit maximization, cost-recovery, competitive bidding, cost benefit analysis, performance targeted salaries, ring-fenced decision making” (Stoker, 1989; Pendleton & Winterton in McDonald & Ruiters, 2005: 9). The most commonly embraced institutional form of commercialization has been corporatization, which involves financial and managerial ring-fencing (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005; Smith, 2001). Commercialisation can act as the channel through which outright privatization can begin to encroach on the service-delivery context.

In the case of South Africa the commercialization of water has become the more common expression of processes of water commodification - although there are also cases of privatization with the involvement of major multinational corporations.

In the next chapter we carry out an examination of the legislative forces driving water commercialisation in South Africa, with cost-recovery as a central element. This includes an account of the evolution of relevant water and service delivery policy. Furthermore the national and global forces bearing on the direction of policy decisions are also examined. Including a discussion on the forces promoting a neoliberal privatizing ideology and the factors countering this tendency.

3. ‘Privatizing’ water delivery in SA

The abandonment of the RDP, for a broader infusion by a neo-liberal paradigm, was captured in the form of the 1996 market-oriented and fiscally conservative Growth Employment and Redistribution framework. The GEAR framework prescribes economic reforms including privatization of state enterprises and privatization of basic municipal services (Bond, 2003a).

Alongside the national GEAR framework, The Municipal Services Act (MSA) of 2000 is also noteworthy. The Act widens opportunities for private sector involvement in water services delivery, and “In contrast to the ANC’s local government election manifesto of 2000 ... and contrary to the ‘preferred option’ language of the National Framework Agreement signed with Cosatu in 1998, the Municipal Systems Act fails to use the word ‘preferred’ altogether. In fact, the most relevant section of the Act (Chapter 8, Part 2) places the public sector on equal footing with alternative service delivery options, including private-public partnerships and outright privatization” (Smith & McDonald, 2002: 25).

This legislative endorsement of privatization and commercialization found in the GEAR framework and the MSA of 2000 has also been articulated at various levels of state and government structures, most notably within the water policy of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWA). As a central tenet of water policy “The need for cost-recovery was worked out in more detail in the 1994 and 1997 White Papers and the 1998 Water Services Act (Hagg & Emmett, 2003). The 1994 White Paper states the principle that “The user pays ... to ensure sustainable and equitable development, as well as efficient and effective management” (DWA, 1994:9).

As early as 1994 a commitment to water commercialization was expressed within the Water Services Policy in November of 1994 (McDonald & Ruiters, 2005: 21). This

legislation was followed by the Water Services Act of 1997¹³ and the National Water Act of 1998.

The Water Services Act of 1997, gave effect to the responsibility of local government in water service delivery, and distinguished between Water Services Authorities (WSAs) and Water Services Providers (WSPs) (DWAF, 2005). The distinction and designated actors widened the opening for the infusion of commercialising principles in water service delivery. Water Services Authorities were recognised as “responsible for ensuring access to water services” (RSA, 1997) while Water Services Providers are entities that actually “provide water services to consumers or to another water services institution” (RSA, 1997). Water Services Providers could be selected by Water Service Authorities on the basis of which arrangement is most appropriate for their circumstances (DWAF, 2005). “Section 19(2) of the 1997 Water Services Act (RSA 1997:24) allows a water services authority to enter into a contract with a private sector WSP after it has considered all public sector WSPs” (Hagg & Emmett, 2003: 72).

With the constitutional right of Local Government to take the lead in water service delivery planning and decision-making confirmed by the Water Services Act of 1997, several acts related to local government further entrenched opportunities for private sector involvement, and growing room for commercialisation in service delivery. The position reflected in the local government Acts has emerged as more bullish than that captured in the earlier DWAF policy documents. Policies of the Department of Provincial and Local Government increasingly made provision for private sector partnerships, for example in its Guidelines for Private Sector Participation in Service Delivery, on the assumption that private partners were often more effective and efficient (DCD 1998a in Hagg & Emmett, 2003: 72).

¹³ In November 1997, the Water Services Act (Act 108 of 1997) legislated DWAF’s 1994 White Paper vision that local government would ultimately take responsibility for water services (DWAF, 2004).

3.1. Forces steering Macro-economic Shift Towards Neo-liberal Policies

The global governance institutions, significantly the World Bank, has been widely acknowledged to have played an influential role in steering the policy shift of the post-apartheid ANC government toward a wider embrace of market principles (Bond, 2003a, Smith & McDonald, 2002). World Bank delegations met frequently with ANC representatives, promoting the economic principles of “fiscal restraint; export orientation; privatization and corporatization; financial and trade liberalization; and cost-recovery (McDonald & Pape, 2004: 2). At the scale of local government, the same forces were applied where several World Bank delegations were sent to Cape Town in the 1990s and “where there remains ongoing collaboration and contact with senior city officials” (Smith & McDonald, 2002). Furthermore the multi-national water corporations including Suez and Biwater have identified South Africa as a lucrative location within which to increase their market base.

A further force identified as pushing the unanimous embrace of market-based operational principles (commercialization of municipal services)¹⁴ by local government is the manufacture of fiscal constraints. The mandated role of local government in service delivery and planning has been shaped by an increasingly bullish local government legislative environment, and furthermore by the effect of GEAR on local government finances. It has been to reduce intergovernmental transfers from national to local government by at least 85% in real terms, and to institute caps on rates increases that local government can levy on property owners, which contribute approximately 25 per cent to local government revenue (McDonald, 2004: 23). The consequence of these fiscal constraints is to burden local government with financially restrained mandate for service delivery.

¹⁴ With a view to outright privatization; and relationally employing full cost recovery policies to finance service delivery.

3.2. Forces countering the pervasive shift toward privatisation

With commercialization and linked practices of cost-recovery appearing as a central tenet of South African water policy, driven by national and global forces, it is significant that forces countering this shift are also present. Significantly both the RDP and the South African constitution provide explicitly for “access to sufficient food and water” as a human right (RSA 1996: s 27(1)(b); ANC 1994: s 2.6.3 in Hegg & Emmett, 2003:70; Kasrils, 2004), with the Water Services Act further enshrining the right to water (Loftus, 2005). The Bill of Rights grants all South Africans “the right to have access to sufficient food and water” (s27(1)(b)), with these rights protected from unfair discrimination, including discrimination related to one’s ability to pay.

This rights based approach, insisting on ‘access to a basic’¹⁵ quantity of potable water, represents a counter to outright commercialization and the wide embrace of cost-recovery. The provision of FBW was announced in 2000 designed as an attempt to reconcile these apparent policy contradictions. This offer was aimed at fulfilling basic water commitments, signaling a policy shift.

While the introduction of FBW has been significant, the degree of transformation possible is constrained by factors limiting the strength of the rights based rationale. Firstly, the Constitution links the government’s commitment to provide basic socio economic rights to the availability of resources. Hence the rights espoused in the Constitution are not inconsistent with the continued practice and intensification of cost-recovery (McDonald & Pape, 2004; Flynn & Chirwa in Ruiters & McDonald, 2005). Furthermore water continues to be defined as a commodity, while being recognised as a human right.

¹⁵ basic standard of water supply was set at 25 litres per person per day, available within 200m from the home, with the medium term goal of 50-60 litres on site per day

¹⁷ In a historic judgment in April 2008, the Johannesburg High Court ruled that forcibly installing pre-paid water meters are unconstitutional since they were found to infringe on the constitutional rights of people to have access to sufficient water. Further, the free basic water supply was increased from 25 litres per person to 50 litres per person per day and the City of Johannesburg was directed to give the residents of Phiri, in Soweto, the option of an ordinary credit metered water supply.

While the points above signal the traps present in casting these rationales as absolutely contradictory, the contentions between these rationales has framed tensions in cost-recovery policy and practice, to be discussed in the next chapter.

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4. Tensions and evolution of cost-recovery mechanisms

This chapter reflects firstly on the harsh measures of cost recovery and the consequent critique of these. This is followed by considering the apparent evolution of cost-recovery mechanisms and practices in an attempt to respond to criticism and reconcile ideological tensions.

4.1. Harsh Punitive Measures

The enforcement of payment within the South African context and punishment for non-payment has been marred by the practice of harsh punitive measures since 1994 to recover costs, and ensure municipal financial sustainability. These measures have included water cut offs, as well as the controversial eviction of people from council homes.

However, these are politically loaded as weapons in the enforcement of cost-recovery, which is why service providers have advocated the use of pre-paid meters. The argument is that it allows low income households to budget more effectively for services so as to avoid falling into debt (McDonald, 2004: 20).

Opponents regard this technology as anything but pro-poor. For those opposed to cost-recovery practices this logic gives primacy to profit over the well-being of people¹⁷ (McDonald, 2004)¹⁸.

¹⁸ Evidence supports the view that the cholera epidemic in Kwazulu Natal in 2000 was a cause of regressive cost recovery practices and in particular the installation of pre-paid water meters in Madlebe Kwazulu Natal. When the local municipality installed pre-paid water meters at all communal water taps, residents were unable to afford clean water and resorted to drinking water from dirty streams and rivers leading to the outbreak of cholera.

4.2. Critiquing Punitive Cost Recovery Measures

4.2.1. Culture of Non-Payment vs. Affordability

During apartheid millions of South Africa's black residents responded to a call by the ANC to carry out a 'rates boycott' by withholding payment to unrepresentative 'black local authorities' and Bantustans. The central objective of this tactic was to contribute to the collapse of the apartheid state. But with the end of apartheid, municipalities expected people to pay and the ANC government launched 'Operation Masakhane'; a key feature of which was to promote payment for municipal services (McDonald & Pape, 2004: 1). Operation Masakhane came to symbolize the beginning of the building of a cost-recovery framework on a national scale.

The intensification of 'cost-recovery' has been supported by a widely accepted position within government that the 'rates boycotts' of the 1980s has led to a sense of entitlement amongst people extending into the democratic dispensation (McDonald & Pape, 2004).

Those supporting this 'culture of non-payment' thesis as the reason for municipal financial instability, support practices of full cost-recovery as the most viable solution to economic woes.

The alternative to the 'culture of non-payment' thesis holds that "non-payment is actually related to issues of affordability, high rates of unemployment and quality of service" (McDonald & Pape, 2004: 7). This thesis is supported by evidence that suggests that low income households take their arrears seriously and retain bills as records of money owed, however they are simply unable to pay the full cost of services, under the current tariff structures.

4.2.2. Limited accounting of costs

The central argument governing cost-recovery is the desire to 'balance the books'. Furthermore with fiscal constraints experienced by local government, it is argued that cost-recovery is necessary to sustain services on a long term basis.

The counter argument to this position is that “even if block tariffs¹⁹ were more progressive, municipal resources more equitably distributed, and free services more accessible, neoliberal cost-recovery models are fundamentally flawed in their narrow accounting methods” (McDonald, 2004: 30). Only fiscal concerns are accounted for, ignoring the costs and benefits of less easily quantifiable factors such as gender impacts, public health and the environment. An additional accounting of the social and environmental costs of water access would completely transform the cost-recovery equation as water is essential to life and water restriction has been observed to have a detrimental effect on people’s health and well-being.

4.3. The inclusion of ‘Equity Measures’

The above punitive measures have not necessarily resulted in significant changes in municipal debt collection and have emerged as highly contentious. As the government has come under increasing criticism, the measures employed in the enforcement of cost-recovery have evolved, to include ‘mitigating’ measures. The evolution of cost-recovery measures will be considered below, including a reflection on the degree of change.

4.3.1. Free Basic Water

A significant moment influencing cost-recovery practices was a shift witnessed within the official DWAF position concerning ‘users’ ability to afford services. DWAF strongly believed that basic services were affordable for all, thereby justifying intensified cost-recovery. However in 2000 DWAF Minister Kasrils acknowledged that for many households even the basic tariffs were not affordable and consequently argued that full-cost-recovery was unacceptable. To bridge the issue of affordability in achieving service

¹⁹ In response to equity concerns, progressive block tariffs have been introduced in many South African municipalities. This is designed to make the initial levels or blocks of consumption more affordable or free. While charging the higher end users higher rates to curb excessive consumption (McDonald, 2004: 18).

equity FBW was introduced as an 'equity' measure designed to mitigate the effects of cost-recovery (Kasrils, 2004; Hagg & Emmett, 2003).

During pre-election speeches for the December 2000 local government elections both the president and the minister of DWA announced a stepped tariff system which would allow 'water services providers' (WSP) to provide a free basic water supply 'which will allow us to achieve (financial) sustainability with equity' (Mbeki, 2000; Kasrils 2000: 4). "The free basic water policy announced in the December 2000 municipal elections reflects an effort to progressively realize the right to sufficient water" (Flynn & Chirwa in Ruiters & McDonald, 2005). Hence, since 2001 the South African government has introduced Free Basic Services, as an equity measure, to mitigate the harsh effects of Cost-recovery, widely promoted as government's fulfillment of its constitutional commitments.

This claim has received criticism. Firstly, while most successful in urban areas where metering is possible, most rural households could not benefit from this policy and full cost-recovery still applied to many of them by January 2002 (Merten 2001; Cottle & Deedat 2001 in Hagg & Emmett, 2003:76). This variance is significant since "under the Grootboom standards, it may be unconstitutional to implement the free water programme in a way that does not afford equal concern and respect for the poorest, including those living in poorer municipalities, rural areas or informal settlements" (Flynn & Chirwa in Ruiters & McDonald, 2005).

Secondly the quantity of free water being offered – 6kl per household per month- is below the minimum of 25kl per month recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO). A linked critique is that while a rising block tariff is applied, "the water charge after the first block is punitive for poor households that require more than the 6 free kilolitres" (Flynn & Chirwa in Ruiters & McDonald, 2005). Hence the first issue relates to whether the 6kl offered per household is 'sufficient' in terms of the constitution, with the related question of whether rising block tariffs unfairly punish poor households preventing them from accessing more than the FBW quantity.

Another identified problem with the ‘free water’ promise is that it does not account for average household sizes and has been accused of biasing smaller households. A higher level critique of the offer of FBW is that it continues to function within an unyielding cost-recovery legislative framework.

With the offer of FBW, government claims its equity commitments have been fulfilled. However analysts argue that mitigating factors such as FBW struggle marginally to correct the harsh edges of the rationale, while the overall logic continues to roll forward (Ruiters, 2001; McDonald, 2004; Ruiters & McDonald, 2005; Smith, 2002; Loftus, 2006; Peters & Oldfield, 2005).

4.3.2. The indigence policy

A second measure introduced as pro – poor is the indigent policy. This policy is designed specifically for households where the total household income does not exceed double that of the state pension (City of Cape Town, 2007a). This policy as well as payment arrangements have been introduced as equity measures. A significant feature of the indigent policy is that it is informed by an assumption that all households can afford to pay for basic services, unless they can prove otherwise (McDonald & Pape, 2004: 5). This notion of proving poverty has been criticized for its enforced labeling and ‘classification’ of those already living on the margins of society.

The indigent policy and arrangements have been broadly promoted by Municipalities as the answer to the woes of all those that have been unable or, in the understanding of certain municipal officials, unwilling to pay for services.

4.3.3. Water Restrictors/drips

The latest cost-recovery instrument is the water restrictor or ‘drips’. These are aimed toward limiting the flow of water to an allocated six kilolitres per household per month – as the Free Basic Water quantity – to those that have defaulted on payment for water.

This mechanism simultaneously enables delivery on the FBW quantity, thus not renegeing on this 'promise' and further complicating criticism. However the restrictor has been criticized as functioning as an indirect 'disconnecter', limiting water flow to a 'drip' (Loftus, 2005).

'Flow limiters' have since been presented as a more advanced water management device, operating electronically to shut off the household water flow after an allocated/predetermined daily volume has been reached. These devices are further promoted as 'pro-poor' with municipalities emphasizing that they are not pre-paid meters, and allow the indigent to control their monthly water use.

The grounded practice of cost-recovery, both in the form of harsh punitive measures as well as the more recent 'pro-poor' measures, has had profound impacts on low income communities. The result of this is the emergence of contemporary social movements in the post-apartheid period, predominantly emerging in response to service delivery challenges including water, electricity and housing.

Having examined the South African waterscape, as well as the evolution of policy and practice in response to the impacts of cost recovery on poor communities, the chapter which follows carries out an analysis of community movements. Which are largely emerging in resistance to the impacts of service delivery policy and practice.

5. Collective Resistance to social and economic marginalisation

Through the preceding examination it has emerged that “the transition to democracy led by the ANC was trumped by the transition to neo-liberalism” (Fakir, 2005:33). This integration has resulted in rising unemployment, and a more pervasive embrace of privatization, commercialization and related practices of cost-recovery with respect to service delivery. Furthermore, the service delivery mandate has been devolved to local government, and coupled with a tightening of the budget. The result is the creation of a financially restricted mandate consequently intensifying the embrace of cost-recovery at the local level. While the existence of competing rationales has served to shape the measures and practices of cost recovery, the extent to which these ‘mitigating measures’ lessen the impact of cost recovery on the poor has been questioned.

Emerging out of the policy and material realities outlined above (Egan & Wafer, 2004) is the rise of contemporary social movements in South Africa

5.1. Locating movement resistance

5.1.1. Chronology of Contemporary Resistance

“The twenty-seventh of April 1994 opened a new chapter in South African political history. It marked a moment when many of the leaders of South Africa’s anti-apartheid movements entered the corridors of political power” (Ballard et al, 2005: 615). This migration of the liberation movements into positions of power was accompanied by a high level of collaboration between social forces (Fakir, 2005: 24). Where “state-civil society relations changed from the adversarial opposition that characterized apartheid politics, to a more collaborative focus” (Ballard et al, 2005:621). However as a welfarist developmental path was gradually eroded by the creeping logic of the market, post-apartheid South Africa witnessed the emergence of social struggles on a range of fronts (Ballard et al, 2005; Fakir, 2005; Desai, 2002; McDonald & Pape, 2002).

The emergence of these social struggles coincided largely with the displacement of the RDP with Gear, government failure in spheres of service delivery and at a community and household level the direct grounded impact of government policies, including cost-recovery (McDonald & Pape, 2004). Some of the most prominent post 1994 movements include the Anti Eviction Campaign (AEC), the Concerned Citizens Group (CCG), the Anti Privatisation Forum (APF) and the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC), an affiliate of the APF. Most of these groups are located within larger urban communities mobilizing the poor and marginalized in resistance against governmental cost-recovery measures, including the disconnection of services (McDonald & Pape, 2002; Ballard et al, 2005). These movements have been described as ‘New Social Movements’.

In this paper the term ‘Contemporary Social Movements’ is preferred, for its capacity to reflect the chronological location of these movements, while simultaneously allowing for the potential of continuities, and thereby reflection on their apparent ‘newness’ (to be examined further in 5.2 below).

5.1.2. Issues, scales and targets of resistance

The definition of ‘Social Movements’ is difficult to capture, fittingly reflective of the diversity of the struggles that the term aims to describe. Elizabeth Jelin defines movements as “forms of collective action with a high degree of popular participation, which use non-institutional channels, and which formulate their demands while simultaneously finding forms of action to express them, thus establishing themselves as collective subjects, thus as a group or social category (Ballard et al, 2005: 617). For the purposes of this study, the point of departure in conceiving of movements and ascribing a common thread is that most contemporary South African social movements have emerged in response to high levels of unemployment, poverty (Fakir, 2005; Ballard et al, 2005; Egan & Wafer, 2002; McDonald & Pape, 2002) and “the inability or unwillingness [of the state] to be a provider of public services and the guarantor of the conditions of collective consumption” (Desai, 2003). Beginning with this commonality we will attempt to reflect on this, as well as on the diversity of movement.

A number of contemporary South African movements have surfaced to challenge the immediate impacts of state policy at a community and household level, coinciding mainly with the ascension of President Thabo Mbeki. Significantly these movements have emerged in all of South Africa's major cities, acting defensively against water and electricity disconnections, evictions and the lack of poverty eradication (Fakir, 2005). While this nationwide emergence points to a coalescing of resistance around common issues, these movements are usually defensive, responding to immediate experiential struggles without necessarily casting their resistance within a larger ideological challenge. Nevertheless it is significant that these contemporary movements increasingly coalesce with respect to their issues of contention, related to the marginalization of the poor, even in disconnected forms.

Alongside the existence of immediate disconnected struggles, there is also a growing trend toward the establishment of wider geographic and/or ideological connections between movements. These 'transnational movements' are establishing global linkages, situating their struggle across geographic boundaries, and making connections between local and global struggles (Sikkink et al, 1998; Khagram et al, 2002).

The contemporary South African movements, while often originating in response to specific local struggles, are linked to a global shift toward the hegemony of neo-liberalism, and inspired by global events (Buhlungu, 2004). Desai (2003) notes: "The neo-liberal transition has squeezed and spewed out the poor but galvanized them at the same time. The 'poors' as they have come to be known in the South African vernacular, have opposed the water and electricity cut-offs and evictions (consequences of the privatization of public services), and have begun making connections between their situation and that of people, first in Soweto and Tafelsig, but then also in Bolivia, South Korea, America's prisons, Zimbabwe and Chiapas. But they have done this without any grand ideology. They are actors on a local stage, squaring off against home-grown villains" (Desai, 2003).

Hence, at the first level of growing connections, while resistance is largely defensive and localized, an increasing number of contemporary social movements are building solidarity with linked movements at the local, national and international level. Others have gone further through engaging within common platforms, reflective of the building of a movement of movements, most notably the annual World Social Forum, performed as a counter to the World Economic Forum.

Some movements, in making connections between the local and the global, have transcended the localized form of their struggle. This consequently recasts the villain from immediate localized target to economic globalization in the form of neo-liberalism, with transnational corporations, global governance institutions and nation states all understood as complicit within a framework of power- thus in informing grounded struggles. The APF for example has succeeded in making the geographic and ideological connections between localized and global struggles (Buhlungu, 2004).

However an examination of the APF reveals a disjuncture across the levels of the movement membership with respect to accessing resources, information, and skills. This disjuncture informs the nature of the ideological and geographic links made. Buhlungu (2004: 17) writes that “A considerable number of these global links are mediated by the individual members as well as members of the political groups in the APF, both of whom tend to have more extensive international contacts than community members”; as well as access to computers, email and the internet; and the skills to read and write in English – as the main mediums of communication. This positions ‘political activists’ within the APF to engage in transnational movement. This is distinct from the majority of the ‘rank and file’ members, referred to as the ‘grannies of Soweto’ or the young illegal reconnectors, (Buhlungu, 2004).

Hence in contemplating resistance, movements are shown to be both potentially reactive, responding to immediate localized issues, as well as reflecting a capacity to locate their struggle within a wider structural context. However movement capacity to make wider connections can also be influenced by the individual members, consequently potentially

creating dimensions of power within the movements. Furthermore, the targets of the resistance are informed by the framing of the issues and ‘scale’ of contestation, ranging from immediate city targets, to national governments, the nation state, and international organizations and corporations.

5.2. Giving Form to Movement

5.2.1. The Politics of Movement

Historically South African social movements were central agents in the transition to democracy, with the ANC, United Democratic Front (UDF), Cosatu, NGOs and civics forming “a collective mass of democratic energy” which combined with economic and other pressures, to bring about the political transition to democracy. As argued earlier, the immediate post-apartheid period was characterized by congenial state-civil society relations as the past networks formed part of the government or operated in a collaborative form.

As part of the liberation movement, the contemporary position occupied by Cosatu²⁰ reflects this absorption of old avenues of resistance and opposition into the post-apartheid government. Cosatu forms part of the ANC lead Tripartite Alliance along with the SACP. Given this however, it is a misleading to conceive of Cosatu as unquestionably collaborationist. With labour emerging as a principal casualty in the South African embrace of neo-liberal macroeconomics, Cosatu has staged several countrywide strikes, drawing several million workers off the job, to protest against the privatization of services (Ruiters & McDonald, 2005; Ballard et al, 2005). Furthermore, as a Cosatu affiliate, the South African Municipal Workers’ Union (Samwu) has been vocal in its opposition to privatization. As a result “its relations with Cosatu and the ANC leadership have been severely strained at times” (Ruiters & McDonald, 2005).

In continuing this reflection on the extent of absorption of former liberation movements into the post-apartheid governmental structures, the case of Cosatu reflects a position of

²⁰ The largest trade union federation in the country and traditional representative of organized labour;

contradiction. The union is both a defender of labour against the onslaught of neo-liberalism and in alliance with a ruling party espousing the magic of the market. Within this contradictory position, Cosatu has not succeeded in considerably reshaping state policy and its effects. This erosion of Cosatu influence within the alliance is evidenced through “large numbers of organized workers being retrenched, casualised and/or forced into the informal economy leading to a further expansion of the burgeoning underclasses ... unemployment stands at 36 percent for the overall population and at 52 percent for African females ... and evidence suggests that unemployment and the number of households without a breadwinner are deteriorating” (Ballard et al, 2005).

Within a context of growing poverty and inequality, and the passage of the liberation movements into the corridors of power, spaces were created for new political actors. A number of contemporary movements emerged within this space in the late 1990s (Ballard et al, 2005). The formation of these movements within the post-apartheid period; and their position in contention with the former liberation movements, contesting state policy and practice points to a break from the movements of the past, leading analysts to define them as ‘new’. Behind these movements is a common rejection of the ANC’s conservative turn in macro-economic policy (Fakir, 2005). These movements have emerged largely within the urban context in response to municipal restructuring and service provision; and appear to display differences from the mainstream organisations of the SACP and Cosatu.

However an examination of the APF²¹ reveals that the distinction between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ movements is not that stark. The formation²² of the APF included disparate groupings from within the ANC, SACP and COSATU alliance, as well as left activists outside of the alliance, and “working class activists drawn from communities that were looking for answers in a context where retrenchments and cost-recovery had combined to destroy their livelihoods and limit their access to basic goods and services” (Buhlungu, 2004:4). While active in steering the initial birth of the APF, in 2001 Cosatu as well as a number of represented organizations within the APF withdrew or faded away.

²¹ One of the most prominent and well documented social movement forums in South Africa

²² The APF was born in response to Igoli 2002

However, individual members from within the alliance; most notably Trevor Ngwane and Dale McKinley; continued to participate following their expulsion from the ANC and SACP respectively. What distinguished these activists from their alliance counterparts was that they had adopted and/or clung to left leaning ideologies that were increasingly being abandoned within the ruling party and the broader alliance (Buhlungu, 2004). This act of resistance against the historical liberators by members within its own ranks speaks volumes about the extent of disillusionment with the alliance, by the Left castaways.

What is significant to extract from the above analysis is that the description of contemporary South African movements as 'New social movements' is conceptually insufficient. Instead the birth of these movements point simultaneously to continuities and discontinuities with the historical liberation movements. Hence the resistance to the policies of the ANC and its alliance partners by contemporary movements can be understood as initially emerging from within and subsequently assuming an increasingly external organizational form.

However, this externalization continues to reflect a great deal of ambiguity as some movement members maintain their ANC membership. Making "distinctions between 'them' and 'us' difficult to capture. "This is in contrast to the struggle period when clear-cut boundaries existed between the pro-democracy movements on the one hand, and organs and sympathizers of the apartheid regime on the other" (Buhlungu, 2004: 7).

5.2.2. The fluidity of movement

The organization of contemporary social movements is variously described as fluid, open, non-hierarchical and decentralized. The diversity of movements results in a spectrum of movement connections and organization, some movements are localized and fragmented, while others situate their struggle within a wider context. The presence of wider connections however does not necessarily suggest greater structural organization.

Some movements are constituted purely out of community struggles, responding to immediate 'bread and butter' issues. These contemporary forms are "driven by families participating as households (...) As a strategy (...) to boycott paying for services" (Fakir, 2005: 38). Other movements reflect a more organized structure.

These movements are also supported with funding and human and technical know-how by well resourced NGOs, research groups and progressive affiliates within the labour movement (most notably SAMWU), challenging the corporatization of core municipal services (Egan & Wafer, 2004; Buhlungu, 2004; Bond, 2001; McDonald & Pape, 2004; Ruiters & McDonald, 2005).

5.3. Practicing Resistance – movement tactics and strategy

The shift from collaborationist state-civil society relations toward one of increasing opposition within the post-apartheid period was exemplified during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. A march from Alex to Sandton was held under the banner of the Social Movement Indaba (SMI) attracting 25000 people, and dwarfing a parallel march supported by the ANC and its alliance partners which attracted less than 5,000 people (McKinley, 2004; Ballard et al, 2005). This march marked the symbolic birth of the Contemporary Social Movements.

Alongside collective protest in the form of marches, movements including the SECC (Flynn, 2001) and AEC have been performing illegal reconnections of households to the electricity and water supply. This act is part of their repertoire of resistance and as one SECC connector said, "You learn not to do it in the dark...everybody must see" (Interview in Egan & Wafer, 2004: 16). With these reconnections seen by the state as criminal, for the SECC it is a performance of contention and resistance, an exercise in reclaiming power and the reverting of "what was a criminal deed from the point of view of Eskom, into an act of defiance" (Ngwane, 2003: 47 in Egan & Wafer, 2004: 16). Reconnectors justify their acts of defiance in the face of criminal charges by contesting that it is the State that has acted criminally by disconnecting citizens from the supply of essential services.

Finally, movements have also focused on engagement with wider support structures and bridging the gap between local, national and global struggles. The framing of resistance is therefore a key strategic project, supporting the development of a 'movement of movements' as a counter to the hegemony of neo-liberalism and its agents. Furthermore in conceiving of the framing of the struggle, within contemporary movements there would appear to be two competing streams of thought with respect to engagement with the state as a strategic act. The more oppositional position questions the legitimacy of the state; while a more collaborationist view holds that state structures are legitimate, the problem is with the present ruling party.

In conclusion, an evaluation of the successes of these contemporary movements, have been viewed by analysts and activists alike as marginal. However the anti-privatization movement has been credited with being instrumental in influencing the development of the FBW scheme in South Africa. Furthermore, through the dual tactics of community mobilization and illegal service reconnections, the rate of service disconnections and household evictions as punitive cost-recovery measures for non-payment have been significantly reduced nationally. "Nevertheless, privatization debates remain very much a David and Goliath battle, with the World Bank, the IMF, bilateral funding agencies, regional development banks, the large majority of politicians and bureaucrats, and the neoliberal press and mainstream academia lined up to promote privatization/commercialization on one side, against a determined, but largely dispersed and underfunded network of anti-privatisation groups and individuals on the other" (Ruiters & McDonald, 2005). Within the context of a global neo-liberalism and deepening marginalization, a number of internal and external mobilizing and demobilizing forces coalesce in informing the capacity of the movements to represent a counter-power to dominant political and economic agendas.

6. Conceptualisation of the research problem and methodology

6.1. Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine the rationale governing South African water delivery, the forces shaping and transforming delivery policy, and the emergent struggles particularly around Cost Recovery policy, practice and its grounded impact on the poor.

While cost recovery mechanisms have undergone an evolution from harsher punitive measures toward measures termed as pro-poor equity measures. The study is concerned with examining the extent to which these transformative measures are experienced as pro-poor by those on the ground.

In fulfilling this purpose the thesis has a number of secondary objectives carried out through both a conceptual study as well as a case study.

The objectives of the conceptual study are as follows:

- Placing South African water delivery within a conceptual framework of commodification that reflects on competing conceptions defining water as a public, private or merit good,
- Analysing the consequences of an increasingly 'private' definition of water on delivery policy and practice in South Africa;
- Examining the structural and legislative forces driving water commercialization within South Africa, with cost-recovery as a central element.
- Identifying counter forces/rationale to this process
- Tracing the evolution of cost recovery measures as influenced by competing rationale
- Surveying and analyzing contemporary social movements in the post-apartheid period, emerging predominantly in response to service delivery struggles

The case study follows the conceptual study by examining the water struggles taking place within the low income community of Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain²³. The study examines the private (household) and public (in the form of collective acts of resistance) community water delivery struggle, drawing connections between household struggles and the articulation of these struggles through public resistance.

The fieldwork was carried out from the start of February to the end of August 2007.

The objectives of the case study are as follows:

- Unraveling household reasons for non-payment,
- Examining the impact of cost-recovery and equity measures on the household
- Examining the emergence and nature of community resistance in response to cost recovery mechanisms/measures.

6.2. Research Question

Primary Research Question:

What is the impact of cost-recovery with respect to water delivery, on the struggles of the poor?

Secondary conceptual study questions:

What are the ideological forces shaping the form of water delivery policy within South Africa?

What are the legislative and structural forces driving water commercialization within South Africa?

What are the counter forces challenging outright privatization and cost recovery?

What are the impacts of these forces on the evolution and form of cost recovery policy and practice in South Africa?

²³ A discussion on how the case study site was identified is included as Appendix ...

What is the form of South African contemporary Social movements emerging predominantly in response to service delivery struggles?

Secondary case study questions:

How is cost-recovery and the equity measures in particular being implemented in Cape Town?

What is the impact of cost recovery and the equity measures on poor households within Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain?

What are the catalysts leading to the surfacing of community resistance within Tafelsig?

What is the form of this resistance?

6.3. Methodology

In this study the proposed research purpose and questions are given primary importance and as such the research methods are selected to be in service of responding to the research questions. In responding to the research purpose and questions posed above, the thesis uses information originating largely from qualitative methodological approaches.

The conceptual part of the study was literature based. The literature focused on was largely used to contextualize the South African waterscape. Therefore for the conceptual study the researching took place through using available library materials, and internet resources, including electronic journals and relevant policy papers.

The conceptual study utilizes a framework of commodification in examining the competing conceptions defining water. It considers the increasing drive toward a 'private' definition of water on delivery policy and practice in South Africa. The influence of governing bodies such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund as well as Multinational Corporations are reflected on, illustrating the national and international structural and legislative forces driving water commercialization within South Africa, with cost-recovery as a central element.

The purpose of the conceptual study is to provide a conceptual overview of the competing conceptions defining water as well as the dominance of a privatizing conception within South African water delivery.

In addition to this, while the dominance of a particular conception is outlined, it is identified that within the South African context there has been an emergence of counter forces to this process. The study traces the evolution of post apartheid water delivery, particularly the practice of cost recovery.

Finally contemporary social movements in the post-apartheid period, emerging predominantly in response to service delivery struggles, are surveyed. This is carried out as a means to locating the case study carried out within Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain.

With respect to the empirical research, flexibility was necessary in responding to the changing environment and being prepared to document community struggles as they were unfolding. Participant Observation and Semi Structured Depth Interviewing were the most flexible methods available allowing for focused engagement while being open to changes and developments within the researched community's struggles.

The decision to focus on Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain as the site for the empirical research was based on an intention to study a community where central issues in the debates around cost recovery were evident.

Overall the design of the empirical study attempted to ensure that the process was participatory and captured the community struggles with sensitivity and openness to the experiences of those being studied. The research was carried out in a rigorous manner with every effort made to document the interviews and observations carefully.

The case study was carried out alongside the conceptual study in order to deepen the analysis carried out in the latter. Looking at the details of what happens at a community and household level allows for a more grounded assessment of the impact of a policy such as cost recovery. While the case study was carried out alongside the conceptual

study it is acknowledged that a case study has its limitations. It is dangerous to generalize as each community has its own particular dynamic. In order to locate the case study within a broader context the literature review was used to outline the wider struggles at a national and global level, aiming to place the struggles of the people of Tafelsig within a larger picture.

It is also important to note that before embarking on the case study, the conceptual study was informed by a view that cost recovery is not an isolated policy designed and carried out by the South African government, independent of external forces. The vision in the design of this paper was to develop a conceptual and case study that could support each other in locating the struggles of the researched community within larger processes of globalization. To illustrate that the struggles of the people of Tafelsig were not isolated. The research did not engage in an in-depth discussion on global social movements, however the intention throughout the paper was to continuously draw connections between the levels of struggle as well as the competing forces aiming to shape the South African waterscape.

Access to members of the community of Tafelsig was possible through contact with members of the South African Municipal Workers Union (Samwu) and the International Labour Research and Information Group (IIRIG). The process of identifying the case study and gaining access to members of the community of Tafelsig is discussed in detail below.

Identifying a site for the Case Study:

The empirical research focuses on the City of Cape Town, with the low-income community of Tafelsig as the site of examination. The development of this empirical investigation paralleled the changing service delivery struggles within the City of Cape Town. The initial focus was on public resistance against pre-paid water and electricity meters, however a more immediate struggle against pink slips and water restrictions had begun to surface in late 2006 within low income communities throughout Cape Town, including Khayelitsha, Langa, Mitchell's Plain, Delft and more.

In order to reflect on the debates around South African water provision and the consequences of cost-recovery, the empirical study aimed to examine further the effects of cost recovery at a community and household level. The site was identified firstly through contact with a staff member of the South African Municipal Worker's Union (Samwu). As well as staff within the International Labour Research and Information Group (Ilrig), a Non Governmental Organisation (NGO). Secondary research had revealed that these organizations were actively involved in campaigning around service delivery issues within the City of Cape Town and nationally.

This initial contact lead me to a campaign, established in 2004, named the, 'Umbane' campaign, focusing on service delivery struggles within the city and beyond. The individuals contacted within Samwu and Ilrig were also active as organizational representatives within the 'Umbane' campaign.

In February 2007 – the period at which the research commenced – the members of the 'Umbane' campaign began to provide support to a campaign established in Mitchells Plain. The Mitchells Plain based campaign, named the 'Water for All' campaign, surfaced at the end of 2006 to resist intensified City debt management and water restrictions in Mitchells Plain and Tafelsig in particular.

Resulting firstly from my initial engagement with the organizational representatives on the 'Umbane' campaign; and secondly from the connections forged between the Umbane campaign and 'Water for All' campaign; the empirical research came to focus on the community of Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain.

The case study is carried out with the aims of determining household reasons for non-payment for services, and assessing the experiential impact of cost-recovery on poor households. This examination is designed to contribute to the discussion on the capacity of equity measures to be truly reflective of the interests of the poor. The two equity measures evaluated are FBW and the indigent policy, and followed by an analysis on whether these measures contribute to an ameliorating effect on households punished for

non-payment through the use of a trickle system; as the cost-recovery mechanism used by the city at the time of the investigation.

The empirical research is also concerned with community struggles surfacing within the context of the impacts of cost-recovery and its linked 'equity' commitments. During the period of investigation, community members, the community based 'Water for All' campaign, and the linked 'Umbane' campaign all converged on the issue of water restrictions within Tafelsig. The surfacing, form, issues, scale and tactics of resistance, and the connections made to wider concerns are examined.

6.4. Research Method

Qualitative research methods were used to meet the identified research purpose and included a literature review, Legislative and policy review, Semi-structured interviews, as well as Participant Observation.

6.4.1. Literature Review

The literature review was a central method within this study as it formed the conceptual basis for further investigation. The main areas considered in the Literature Review included the definition of water, the implications of a particular definition, the global, national and legislative forces driving a privatizing agenda, the emergence of ideological and legislative tensions, their expressions through practices of cost recovery, and the emergence of contemporary social movements in post apartheid South Africa within a context of service delivery struggles.

6.4.2 Legislative and policy review

The legislative and policy context in South Africa with respect to water delivery was reviewed as a means to understanding the tensions and contradictions co-existing within South African water policy. The policy analysis was carried out to begin to understand the issues around water delivery, before considering the lived experience.

6.4.3 Secondary Document Analysis (Case Study)

The City of Cape Town

The City of Cape Town Municipal implementation of cost-recovery and Free Basic Water was gauged through an analysis of secondary data, including existing research carried out on the extent of privatization within the City of Cape Town during the first stage of municipal structuring (McDonald & Smith, 2002) and beyond. This is further supported by city press releases, city policy documents, and newspaper and internet articles. These secondary sources were reviewed with the aim of examining the city debt management policy, Free Basic Water policy, indigent policy, and establishing the extent of City distribution of pink slips and the related use of water management devices prior to and during the period under investigation.

Household struggles

The impact of implementation of cost-recovery and Free Basic Water on households was gauged through an analysis of secondary data, including existing research carried out on the extent of privatization within the City of Cape Town during the first stage of municipal structuring (McDonald & Smith, 2002) and beyond. This is further supported by city press releases and newspaper and internet articles. These secondary sources were reviewed with the aim of examining the documented impact of cost recovery practices on households prior to and during the period under investigation.

Public Resistance

Internal documentation of the Umbane campaign and to a lesser degree 'Water for All' campaign was read. These sources were used firstly to establish the latest developments in the water debate, and community struggles against disconnections/restrictions regionally and nationally. Secondly, internal archives and records were used to develop a chronology of activities and focus areas for both campaigns. This allowed for consequent identification of the points of intersection and connection between the campaigns. The

documents examined included reports, pamphlets and the minutes of an Umbane Committee meeting, and a Platform meeting initiated by 'Umbane' in April 2007.

6.4.4 Semi-Structured depth interviews

Household Struggles:

In examining the impact of cost-recovery and water restrictions on low income households, Semi-Structured Depth Interviews (SSDI) were conducted. Household interviews were limited to those that had municipal arrears and had experienced or been threatened with water restriction/disconnection.

The interviewed households were located within Tafelsig and had all been issued with pink slips by the city in the latter part of 2006. Some but not all of these households had experienced multiple restrictions/disconnections also prior to the period under investigation.

The Households were identified through a number of channels. Potential interviewees were initially identified through my attendance at a public meeting held on 27 February 2007, convened to discuss the issuing of pink slips and experiences of water restriction. Thereafter interviewees were identified and approached during a community march on 21 March 2007, held in protest against water restrictions.

Three preliminary interviews were conducted with individuals accessed through this latter channel. What emerged through the preliminary interviews was the degree of sensitivity around service delivery issues. Particularly water which was viewed as fundamental to dignified living.

Since issues of service delivery are sensitive, and the household is a private space, the remaining households were contacted firstly through referrals by the first three interviewees and secondly through campaign actors, particularly the founding members

of the 'water for all' campaign, since they had established relationships within the community.

A major concern was the potential for interviewees to be suspicious of the research intentions. It was therefore vital that they were reassured that the research was concerned with understanding their experience of service delivery, and not contributing to a deepening of their struggles.

Interviews were conducted with 10 households located within Tafelsig. Tafelsig was selected as the study site as it was the location within Mitchells Plain where the 'Water for All campaign' chose to hold its first public meeting, following the widespread issuing of final notices by the City. Whether this reflected a strong correlation to the number of final notices and consequent restrictions carried out by the Municipality was not verified (as I did not obtain the relevant statistics from the Municipality).

This reason was the one offered by the actors within the 'Water for All' campaign in explaining their decision to begin their campaign activities in Tafelsig. It is significant, that the actors within the campaign were based in other areas in Mitchells Plain, and received service delivery grievances from residents based both in Tafelsig and surrounding areas.

An interview schedule was utilized to interview households. Questions revolved around household reasons for non payment, and household experiences of cost recovery. This included an examination of the household experience of FBW, the indigent policy and the water restrictor as the water management device in use at the time of the study.

Public Resistance:

Semi-Structured Depth Interviews (SSDI) were used in the examination of public resistance converging within Tafelsig. Interview schedules were used to conduct interviews with activists involved in the 'Umbane' and 'Water for All' campaigns. The

questions revolved around convergence and divergence between these two campaigns, the collective space inhibited by the campaigns with respect to the Tafelsig community struggle, the multiple roles played by activists within the campaigns, connections made to wider struggles, and the campaign tactics and strategies.

Three actors within the Umbane campaign, and two actors within the 'Water for All' campaign were interviewed.

6.4.5 Participant Observation (P.O.)

Public Resistance:

Umbane campaign meetings were a source of information, as well as a community meeting held on 27 February, a community march held on 21 March 2007, and an Umbane platform meeting held on 14 April. These were observed and documented with the information used to inform an examination of the emergence of the Umbane campaign, the convergence of the two campaigns, the movement structure and representation, the issues and scale of resistance, as well as the tactics and strategy of resistance.

It is important to note that it was agreed at the Umbane committee meeting, held on 6 February 2006, that I could carry out Participant Observation (P.O) within the campaign. The P.O. focused on community struggles in Tafelsig during the research period, but was located within concerns around wider service delivery struggles.

Contact with the 'Water for All' campaign was made possible through the representatives within the 'Umbane' campaign. A number of meetings had already taken place prior to the commencement of the case study investigation. Hence insight into the 'Water for All' campaign was gauged more through interviews with actors, then through meeting attendance.

6.5. Data analysis strategy

Case Study

The interviews and field notes were transcribed and the data analysed through the use of coding procedures from Miles and Huberman. The data was coded per paragraph, following careful and repeated reading of the transcripts. This initial stage of coding is referred to as first level coding. This descriptive first level was followed by a second level concerned with the development of themes across the data.

Once the themes were identified, the layers within the themes were reflected on, and deepened through the development of relationships between the themes. This exercise of data transcription, first level, followed by second level coding, and the development of themes and relationships can be understood as an exercise in deconstruction and reconstruction. Splicing the data vertically and horizontally and (re)constructing a thematic analysis concerned with relationships and insights contained within the data, responding to the research aims and questions.

The organization and presentation of the report was guided by a reading of related Master's thesis. The thesis of Karen Peters (2005) on "'Free Basic Water' and cost recovery: Impact on low income households in Grabouw", proving to be exceptionally valuable in informing the structure and logic employed within this paper.

7. Case-study

The City of Cape Town has a population of approximately 3 million (StatSA, 2003), with the coloured population representing approximately 50% of the total population, and Africans and Whites each comprising 30% and 19% respectively (StatSA, 2003). This is distinct from the demographic profile at a national scale where Africans constitute 77%, and whites and coloureds 9% each (Pieterse, 2002: 7 in Smith & Hanson, 2003: 1520). While 70% of the economically active population - of approximately 1,3 million - is employed, 40% of these income earners earn below R1, 600 per month (StatSA, 2003). Hence the city must contend with widespread poverty and social exclusion. In considering the overall economic position of the population, “approximately 20% lives below the poverty line at R1070 per month, and 50% are just above this figure (Pieterse, 2002: 7 in Smith & Hanson, 2003: 1520).

This socio-economic context is partially a legacy of, and deepened by, the historical and geographic inequity created through apartheid, including service inequity. During apartheid, informed by political and planning structures, the City of Cape Town instituted a three-tiered service delivery system within which service delivery was highly fragmented and racially skewed. The white minority received high-quality, highly subsidized services; the coloured community, comprising approximately 50% of the population and a significant share of the working-class within the city, received relatively good quality services; while the black population within the city received substandard services through the financially restrained black local authorities (Smith & Hanson, 2003: 1520). However, while having access to fully metered (in- house connections), the council houses built in coloured townships such as Mitchell’s Plain were of a poor quality. “The decaying water pipes in these areas are testimony to local authority neglect of maintenance of infrastructure services” (Smith & Hanson, 2003: 1527).

The dawn of democracy was accompanied by the collapse of this institutionalized system, however elected local authorities inherited immense racially skewed service backlogs²⁵.

7.1. Post-apartheid municipal amalgamation and the associated commercialization of service delivery

The inheritance of service backlogs, widespread poverty and social exclusion within the city, by post-apartheid local authorities, coincided with a period of municipal restructuring with the aim of integrating townships and bringing about a more equitable (re)distribution of services (1997-2000) (Smith, 2005). Beginning in 1997, during this ‘first amalgamation’ twenty-five municipal authorities were amalgamated into 6 municipalities²⁶ to form the Cape Metropolitan Area (CMA). A ‘second amalgamation’ followed, with these six municipalities amalgamated into one Unicity in 2000.

Research, carried out by McDonald & Smith (2004) into the nature of municipal service delivery, during the first amalgamation, demonstrates a widespread embrace of market principles, and ‘running the city more like a business’, (McDonald & Smith, 2004).

While Cape Town has not embraced ‘privatisation’ in the same form as other South African cities, South African local government, has been tasked with the responsibility of service delivery, but is impeded by financial restraints²⁷ to carry out service delivery. Unsurprisingly this has led to an increasingly cost reflexive approach in the delivery of

²⁵ The water service levels in the City of Cape Town are captured in the Appended table.

²⁶ The six municipalities constituting the CMA included South Peninsula, City of Cape Town, Blauwberg Municipality, City of Tygerberg, Oostenberg Municipality and Helderberg Municipality. The Cape Town and Tygerberg administrations integrated the largest proportion of the BLAs, and were the places within the CMA “with the highest concentration of poverty and social pathologies and represent a microcosm of the service delivery problems facing the area as a whole” (Smith & Hanson, 2003:1522). Following the second amalgamation, the spatial concentration of poverty within the City has persisted, with the location of the townships on the periphery of the urban centre.

²⁷ “Cape Town’s local government has experienced substantial cuts in funds from the national government for infrastructure provision; intergovernmental transfers were reduced by 85 percent between 1991 and 1997 and, in Cape Town alone, these funds have been cut by 55 percent since 1997” (Financial and Fiscal Commission, 1997; Unicity Commission, 2000 in Smith & Hanson, 2003: 1522; McDonald & Smith, 2004; Smith, 2005).

services (Smith & McDonald, 2002). This position is deepened within an ideological context of neo-liberal discourse and practice at different levels of government, captured within national policy and reinforced by international forces.

The election manifesto's of the two main parties, the ANC and the DA, contesting the local government elections held in December 2000²⁸, also provide insight into the neoliberal embrace within both parties at the onset of the second amalgamation. Concerning the commercialization of municipal services the DA assumes a clear position stating that municipal services "lend themselves to variants of commercialization, competitive outsourcing and privatization" (DA, 2000).

The ANC's position with respect to commercialization of service delivery is more ambiguous. However an analysis of the ANC in practice, while it was in power in two of the main City sub-structures from 1996-2000, reveals an intensification of "privatization, outsourcing and aggressive cost-recovery" (McDonald & Smith, 2004: 1475).

7.2. Cost-recovery as debt management

Guided by national and international forces and policies, as well as localized pressures, the city has adopted an increasingly cost reflexive stance on service delivery. With rates and service arrears running into billions of Rands, local authorities developed a debt management policy in 1997, concerned with addressing arrears and non-payment. "This policy calls for recovering debts owed to the local authority and includes sanctions (warning, disconnection, legal process and evictions) in the event of non-payment of accounts (City of Cape Town, 2001b, p.3). Domestic consumers in arrears could make an arrangement with a service provider to begin paying off a portion of their debts ... by 1998 local authorities began using water cut-offs as a mechanism for debt collection" (Smith & Hanson, 2003: 1533).

²⁸ The election was won by the Democratic Alliance with 108 of the 200 seats available, the ANC came back into power in 2002

Research conducted in 2001 reveals that between 1999 and 2001, 159 886 were disconnected from the water supply for non-payment. Most of disconnections carried out within the Cape Town sub-structure during the first amalgamation were concentrated in Mitchell's Plain and Tafelsig in particular (Smith & Hanson, 2003: 1533).

In response to the high numbers of people experiencing cut-offs and evictions Tafelsig has at times emerged as a hotbed of resistance. In 2001 the community united to resist attempts to evict people from their homes due to non-payment of municipal services. This struggle was led by the Anti-Eviction Campaign (AEC).

With evictions and disconnections proving to be politically loaded as weapons of cost-recovery within the city, and with the introduction of Free Basic Water Services since 2001/2002 - following local government elections in 2001- the practices of disconnection and eviction have been gradually phased out, and replaced by measures presented as 'pro-poor' equity measures, including the indigent policy, Free Basic Water and the linked use of the water restrictor.

7.3. Equity measures within the ambit of cost-recovery

The Indigent Policy²⁹ as well as payment arrangements³⁰ have been introduced as 'pro-poor' and the answer to the problems of the city's 'indigent residents' in overcoming service arrears. The claimed benefit is that they will not face debt collection action and will not be charged any interest on arrears, provided they pay their current account

²⁹ The indigence policy is designed specifically for households where the total household income does not exceed double that of the state pension (Credit control and debt collection policy, 2007) (all residents who have a total household income of less than R1 640-00 per month) and who do not own more than one property. Qualifying households are required to make an application and provide either proof of income or an affidavit confirming their unemployment status, and a declaration that they have no other source of income. Thereafter they will be allowed to enter into specific payment arrangements (City of Cape Town, 2006).

³⁰ Offered to those who do not qualify for indigent assistance

together with an agreed amount towards their arrears, according to Mayor Helen Zille³¹ (2006)

"While we are obliged in terms of the Municipal Systems Act to collect rates and service fees, and also to implement credit control and debt collection, we do not want people who are experiencing financial difficulties to feel that they have nowhere to turn. We have an indigent policy which will ensure that disadvantaged people in our city can continue to receive services" (City of Cape Town, 2006).

Furthermore, alongside indigent relief, Free Basic Services, are targeted at the poor and presented as an equity measure designed to mitigate the harsh effects of Cost-recovery. The FBW allocation has been guided by World Health Organisation standards with the minimum quantity to meet health requirements, within a household of 8, identified as 25 litres per day. Thus the minimum FBW allocation is 6 kilolitres per household (based on a household of 8) per month³².

In providing 'indigent relief' and FBW, a revised instrument is the water restrictor or 'drips' aimed toward limiting the flow of water to an allocated six kilolitres per household per month – as the Free Basic Water quantity – to those that have defaulted on payment for water; and can also be used for 'indigent' residents to limit consumption³³.

³¹ Following the local government elections in mid 2006, the DA resumed political control of the city

³² The City's tariff structure for 2007, accounting for the provision of the first six kilolitres free, is presented in the appended table.

³³ In the second half of 2007, the City of Cape Town started the installation of the water management device, which is a meter that replaces the existing pre-paid or trickle flow meters. The water management device differs from the conventional meter in that once the agreed-upon daily allocation (usually 200l/day) has been used, the normal water flow stops until the next morning. If only a portion of the daily allocation is used, the remainder is carried over to the next day. However, at the end of the month, any unused allocation cannot be carried over to the next month. Should the resident be registered as indigent and, for six consecutive months, continues to pay for monthly water use, plus an agreed amount to reduce arrears, then they can apply to have their water and sanitation debts to be written off. (City of Cape Town, 2008). This device was not installed within the research area during the time that this research was conducted, and is therefore not examined within the empirical component of this paper.

7.4. Revived efforts to recover costs

Since 2006, the City of Cape Town has been engaged in a campaign – driven by the DA following the 2006 local government elections - to reduce the existing rates and services arrears totaling more than R3.5 billion. By the end of 2006 more than 300, 000 final demand notices (pink slips) were issued; with residents encouraged to take advantage of indigent relief and/or payment arrangements; or face service restrictions.

These revived efforts by the City of Cape Town to collect arrears on municipal accounts have been accompanied by the issuing of ‘pink slips’, serving as a notification of disconnection/restriction due to arrears. In October/November 2006 the City, in its campaign to recover arrears, flooded largely low income communities, including Mitchell’s Plain and the neighbourhood of Tafelsig with pink slips (City of Cape Town, 2007b).

The case study examines the struggle emerging within the community of Tafelsig in response to the widespread distribution of pink slips by the city – initiated in October 2006 - and consequent water restrictions.

8. Reasons for non payment on municipal services in Tafelsig

Mitchells Plain was built in 1973, to accommodate coloured people displaced by the Group areas Act. As the largest coloured township in the city, it consists of nine low-middle income neighbourhoods, including Tafelsig. This neighbourhood is one of the oldest within Mitchell's Plain, with large households, low household incomes and low levels of employment (StatSA, 2003; Smith & Hanson, 2003). Located within ward 82, of subcouncil 12, within the unicity structure, approximately 37% of the economically active members of this ward are unemployed. In considering the economically inactive ward constituents, 11 % are unable to work due to illness or disability, and 11% could not find work (StatSA, 2003).

Built in the 1980s, Tafelsig is one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Mitchells Plain. "Residents here have lived in the sub standard council housing for two decades and, since 1997, the council has neglected to maintain broken doors, windows, leaking pipes and toilets ... While RDP subsidies have assisted Tafelsig residents in becoming homeowners, the high levels of unemployment and the transmission of poverty across generations have left most Tafelsig residents unable to pay their service bills" (Smith & Hanson, 2003: 1529).

The research area was within Old Tafelsig, within ward 82, on the border with ward 89. The households interviewed were located within a two to three block radius from the Tafelsig (Olifantshoek) community centre. This was also the area of public resistance, with the community meeting held within the centre, and the march taking place within the same neighbourhood as the household interviews. The map in appendix 12.7 shows the research boundaries within Tafelsig.

8.1. Number of household dependents

Of the 10 households interviewed, a total of 76 people were represented, of this number it is noteworthy that 7 were solely female headed households, 26 were adult children, and 18 were grandchildren of the household head (s). It is also significant that 45 of the 76

individuals making up the 10 households were adults (above the age of 18). The smallest household was composed of 3 members within a female-headed house, with 2 minor children, and the largest household was household 5 with a total of 15 members. The average household size was between 7 and 8.

The dominant trend of the households reflected extended family household structures, with the major member composition made up of a female household head, her adult children, and grandchildren.

8.2. Evaluating household levels of employment/unemployment and income sources

The intermittency of income sources, both in households with employed individuals as well as those with complete/partial unemployment, was a striking pattern which emerged across the households. Emerging as a constant experience, irregularity/volatility in income was raised in every interview conducted for this research.

A survey of the overall results reveals that of the 45 adults accounted for within the 10 households:

- 4 were casually employed;
- 3 were permanently employed;
- only in household 7 did both the male and female household head have employment (however this employment was volatile);
- 35 of the 45 adults were unemployed and received no state social grant;
- 3 individuals were recipients of the state disability grant.

Of the 4 households with a male household head present, 2 of the males were unemployed, 1 male could be termed as having permanent/contractual employment, and 1 male was a casual employee. The largest of the households, was composed of 15 people, with 10 adults, and 5 children (the grandchildren of the household heads). Of the 10 adults, all were unemployed.

While this sample cannot be extrapolated as being representative of the entire Tafelsig community, it is striking that only 7 of the 45 individuals of working age, accounted for within this research, were casually or permanently employed, this is an alarmingly low overall employment rate³⁴ of 15.5%. Furthermore, these 7 were distributed amongst only 4 of the 10 households.

The emergent picture amongst the 10 households is one of high unemployment; sporadic/intermittent income in every instance; a high vulnerability in employment for those with casual employment (4 of the 7 employed individuals) as the jobs are piecemeal and undependable; and an overall and dominant reliance on either informal income generating activities and/or child and disability grants by the households considered in this research. A total of 22 state child-support grants were collected.

8.3. Considering household priorities and debt

With this knowledge of the prominent household context and profile unpacked above, we proceed now toward examining the basic needs/priorities of the households, including water accounts, and the ability of these households to meet/pay for these.

Of the 10 households interviewed, while identified priorities varied, in every instance the interviewees expressed an insufficiency in household income to meet all of the household priorities. It emerged that payment priorities were constantly negotiated and revised alongside shifts in employment levels and income sources. Furthermore, in every case household debt was accumulating within this context of household payment priorities exceeding income, with stated water and electricity arrears as high as R13, 000 in at least 2 cases.

³⁴ 'Unemployment' is used in this paper to refer to the expanded definition of unemployment, which includes the category of discouraged work seekers which are not included in the narrow or official definition of unemployment. The official definition of unemployment counts as unemployed only those workers who have actively sought work in the last four weeks, which is the measure used by the 2001 census data (Frye, 2006)

Illustrative of this burden of debt, in household 1, M inherited his home from his parents in 2003/2004, as well as the arrears of R4300 on the house bond. At the time of the interview the house was being auctioned, leaving M's family with an uncertain future. Deepening this burden, he had also inherited arrears on the water and electricity account, totaling R13000.

Within this household of 8, the total household income was approximately R2800 per month with 2 of the 3 employed household members holding precarious employment. The family's monthly fixed expenses included payment on a furniture account of R800 pm, an account for household appliances of R400pm and a clothing account of R400 pm; alongside the central priorities which were identified as "The food, my water, my light and the roof over my head". This financial predicament lead M to conclude that *"actually we are living beyond our income"* (M, Household 1). This was even before accounting for the outstanding debt on the house bond, and water and electricity accounts.

In an attempt to reduce the household financial burden M entered into a "voluntary repo" on the furniture to redirect a portion of the household income toward more pressing household priorities.

As a result of the accumulated arrears on the water account, M and his family were placed on a water restrictor by the municipality, 3 months prior to the interview. In an effort to be 'reconnected' M had approached the municipal council "at the Foreshore" enquiring about entering into a payment arrangement on his service account. The proposed arrangement required M firstly to make payment of 10% per month on the arrears of R13000; secondly he was required to pay a reconnection fee; and finally to make payment on the current municipal account on a monthly basis.

M concluded that this proposed arrangement was unaffordable as *"I mean, I don't know where I'm going to get that money, so I just have to Wait"* (M, Household 1).

The inability to afford entering into a payment arrangement lead M to conclude that his family had to continue to live on the restrictor as *"I mean a thousand three hundred rand!! That's, hahaha, that's a WHOLE MONTHS FOOD MONEY. I CAN'T AFFORD ... its not that I'm not sure, I KNOW THAT I DON'T HAVE (the money)... that's why, as I told you I told my wife that we can live with it. But it's going to be every morning, catastrophe and quarrelling. And I mean on the long run its going to affect me (M, Household 1).*

It is significant that M expressed a willingness to assume responsibility for 2.5 years of the accumulated arrears provided the arrangement was reasonable.

E of household 4 is also attempting to provide for the needs of her family within a context of limited and volatile employment/income sources. Her eldest daughter and (daughter's) spouse live in a caravan on the property, while her second daughter and her daughter's son live in the main house with E.

E worked previously as a domestic worker, and began receiving a disability grant in January 2007 (interview conducted in July 2007). Reissuing of the grant was dependent on a second application in January 2008 – the approval thereof was dependent on a doctor's diagnosis of her eligibility for the grant.

Her younger daughter was unemployed and actively seeking employment, at the time of the interview, whilst the elder daughter and her spouse were both employed at I&J - but had been placed on 'short time'.

Within this environment of precarious employment, the stated priorities are food, rental of R190, a monthly installment of R300 for a couch purchased by her late husband, and the water account including arrears payments. E (Household 4) maintains that she aims to make payment on the current water account and arrears within her financial means:

"when I see where I can afford when my children help me then I give more, you see because I know I am in arrears and I know it should get paid, you see so the water was R100 and something last month, and I try to always give a R50 or R100 extra on the arrears"

The household entered into arrears on the water account following the death of Es husband, 8 years ago. While the household financial resources are pooled to make payment for household expenses, employment volatility limits payment ability.

In 2006 the household monthly water account had been unusually high prompting E to make enquiries at the “foreshore” in March of that year. At this time she also made a payment on her account to contribute to the arrears. To make this payment, to prevent her water from being disconnected, E borrowed money from her sister.

Following this enquiry, the water pipes were examined by a municipal worker and it was established that there was a leak, resulting in water loss, which was reflected on Es municipal account. According to E no follow up had taken place since this initial assessment. In October/November of 2006 ‘pink briewe’ warning of pending restrictions due to arrears flooded the Old Tafelsig community. Along with many other concerned community members E approached the Rent Office in Beacon Valley to make enquiries around arrangements and preventing water restriction. The household was placed on the water restrictor at the start of February 2007.

While emphasizing her efforts to make monthly payments on her water current account and arrears, which she had continued even after installation of the water restrictor, it emerged during the interview that E had not entered into arrangements with the municipality and chosen an alternative route for reconnection. While awaiting an assessment of her pipes to determine her actual usage and repair the leak, E attended a community meeting held on 22 February 2007 – called in response to the widespread water restrictions - and was informed of community members performing self-styled ‘illegal’ reconnections. This is the route E chose to access her water supply.

It is noteworthy, that in spite of this ‘illegal action’ she continued to make payments on her water account and arrears according to her financial means, even in not entering into an official arrangement with the municipality. More on this will be discussed when

considering community responses to ‘water restrictors; and accounting for ‘official’ as well as ‘illegal’ channels of reconnection and their respective motivations and implications.

E's perspective on reasons for non-payment, is in direct contrast to the dominant government mantra of a culture of non-payment, citing affordability and the extreme levels of unemployment and poverty within communities - such as Tafelsig - as the true reasons for non-payment.

“The reasons why I didn't pay that time when I entered into arrears was because I wasn't receiving the grant at the time, you see, then I didn't have an income and my daughter wasn't living here ... But I just feel, that they (the municipality) must go look at the people's circumstances ... they must go see what are the people's circumstances, what is the reason why you don't pay, because behind everything there is a reason you see. They must go in there as you now came to me and come to listen about what is and over what it goes, sometimes they think the people can pay or afford to pay but then they don't go to see what the people's circumstances are, because this is Tafelsig and this is a very poor community, you see. Go see what is the people's needs, and go see what the reasons are for why the people.” (E, Household 4)

E does not stand alone in highlighting the importance of acknowledging household context in understanding reasons for non-payment. Interviewees explained how household priorities were negotiated on a monthly basis, based on affordability, according to N (Household 7): *“sometimes I can't afford to pay at the end when the bill comes, ... to make up for the total I'll pay in the week ...”*. Furthermore, N explains the linkage between monthly negotiation of payment priorities and reasons for non-payment of her municipal account; which resulted in water disconnection/restriction on two separate occasions: *“the first time, was my husbands, the amount of money that he had wasn't sufficient money to pay for that bill. Because we bought light, ... and bread”* (N, Household 7).

An interesting inversion of this discussion on household priorities and debt is presented by B (Household 8). B suggests that payment should not be viewed solely through a myopic cost-recovery lens. B, as a self-styled community worker, draws on her intimate knowledge of her community to illustrate how other priorities are sacrificed to make payment on municipal accounts, with potentially serious consequences. This inversion in

considering household reasons for non-payment, inserts the issue of the impact of payment to be considered in 8.5 below.

8.4. A Culture of Non-payment or an inability to afford

Government blames the arrears situation on a ‘culture of non-payment’, extending from the anti-apartheid struggle and rent boycotts of the 1980s. This thesis claims that citizens have come to believe that it is their right to receive free services. But the evidence from this research (supporting related research conducted country-wide) suggests that many low-income households are simply unable to pay for municipal services.

An examination of the households within this research reveals a profile of large extended family structures, often female-headed, with high levels of unemployment or precarious employment, and an overall reliance on either informal income generating activities and/or child and disability grants. Within this context the multitude of household responsibilities are experienced as cumulative financial commitments (each assigned varying degrees of priority); with relational mounting debt in all instances. Each of these issues experienced individually and in connection to each other presents a picture of financially burdened homes, where total expenses exceed total household income. This negative financial balance implies a fundamental problem of affordability in the servicing of household debt.

Hence, the findings in this research supports the ‘affordability thesis’ demonstrating that Cost-recovery, aggravated by large and growing payment arrears, within a context of unemployment and income volatility has placed many low-income households within a debt trap and lead to reduced water consumption, non-payment and water cut offs/restrictions.

8.5. Considering a ‘culture of payment’ and its implications

The findings and analysis above have demonstrated the reasons for non-payment to be related to an inability to afford service payments, as opposed to a ‘culture of non-

payment'. However, the inversion of this analysis also warrants consideration. Referring to what could be termed a 'culture of payment' and its related implications.

B (Household 8) was known by many of the interviewees and had been involved in the initial campaign against evictions in Tafelsig in 2002. Drawing from her observations and knowledge of household struggles within her community, B suggests that while many households within the community are constantly negotiating household debt and payment decisions. An examination that solely considers 'reasons for non-payment', ignores the reverse impact of 'payment at all costs'. B suggests that in some instances people are so concerned about the consequences of non-payment of municipal debt that they prioritise this over of all other household commitments.

One example of this is a shebeenist within the community who *"... also wants to pay. BUT She is selling wine to pay her debt, you see. But she had to feed, five grandchildren, plus she had to feed her daughters, but they get the income for grants for their children. She lost her job because of retrenchment, now she starts selling wine"* (B, Household 8).

Taken as a whole in examining both reasons for payment and non-payment it emerges a cost analysis with a purely monetary focus ignores "the reason behind things", and as even illustrated through households consumed by the 'necessity' of payment, this short-sighted focus could result in further social underdevelopment.

Therefore, it could be argued that there are impacts for non-payment (to be examined chapter 9 below) and the social and monetary expense of payment at all costs. Both contribute to deepened underdevelopment within already marginalized households. This suggests that municipalities should overcome purely cost reflexive policies and measures if concerned truly with long-term societal development (social, environmental and economic).

9. Cost-recovery mechanisms and their impacts on households

This chapter is concerned with carrying out an examination of the experience of the proposed mitigating equity measures and linked instruments. This refers specifically to the indigent policy and arrangements; the offer of FBW; and the related use of water restrictors as the instrument of cost recovery, replacing outright disconnection. These measures and the use of a restrictor are assessed to establish the impact and experience of these, and the extent to which claims that they are pro poor are supported by the experiences of the households within this research.

9.1. Municipal arrangements and the indigent policy

As already demonstrated the interviewed households are experiencing a fundamental problem of affordability in servicing municipal arrears. Overall households within the research either experienced difficulty in maintaining payments on arrangements or did not enter into arrangements at all, as in all instances they were not viewed as affordable.

For example, in the case of household 5 the service arrears are approximately R12000. The household received a final notice (pink slip) in November of 2006³⁵ and proceeded to approach the municipal rent office in Beacon valley, Mitchell's Plain. Sh (household 5) was asked to obtain an affidavit as confirmation of her husband's unemployment status, to qualify for 'indigent relief' and enter into a payment arrangement. The payment arrangement required payment of 10% of R12000 (outstanding arrears), in addition to monthly service charges, an agreed installment arrangement and a reconnection fee of approximately R160.

Household 5 had 15 members with no adult members employed, hence in considering the arrangement the interviewee concluded it was unaffordable: (Sh, Household 5) "... when we had to make arrangements, I went there (to Beacon Valley), and I told them that my husband doesn't work. They said to me I should first go for an affidavit. I went for an affidavit, then my husband said 'man what

³⁵ Revived efforts by the City of Cape Town to collect arrears on municipal accounts have been accompanied by the issuing of 'pink slips'. These slips serve as a notification of disconnection/restriction due to arrears. In October/November 2006 the City, in its campaign to recover arrears, flooded Tafelsig – and other largely low income communities - with pink slips

is the use of you going because they now want that you must pay the amount every month. Where must I get the money? ”.

Of the remaining interviewees, 3 households had entered into arrangements but were unable to maintain payment on these arrangements due to affordability. As explained by L (Household 6), *“So I went down to the council and I made an arrangement. They said to me I must pay R60 a month. Now if I pay R60 a month, out of a R150. What have I got left, a R90, I must eat from that R90, If I make a debt, I must pay from that R90. I paid the water for three months and then I said to myself after this meeting I said to myself I’m not going to pay anymore. Because I haven’t got a proper income. If I’ve got a basic wage that comes into me every month or every week then I can afford to pay. BUT I haven’t got a basic wage, you See, that’s the problem. Because I mean I’ve hardly got money for food now I must take my last money and give it to the council.”*

The consequence for these households of renegeing on the payment arrangements was placement on a water restrictor in February 2007. Household 3 was still on a restrictor at the time of the interview (May 2007), while both households 4 and 6 (interviews in mid July 2007) had arranged for community members to ‘illegally’ reconnect their water supplies³⁶.

Households 1, 8 and 10 (including household 5 discussed above) did not enter into payment arrangements with affordability as the cited reason for this decision, and each of these cases³⁷ had their water supplies reconnected ‘illegally’.

The results further substantiate the affordability thesis versus the culture of non-payment thesis, and expand on this analysis by bringing into question the efficacy of ‘pro-poor equity measures’ operating within a larger cost-recovery framework. As evidenced through the mounting payments included in arrangements, these measures are

³⁶ Following attendance at a community meeting in February 2007 arranged by the ‘water for all campaign’ in opposition to the widespread water restrictions occurring within the community at the time.

³⁷ Household 1 had discussed reconnection with a community worker on the evening of the community meeting. During the interview he explained that he had noticed a minor improvement in the rate of the water flow, however he was unsure of who was responsible or how this change had occurred.

experienced as unaffordable and at the very least difficult to maintain, and consequently - while claiming to be pro-poor - deepen the burden of debt of the poor.

The interview results show that attempted 'mitigating measures' can experientially contribute to deepening as opposed to ameliorating the burden of the poor, through increasing debt including fees such as disconnection and reconnection. Compelling households to commit to agreements (binding) that they cannot afford to maintain serves to increase the burden of debt and poverty. Therefore the efficacy of indigent 'relief' as a mitigating measure is questionable.

9.2. Questioning the sufficiency and actual quantity of FBW

The following is a related experience on FBW delivered through a water restrictor:

"To make food and then for the washing, You had to stand a whole hour for the water to fill in the bath... Ja, you got washing to wash, you can't wash, it's dirty washing like also a hygienic risk [hmmm].. It was really terrible" (J, Household 10).

When questioned about the sufficiency of the FBW for her household of 9, J had this to say: *"NO, NO, NO, (referring to whether the FBW was sufficient) as I said we had washing to wash, you must wash yourself, you must use the toilet, and I mean for a household with say seven adults in the house to use a dripping tap and a dripping toilet ... It's Not GOOD, It's really Not Good" (J, Household 10).*

While efforts were made during the interviews to determine the actual quantity received, the interviewees experienced difficulty in quantifying this amount. Hence the actual quantity received per household per day, versus the promised 25 litres per day, is not scrutinized within this paper, as the evidence gathered is insufficient for this analytical exercise.

What did emerge is that every one of the 10 households echoed Js view that the actual quantity of FBW received – be it 25 litres or less - was insufficient to meet their household needs.

As a coping strategy almost all of the households relied on the support of neighbours for further water needs. Interviewee E explains. *"The only thing is the water of the people next door...I mean they are a big help to me ... but, you see sometime they will come and ask me M you have to give us money for the water, BECAUSE its running on a monthly basis. And I can't expect to get water from them, they also have a bill to pay."* (M, Household 1).

While emphasizing the importance of neighbour support, the above account is significant in highlighting two potential consequences of this reliance. Firstly neighbours water consumption and related charges increase³⁸, and secondly the household burden of debt grows, if neighbours claim monetary or other compensation as *"they also have a bill to pay"* (M, Household 1)

Furthermore, aside from concerns of monetary debt owed to neighbours, others expressed feelings of shame and fear of being talked about in the community. This concern prevented household 3 – with 11 members, and none of the adults employed - from asking for support from neighbours.

Overall every household within the research viewed the quantity of FBW received as insufficient. Furthermore it is significant that the same quantity is allocated to all households without accounting for average household size, hence a household of 2 would receive the same FBW as a household of 15. The results underline that the offer of 'free' basic water, despite its poverty alleviation potential, is insufficient to address the fundamental problems of sufficient access and affordability within low-income households. As demonstrated by the experiences of the households this 'equity measure', coupled with a water restrictor is experienced as *"Not GOOD, It's really Not Good"* (J, Household 10) as it is offered through a restricted flow to households being punished for non-payment – this is therefore taking place within the overall cost-recovery logic.

³⁸ A significant impact given that the City utilizes a rising block tariff, with an increase of 165% from block 2 to block 3

9.3. 'Drips' as indirect 'disconnectors'

Household I living in a household of 8 and placed on the restrictor for three months at the time of this interview (15 May), describes the household's experience with the restricted flow: *"Its a thin flow, and if somebody uses the tap in the back, I've got no water in front ... First of all in the morning we have to wait on each other. There's a lot of clashing and , ok to be honest, sometimes there's quarrelling over water in the morning, and I mean I can't take the stress man (M, Household 1)"*

Many of the households interviewed experienced service restrictions on more than one occasion, with high rates of arrears creating a debt trap that they were struggling to escape. Of the 10 households, 7 were still officially on a restrictor, however 5 of these households had 'illegally' reconnected to the water supply with community assistance in removing the restrictor. While 1 of the remaining 2 households (on restrictors) had discussed reconnection with a community activist, and was unsure of whether the restrictor had been removed. The cited reasons for 'illegal' reconnection have already been alluded to in earlier discussions on arrangements and will be expanded on when criminalization and stigmatization as impacts are discussed later in this chapter.

9.3.1. Household perceptions of municipal measures

Household responses to the service restrictions reflect growing distrust of the municipality as well as a sense by some that water restriction was an injustice and an imposition on their constitutional rights.

This was very strongly expressed by the members of household 3: *"we feel very off, the money goes to the water, what do we have now for the children and the water? How can a person make a cup of coffee? If I worked at the council I wouldn't (restrict the water) because everyone struggles, I wont disconnect their water. We aren't camels that hold water in their humps. Without water, nothing comes right without water. You can't make no decisions (OF, Household 3).*

Furthermore, in reflecting on municipal measures to address non-payment for water, N (household 7) calls for a deeper understanding of household circumstances: *"I mean, why*

cut your water if your rates is in arrears? I mean it doesn't make sense to cut your water, people need water, its everybody's right to have water" (N, Household 7)³⁹.

A feeling that household context and circumstance should be acknowledged in responding to and understanding non-payment for service delivery was widely expressed by the respondents, and used to support a sense of injustice in considering current municipal cost-recovery measures.

9.3.2. Health impacts

As outlined above, the water restrictor enables the city to deliver on the promise of six kilolitres 'Free' per household per month, while simultaneously punishing the defaulter for non-payment. While a less overt instrument than outright disconnection or pre-paid water meters, the restrictor has been experienced and observed to have detrimental impacts on households. They have had an adverse effect on the physical, mental and emotional health of the respondents in this research, thereby functioning as an indirect disconnecter.

Health/Illnesses

As expressed by one household, cost-recovery measures, even those cloaked under the thin veil of equity, have been observed to have a detrimental effect on health and well-being. *"You see the drain blocks outside, now the drain isn't closed, its open, now the water runs out, there's flies. And its on the children also. Every time they sick, they go out and drink the water(in the drain) also"* (OF, Household 3)

Members of households 5, 7 and 10 all experienced an adverse impact on their health as a result of being placed on a water restrictor. Sh of household 5 was already in poor health and using chronic medication; *"I felt bad but what can I do. Because I take it that my husband doesn't have fixed work. But look here, my husband is also not a healthy man. He also has a problem, like I have. I am also a sickly person from the arthritis. You can see yourself and my pills. Yes, everyday I have to take it."*

³⁹ Significantly, while recognizing water as a right, N had entered into arrangements and continued to make payments on arrangements, while experiencing difficulty in maintaining these. The household had been disconnected/restricted from the water supply on two occasions.

Placement on a water restrictor increased her blood pressure and also made it difficult for her to take chronic medication. Furthermore, access to water is vital for physiological health and wellbeing, and still more significant for those already suffering from poor health.

N of household 7 also suffered from poor health, and experienced the same difficulties with water restriction affecting her ability to take her medication, and increasing her blood pressure due to stress within the household. When asked if the water restrictor impacted on her health she had this to say: *“Yes, because I’ve got to take my medication for hypertension and my spine, I’ve got spinabifida. It stresses you, because if you don’t take your medication like your hypertension, your blood, and you stressed out because your blood pressure goes up. When the water was cut, my blood pressure was high and I went to the hospital but I didn’t tell them that my water was cut, I just said problems at home”* (N, Household 7).

Furthermore, as one of the three households within this research that had entered into and attempted to maintain arrangements – despite experiencing water disconnection and restriction on two occasions – N ‘sacrificed’ her health by going to work to contribute to the volatile household income. She explains: *“He (husband) was saying you must see that this Bills GET PAID. That time there wasn’t a lot of money, so how could this get paid, that is why I was glad when I was offered this job. Although I’ve also got disabilities with my back and that, they said I can’t actually go out and work .. Because I can’t stand too long and whatever. BUT I’m sacrificing my health and working to help my husband out [hmm]. So that our water doesn’t get cut or what. My husband actually put the pressure on me, On me, I must do that”* (N, Household 7).

In this recount of her experience with the water restrictor and reasons for ‘sacrificing’ her health to contribute to the household income, N also highlights the gendered effect of water restrictions. With women often left with the burden of managing household responsibilities and payments.

Household 10 also recounted the health and gendered effect of water restriction. At the time of restriction within the household, the interviewee J’s daughter was pregnant, and on her final trimester, furthermore J is also suffering from ill health.

Hygiene

The harmful health effects extend still further, with water restriction impacting on household hygiene and sanitation. With a limited water supply and water ‘dripping’ out of the taps, the use of the toilet is extremely difficult, made still more unhygienic and unpleasant in larger households.

When asked about the impact of the water restrictor, N (household 7) also stressed the difficulty in using the toilet and the overall impact of water restriction on household hygiene. *“I mean now, you go to the toilet, you can’t, like you can’t flush the toilet and you, like you normally would do, and the washing, washing yourself, doing your clothes. Using the toilet, its really horrible, because I mean when they was no water for using the toilet, its unhygienic, not to have water and to go get water so that you can flush the toilet, it was actually... it wasn’t nice, really.”*

In discussing the impacts Sh drew attention both to hygiene risks, shame and the gendered nature of water restriction on her household of 15. *“when they (children) wake up or before they go to sleep and if they mouths smell then they ask “mum must a person live without water again. You can’t even make a bit of tea or you can’ even wash yourself. And where there’s a girl, look when they get there periods and they are young girls. And when you get your periods you smell”* (Sh, Household 5).

Stress/Shame

As already suggested in the examination above, water restriction has a mental and emotional effect on those living with none or a limited water supply, increasing stress levels, and resulting in feelings of shame amongst those living on a restrictor. When asked about the effect of the water restrictor on her family J replied that *“I can’t talk on their behalf but as I told you before, you can see the stress on their faces, tells you many different stories”* (J, household 10). Sa (Household 9) also referred to an increase in stress levels due to water restriction, *“I was really stressed and upset, I also have a heart problem and hypertension”* (Sa, Household 9)

According to M (Household 1) the restrictor had contributed to increased tension, conflict and stress for himself and amongst his family members. *“Ja, its like quarrelling over who’s*

washing first, whose washing second, and you using too much water. And sometimes the small one runs to me. 'Daddy, daddy, (other daughter) Is using too much water'. And they got into a quarrel you see" (M, Household 1).

Experiences of conflict, tension and growing stress were also layered with accounts of shame amongst household members as a result of water restriction. As with Household 3, the members of household 5 felt ashamed to be living on a water restrictor. Household 3 had chosen to not solicit the support of neighbours, as "*People around here like to talk, hulle maak as of hulle water is nie af nie, maar hulle water is ook af (they make as though there water is not cut, but their water is also cut)*" (OF, Household 3).

9.3.3. Burden on women

The gendered impact of disconnection/restriction is important to recognize, with the responsibility of acquiring access to water often left to women. Disconnections (through cutoffs/restrictions or self-disconnection) often mean that women's domestic responsibilities are increased, having to obtain alternative water sources for basic household use. Furthermore, as was the case with household 7, women also feel the burden of ensuring that household payments were met. The gendered nature of health and hygiene issues were already discussed with woman having to experience the impact of water restriction when they are unable to wash when menstruating, or pregnant and living on a water restrictor. Furthermore the burden of childcare and responsibility also rests with woman in most instances. Within this research only one of the interviewees was male, as the women were the voice of the household.

9.3.4. Stigmatisation and criminalization

As already discussed, many of the households interviewed experienced service restrictions on more than one occasion, with high rates of arrears creating a debt trap that they were struggling to escape. Of the 10 households, 5 had 'illegally' reconnected to the water supply.

The cited reasons for 'illegal' reconnection were related to affordability and an inability to enter into municipal arrangements. The evidence in this research shows that arrangements reflect a further debt noose to the poor as opposed to the offered 'relief'. Furthermore, as already discussed, in order to qualify for indigent relief residents have to be class – ified as indigent.

Hence 6 of the households 'rejected' indigent 'relief', class-ification as 'indigent', and an offer to enter into arrangements, choosing instead to 'illegally reconnect themselves'. This decision to become 'criminalised' is explained as an experienced lack of alternatives, as for many arrangements are not viewed as affordable. And the restrictor is experienced as tantamount to disconnection.

Hence those already living on the margins of society are apparently left with two choices, either criminalization or indigence, both with attached stigmas.

Interestingly community mobilization emerged as a key to supporting the alternative of 'illegal' reconnections. That is, while households determined that they were unable to afford formal municipal payment arrangements, community mobilization made the alternative of 'illegal' reconnection more acceptable, with community members entering into a collective 'criminalisation'.

"All the people put there own water on. The people took their own right/justice. The one for the other ... because when we returned from that meeting the people were in confusion and that's how they came put each other's water on. So the one helped the other one." (E, Household 4).

10. Public resistance

With the City's debt collection initiative rolling forward, 'Pink Slips' came to symbolise its intensification from late 2006, with this final notice rained down on debt ridden communities including Tafelsig' from October 2006. Reportedly⁴⁰ hundreds of people queued at the Municipal rent office in Beacon Valley in efforts to prevent water restriction on their household water supply. The scale of the arrears problem and intensification of city efforts is captured by the following account.

"Actually hundreds of people queued at the municipal renting office to make arrangements for payments and not even knowing what is the effect on them when they are going to make that arrangements. Maybe you going to pay now but then you may not be able to pay for the next months.. Some of them had to go and sell some of their stuff and so on, to get that money to pay or to make arrangements" (E, Water for All).

In immediate response to the issuing of pink slips the anger of some disillusioned residents spilt onto to the streets of Tafelsig where *"Some people took action, burning tyres and so on. It almost went back like in the 80s where you get back to this riots"* (E, Water for All).

This was followed by the emergence of a more structured community based campaign in November 2006, resisting the impacts of city cost recovery practices. This campaign was consequently supported by an existing city-based campaign, formed with the objective of acting as a platform for communities within the City of Cape Town to coalesce and challenge service delivery issues through networking, collective resistance, and resource support.

This chapter examines these two campaigns, which were active within Tafelsig at the time of the research. The discussion begins with a chronological analysis of the existing city-wide campaign, named "Umbane Wabantu Bonke", meaning "electricity for all". The chronological analysis traces the emergence and activities of the campaign to the point of convergence with the Mitchell's Plain based campaign, named the "Water for

⁴⁰ Related by interviewed residents and community activists

All” campaign. The initial waterway leading to the campaign convergence will also be discussed.

The aim of this chapter is to evaluate these two campaigns with respect to their emergence, composition, the issues and scales of resistance, as well as the tactics and strategies of resistance employed. The focus on both the independent form and characteristics of the campaigns as well as the campaign convergence and the focus on the community of Tafelsig as the site of convergence.

10.1. Movement emergence and Profile

10.1.1. The Historical Profile of the ‘Umbane campaign’

What follows is a brief historical profile of the Umbane campaign, as the older of the two campaigns and the campaign which acted as the support campaign to the “water for all” campaign within Tafelsig. This chronological presentation serves as a point of entry into examining the two campaigns both collectively during their convergence in Tafelsig, and as independent structures.

The Umbane campaign was initiated in 2005 by the South African Municipal Workers Union (Samwu), an affiliate of Cosatu (Congress of South African Trade Unions), with Ilrig and the SACP present at the birth of the campaign. At the outset, the campaign revolved around public awareness on electricity distribution issues focusing on resistance against pre-paid electricity meters and the proposed Regional Electricity Distributor, RED1. However the campaign experienced difficulties in rallying support and generating awareness around the first electricity entity in July 2005.

The move by the City to install pre-paid water meters was growing in momentum. Beginning with a pilot programme running in Klipheuwel since July 2001 - to test the efficacy of the meters – a roll out was proposed in Bishop Lavis, Netreg in Bonteheuwel and Richwood. This created increased tensions,

“And the focus of the campaign shifted ... this was quite a different experience to the previous experience of the campaign because pre-paid water meters was something much more immediate and real to people and they knew from their experience of pre-paid electricity meters that often it meant that they just had to go without it, which is bad enough without electricity, but without water” (R, Umbane).

The campaign, through public meetings and a march, aimed to increase the level of public awareness around the proposed installation of pre-paid water meters in Cape Town. It focused on the health effects, as witnessed nationally and internationally, of pre-paid meter technology on poor households, and was ultimately aimed to prevent its installation.

Significantly, in August 2005, the City of Cape Town took a policy decision not to implement pre-paid water meters in the city. The campaign has claimed this decision as a victory, and an outcome of its activities and ongoing political pressure.

Following this ‘victory’ against the installation of pre-paid water meters in 2005, the campaign briefly (re) shifted its focus to electricity distribution issues resisting pre-paid electricity meters and the proposed Regional Electricity Distributor, RED1 . The campaign was then named “Umbane Wabantu Bonke”, meaning “electricity for all”.

It is significant that the campaign focal point has continued to change in response to the shifting service delivery context within the City. The connections between the issues and sites of contestation are explained as follows:

“Well its policies, state policies. Although the issues are different you’ll find that for some people it’s just the issue is really that they can’t afford the latest increase, others are completely indigent, others are having a problem with water and electricity. But its neoliberal state policy that’s the problem. I mean it runs across parties and across levels of government. Its basically the policy of the state is to put the market and profit making ahead of the needs of the people and people are fighting back. That is the connection” (R, Umbane).

Following the distribution of ‘pink slips’ in Mitchell’s Plain the Umbane campaign became an active community supporter in February 2007. The discussion below outlines

the factors leading to involvement of the Umbane campaign in Mitchells Plain and its convergence with a recently formed community based campaign named the “Water for All” campaign.

10.1.2. The ‘Water for All’ campaign meets the ‘Umbane campaign’ – sketching campaign convergence

The proliferation of pink slips, pending community wide disconnection, anger boiling over onto the streets, and the potential impacts of restriction all converged as catalysts for the emergence of the ‘Water for All’ campaign, a Mitchells Plain based campaign, in November 2006. The factors leading to the emergence of the campaign is explained by the campaign organizers⁴² as follows:

“It (campaign emergence) stemmed from the pink letters that was delivered last year” (N, Water for All).

“When the city started with the cutting of water it was like the poor people who could not afford to pay. We started to lobby with other people, with women, some was activists, some was ordinary people and so on. To address the actions of the city, because we felt that this was totally an effect on poor people” (E, Water for All).

Soon after the inception of the “Water for All” campaign, extensive disconnections/restrictions were carried out on households throughout Mitchell’s Plain. Tafelsig was reported as one of the harder hit areas.

Moved by the struggles of her community, one of the founding members of the “Water for All” campaign, Elfrieda, began to engage with support organizations and individuals in developing a strategic response to the debt collection offensive of the City, focusing on its impact in Mitchells Plain. She drew on her activist connections in garnering support both within and outside of the Mitchells Plain community. Her networking efforts lead to the involvement of 2 researcher activists, namely Ronald and Shireen. The former activist was also an employee of the labour research organization Ilrig and an Ilrig representative

⁴² Campaign member composition will be discussed in section 10.2 below

on the existing service delivery campaign known as the “Umbane” campaign (E, Water for All).

The issues of resistance for the “Water for All” campaign and “Umbane” campaign were understood by Ronald to be linked. Following his engagement with Elfrieda with the “Water for All” campaign; Ronald proceeded to propose collaboration between the two campaigns within the community of Mitchells Plain. This took place at an Umbane Planning Committee Meeting held on 8 February 2007. The proposal was supported by the Umbane committee members (The “Umbane” membership structure will be discussed below).

Therefore, from February 2007 the ‘Water for All’ campaign was officially supported by the “Umbane” campaign. The initial waterway which led to the convergence between these two campaigns was forged by individuals involved in both campaigns, engaging through the Social Movement networks.

The two campaigns directed their collective attention toward the mobilization of Tafelsig residents, against the pink slips and the resulting practice of municipal water restriction. What follows is an analysis of the campaigns as independent entities as well as organizations that focused their collective resources on the struggles of the community of Tafelsig. The primary purpose of the analysis is to examine the campaigns to contribute further to the discussion on the issues and forms of contemporary social movements in South Africa.

10.2. Movement composition

10.2.1. Movement politics

Umbane Campaign

The Umbane campaign was initiated in 2005 by the South African Municipal Workers Union (Samwu) an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). As the force behind campaign conception, SAMWU was deeply concerned with the proposed electricity restructuring.

Samwu tabled a resolution to Cosatu, with Ilrig and the SACP invited as participating organizations, with the formation of the campaign as the outcome. Following emergence, the member composition included the original members (with individual representatives), and grew to include representatives from NGOs and community organizations including the Environmental Justice Networking Forum, Earthlife Africa, and the Anti privatization Forum (Cape Town), with the Bonteheuwel Civic Association – as the main ‘community organization’ represented (*R, Umbane*).

These campaign members constituted of labour union, NGO, and community organizations (represented by individuals on the campaign committee) carried out a series of public meetings in opposition to Red 1, following the ‘victory’ against pre-paid water meters. The struggle was couched in terms of service access and quality, affordability, and strong opposition to the corporatization and ultimate privatization of municipal services.

However in 2006 the unity amongst campaign members began to fray, fueling momentary (?) campaign demobilization.

The first problem contributing to campaign fragmentation “*was that at the time the Anti Privatisation Forum (Cape Town) ... stopped functioning right for a number of reasons*” (*R, Umbane*)

Other factors contributing to campaign disunity and momentary demobilisation were murkier, and located within the depths of the Tripartite Alliance. Member constituency of the Umbane campaign included both the SACP and Cosatu, represented through its affiliate Samwu⁴⁴. Ironically this campaign – constituted of (ANC lead) Tripartite Alliance members - was directed against an ANC council within the City at the time.

This apparent paradox of Alliance partners contesting the interests of the ruling party, and in particular the capacity for this to jeopardise the electoral chances of the ANC - in the local elections to be contested in mid 2006 - was not lost on the ANC. Pressure was exerted to silence the agitators within the alliance.

“The SACP branches came under pressure within the party as well, because the party was saying ‘you are damaging the ANC’s electoral chances’” (R, Umbane).

A further demobilizing force emanated from within the Cosatu body politic, as it became apparent that related Cosatu affiliates were not united in their opposition to RED1.

“Within Cosatu you see it became clear that there are problems around RED. And that problems is basically that you have the municipal workers in electricity distribution that is organised by SAMWU, then electricity generation is organised by NUM ... there is also a lot of workers that work for Eskom in distribution that’s organised by NUMSA. So these are the three Cosatu Unions. ... It became clear that they (NUMSA) were not so opposed to RED” (R, Umbane).

In reflecting on campaign fragmentation it surfaces that the internal politics as well as the contradictory political roles and allegiances of campaign constituents can serve to mute resistance, and act as a demobilizing force in the emergence of a collective voice against the interests of the powerful. Secondly the existence of resistance to ANC lead policies carried out by a campaign composed of alliance partner’s points to the difficulty and analytical inaccuracy in presenting historical and contemporary movements as binary

⁴⁴ Samwu is recognized amongst activists as a progressive fraction within the larger body, having been involved in related service struggles on a national level.

opposites. Instead resistance in post-apartheid South Africa is occurring along blurred lines with political opponents and alliances not entirely distinct.

Posed with the question of the seeming contradiction concerning Cosatu's positioning both as an alliance partner and a campaign member⁴⁵, the SAMWU campaign representative was adamant that Cosatu remains autonomous.

"You know ... In its 8th Congress Cosatu passed their resolution of anti pre-paid water meters, of which was motivated by SAMWU in congress and that won the resolution being able to be passed. It then means that Cosatu challenges the ANC And whether it's in alliance with ANC, it's a strategic kind of alliance to roll out the national democratic revolution and the understanding thereof. But Cosatu is still autonomous." (L, Umbane).

Water for All campaign

At the core of the campaign were two dynamic female community activists, Elfrieda of Copa and Nadiema, a community development worker and ANC member.

Nadiema's position as an ANC member and co-founder of the campaign is significant for two reasons. Firstly, in contrast to the struggle period, it becomes more evident that clear-cut boundaries no longer exist between movements and its constituents on the one hand, and the ruling party on the other. Secondly, the direct target of the Water for All campaign - following its emergence in late 2006 - was a Democratic Alliance (DA) lead City Council⁴⁷, with the ANC having lost its precarious political hold in the local government elections contested in mid 2006. With the DA lead City Council responsible for the issuing of 'pink slips' and water restriction at the time, it was easier to cast the struggle as one against DA lead policy. Furthermore it is certain that any campaign effective in publicly demonizing the DA could potentially be employed in supporting future ANC electoral chances within the hotly contested City of Cape Town.

⁴⁵ Represented by Samwu, with the campaign housed under the Cosatu Jobs and Poverty Campaign

⁴⁷ This is distinct from the pre-paid water meter struggle and the campaign against Red1 which took place under an ANC lead City Council

However the campaign core activists were adamant that their support was located with the people of Tafelsig and not within the terrain of political wrangling, emphasizing that they “*support what is beneficial for the community*” (E, Water for All). And went further in acknowledging that “*What happened here (in Cape Town) is even happening in other provinces, the same kind of thing. For example in Gauteng, with the ANC in power, they facing the same problem as in the Western Cape*” (E, Water for All)

10.2.2. Movement structure

A platform for engagement and collective mobilization

Within the Umbane campaign, the coordinating committee is the main organizational structure. As already discussed, changes in the organizational representation within the committee has paralleled the presence of political paradox⁷, and shifts in campaign issues of resistance. Representatives from SAMWU and Ilrig have remained within the committee since its inception, with Earthlife Africa also represented. However if constituted largely of a core group of labour union and NGO representatives, the campaign committee is limited in its capacity to reflect grassroots struggles.

In acknowledgement of this potential limitation the Umbane campaign advocates a more representative model. Through this model, three levels function within the campaign, namely labour unions and NGOs/ research organisations such as SAMWU and Ilrig, community groups such as Bonteheuwel Civic and the Water for All campaign, and individual community members (operating independently or drawn from community organizations). Representatives from each level can serve on the campaign committee. The campaign emphasis is on strengthening grassroots involvement and individual voices.

Umbane is conceived of as a Platform for community movements and activists. Thus Umbane would provide information, provide resources, facilitate movement connections, and provide a platform for engagement and collective mobilization.

Representation from the ground up

Some reflections on the characteristics of the community structures and the union and NGO representative core functioning within the Umbane committee, are relevant. Firstly the community organizations are drawn from black and coloured townships within the city. Secondly, these targeted communities are generally marginalized poverty stricken pockets of the city. They are experiencing high levels of unemployment or precarious employment, with household reliance on state grants to supplement income. Thirdly a large percentage of the community members present at the public meeting and march organized in Tafelsig were women, with women as the overwhelming majority of those attending the march⁴⁸.

Importantly, the involvement of community organizations, has not necessarily translated into the involvement of individual community members within the campaign structures. This disjuncture between the Umbane campaign vision and grounded experience is explained by a committee member as follows:

“My concern is that we assume that those people know how to take on a campaign and a lot of the time these were ordinary people in the community and not necessarily people from organisations that, you know, that would come forward ... and sometimes things didn't happen the way we thought it would happen” (J, Umbane).

Positioning in relation to power

A final point relates to the committee actors representing the groups SAMWU and Ilrig. They each rose through the ranks of community and/or labour structures. However their organizational roles have provided them with access to a wide range of information, as well as opportunities to participate in spaces of influence. The SAMWU campaign representative, Lance, has been a central figure in SAMWU's advocacy around water

⁴⁸ Cost reflective policies have been shown to have a gendered effect, with women having to carry the burden of responsibility.

issues and has been active within National Water Fora, Nedlac negotiations on water policy, and championing union alternatives to Privatisation.

"I'm a shop steward within SAMWU. I joined SAMWU in 1986, in 1977 with the Cape Town Municipal Workers Association, and then was part of the formation of SAMWU in '87, '89 ... I was also identified as the National Water Co-coordinator for SAMWU Nationally and for Cosatu. I was part of the negotiations in Nedlac for the Water Legislation, the National Water Act, and the Water Services Act" (L, Umbane).

Furthermore, Lance has also been instrumental in adding to the voice of the global anti-privatisation movement through his role as a representative on Public Services International (PSI).

"One of them (roles) is also as a representative on the Public Services International, I addressed the World Water Forum in the Hague on behalf of PSI, I represented PSI in Ghana, Bonn Germany, Japan Kyoto, other countries too. There's eight of us that represent them on water. There's a comrade from the Phillipines, from Brazil, there's two from the UK, Dave Hall, David Boyes who coordinates, we go from country to country and to the World Water Forum and lobby against Privatisation and the private sectors involvement in water" (L, Umbane).

This locates him as an 'expert' within the water debates taking place nationally and internationally, and creates space for him to participate within the formalized structures of the higher echelons of power. This position influences the discourse employed within the Umbane campaign in positioning the localized struggles within a larger geographic and ideological frame. This is distinct from community members experiencing the impact of structural forces, without necessarily constructing the linkages between policy and their lived experience. Hence it emerges that there is a divergence in member positioning in relation to power.

10.3. Issues and scales of resistance

We will now proceed to consider how the issues of resistance, with Tafelsig as the site of contestation, were understood by actors within these two campaigns. This examination

will consider the immediate issues and connections made practically and discursively to wider issues as the impetus for resistance.

Localized resistance

With respect to the 'Water for All' campaign, the two founding members are directly connected to the community struggles. As a community development worker⁴⁹ (CDW), Nadiema has been approached by residents experiencing service delivery struggles. They seek assistance with restriction, arrangements, and unaffordable fees. Similarly, Elfrieda as founder of the Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA), engages with many debt ridden residents undergoing aggressive 'cost-recovery'. This connection informed the issues and scale of contestation of the campaign expressed as direct resistance to household struggles.

A serious concern was the impact of arrangements⁵⁰ functioning as a mechanism deepening the burden of debt of struggling households.

"You see I would not recommend people to make arrangements if they know that they are unemployed and there is no proper income because you setting a trap up for that person ... because you are bound to pay once you enter into arrangements. And therefore it was important to inform the community, if you cannot afford to pay, don't make arrangements" (E, Water for All).

A related issue is the permanency of restriction of those unable to afford to enter into any initial arrangements. Hence arrangements are viewed as a double edged sword with this position substantiated by the cases of community members experiencing the burden of arrangements and restriction:

*"But if people go to a municipal office and they go to **make an arrangement**, which is an attempt to make an effort to pay, but if you don't have the specific amount that the city wants from you then you cannot even*

⁴⁹ The difficulty and uncertainty surrounding her role as CDW within the ANC and the linked questions of the reasons for her involvement in the 'water for all' campaign, emerging at a time with DA presiding over the City Council, have already been considered and will not be considered here.

⁵⁰ Presented by the city as the solution to the woes of debt ridden residents

make an arrangement. So you can go with a hundred rand but if they say 500 then you will have to pay them or you cannot make arrangements” (E, Water for All).

Finally the issue of arrears and apparently indiscriminate restriction also shaped the campaign resistance.

*“The other thing with this water connection is that we found that people were in **arrears** with something like less than a hundred rand and their water gets disconnected” (E, Water for All).*

Framing the struggle within a wider context

As the linked and supporting campaign, the Umbane campaign mirrored this view of bringing the private household struggle into the public domain as a means to make the struggle visible, create unity, and build collective community resistance against a shared experience. This position is reflected in statements made during a community meeting held on 27th February 2007 by an Umbane campaign representative. *“We are meeting today because of the issuing of pink slips, the growing number of cut-offs and the use of water restrictors. Electricity and water are basic needs for the people. In responding to cut-offs and the use of water restrictors, we can either roll over, OR WE CAN HAVE OUR VOICES HEARD For what we know we deserve” (R, Umbane).*

Furthermore, the perspective on the central issues related to household struggles are shared by the Umbane campaign, as *“the prepaid water meters, the prepaid electricity meters, the trickle system of water for the communities, as all it really does is deepens poverty and leaves the poor in absolute misery” (L, Umbane).*

While responding to grounded struggles, Umbane actors frame the resistance within a wider geographic and ideological struggle. Hence the issues within Tafelsig are situated within a wider terrain of struggle, connecting local to global.

“Having participated in the PSI activities 1.2 BILLION PEOPLE in the WORLD don't have access to water. So the struggle is not only that of the people's of Tafelsig, but is of the people's of the world, especially in developing countries. So what I realised is that even although our struggle is one of a very local one it is an international struggle to access to water” (L, Umbane).

Global neo-liberalism and Privatisation⁵¹ are cast as the central foe, and the national economic policy of GEAR understood to be a mirror of global economic principles.

Significantly the roles held by Umbane actors within union, NGO and research organizations provides them with access to information and expert discourses - which they simultaneously draw from and contribute to – thus positioning them to conceive of the connections between local and global struggles.

10.4. Tactics and strategy of resistance

The first community meeting⁵² organized by the ‘Water for All’ campaign - with support from Ronald and Shireen - took place in Eastridge Mitchell’s Plain⁵³ (Minutes of Umbane Planning Committee meeting, 8 February 2007). A decision was then taken by those present to request that the City redraws all ‘pink slips’. The result of this decision was a meeting requested with the Mayor and ultimately held with representatives from within the City Council. This meeting took place in early February 2007⁵⁴.

Engaging the Council

Four representatives were present at the council meeting, with the following demands presented to the City: Scrap Arrears, Withdraw Pink slips, Ban Restrictors, offer Free Water to people earning less than R5000 per month (Umbane Campaign Planning Committee Meeting, 8 February 2007)⁵⁵.

⁵¹ The following definition of privatisation was provided: “ *We view outsourcing as privatisation, as soon as you start running it on business principals we believe that is privatisation of water. Because it is looking at cost recovery before looking at needs. And it is looking at profit out of a basic service like water, before needs, of people’s needs which is like health and hygiene and you know basic life that water is required for*” (L, Umbane).

⁵² This research began in February 2007, with the meeting having taken place somewhere between December 2006 and January 2007. The exact date was difficult to establish.

⁵³ The meeting was in direct response to the rising numbers of ‘pink slips’ being issued by the city to members of the Mitchell’s Plain community (Minutes of Umbane Planning Committee meeting, 8 February 2007).

⁵⁴ This research began in February 2007, with the meeting having taken place either in January or before 6 February 2007. The exact date was difficult to establish.

⁵⁵ I have not viewed the list of demands and am only able to extract these from the following campaign meeting and information provided through interviews with the actors

The city officials acknowledged flaws within the water delivery system, encouraging campaign representatives to make contact in addressing specific cases. However subsequent efforts to contact with the City on specific cases of complete disconnection received the established response that payment was required for reconnection (E, *Water for All*).

The City's response was viewed by Elfrieda to be one of complete denial. While there was a general sense of promises betrayed, for Shireen the admission of problems within the cost-recovery initiative also represented an opportunity for strategic rupturing of the larger logic. As these admissions revealed inconsistencies, and a lack of a coherent and systematic approach on the part of city officials, they should be exploited. "*The 'Water for All' campaign met with city officials. At this meeting something became very clear. They actually admitted problems with policies, yet they go ahead. They admitted that the database is problematic. They admitted that the indigent policy is an issue. In terms of strategy it's important to widen the loopholes to explode it. As it appears to be a unified front but the officials are very unclear. In terms of strategy, we need to consider how do you think in a rigorous way?*" (E, Water for All).

Mobilising the community

Following the meeting with the City Ronald attended a Water Caucus meeting on 6 February 2007 to share information on the 'Water for All' campaign and build connections. Two representatives from a Khayelitsha based organisation expressed interest in the activities of the campaign and attended a 'Water for All' campaign follow-up meeting held in Mitchell's Plain in the evening (Umbane Planning Committee Meeting, 8 February 2007). Furthermore representatives of the Anti Eviction Campaign were invited to the meeting, with movement tensions reportedly surfacing during this meeting, with a sentiment of 'us' versus 'them'.

These movement tensions surfaced again during the community meeting held in Olifantshoek Community centre on 27 February 2007.

The Water for All campaign, alongside the Umbane campaign was instrumental in organising this community meeting. It was decided that pamphlets would be produced at the SAMWU offices. The pamphlet distribution took place within Old Tafelsig in the streets surrounding the Olifantshoek Community Centre on Saturday 24 February 2007. The meeting was extremely well attended with a hall larger than 200 square meters filled to capacity.

The meeting was introduced as a platform for developing collective action against water struggles, *"In responding to cut-offs and the use of water restrictors, we can either roll over, OR WE CAN HAVE OUR VOICES HEARD For what we know we deserve"* (R, Umbane). A call was made for people to stand together.

Once the floor was opened to the gathering of community members the anger about water restrictions was palpable. There was also a sense that those gathered at the meeting were seeking an immediate solution to their struggles. This sense of urgency created a space consequently occupied by two contrasting responses. Firstly the Umbane campaign utilized the opening to clarify their campaign mandate as supportive and not directive, creating platforms for the grounded emergence of a united community, explained as *"we didn't come here with a clear path plotted out. What we want is to see what's decided at the meeting"* (R, Umbane)

In contrast, a representative of the AEC, used the opportunity to promote the campaign and AEC strategy of performing 'illegal' reconnections. *"The cut-offs have been happening for two months. This is what is in the water pipes (shows discs), all that's needed is a spanner and you can put your water back on!! (Community Meeting)* This tactic suggests a territorial attitude being adopted by certain actors/individuals, and points to the room for movement politics and agendas to emerge and threaten collective community mobilization.

Based on the sense of urgency, palpable anger, high attendance and collective spirit expressed at the community meeting; a decision was taken by the newly constituted

'Water for All' campaign committee⁵⁶ to hold a community march. The date of the march was symbolically selected as Human Rights Day, 21 March 2007, as water was resoundingly recognized as "*a basic service, a RIGHT*" (SAMWU representative, Community Meeting, 27 February 2007).

The march was held under the banner of the 'Water for All' campaign with participation and support from the Umbane campaign. The march began at the Olifantshoek community centre, the site of community anger and urgency almost a month earlier. However the numbers at the march were far less than those at the meeting. A proposed explanation for this low turnout was the failure of the campaign to realize the significance of timing as a force for mobilization, "*I think it's so important, timing, you know, timing. It's becoming a mantra for me. Because there are certain things that are almost inherently and always a good idea but if your timing is not right...*" (R, Umbane).

Illegal reconnections

Alongside collective action in the form of a meeting and march, the campaign actors have directed people toward reconnectors. Furthermore, they have simultaneously attempted to utilize official channels for reconnection. However concerns exist with respect to both approaches. To take the latter first, in the case of the municipal avenue, reconnection requires entering into a payment arrangement before water can be reconnected. While the concern with the former is that it is seen as a short term/temporary solution, with the threat of criminalization.

Relations to the state

Actors within the Umbane campaign also recognized methods such as participation and making submissions to state institutions as legitimate elements of their strategy. With

⁵⁶ Composed of volunteer community representatives elected at the meeting

influence on legislation viewed as a means to achieve more sustainable as opposed to reactionary change.

This strategy could be reflective of a recognition by Umbane actors that the State could exist in many guises, with a neoliberal expression as one form. This is to say that the State can be simultaneously utilized and opposed with different state structures functioning autonomously.

Building a ‘movement of movements’ as a counter-force

This seems to correspond with an expressed idea that the strategic challenge for the campaigns and ‘movements of the people’ is to cast the struggle as one of unraveling concentrated power that operates to marginalize. This concentration of power could assume many forms including the state, ruling party, as well as policy and ideology driven by forces at various scales. The proposed vehicle through which to carry out this strategic shift is the building of a ‘movement of movements’ to serve as a counter power.

“I think the task is to build a movement of movements so that each kind of movement is also part of a larger movement that’s specific purpose is to get rid of the power over us, that’s causing these problems.” (R, Umbane).

The Umbane campaign is driven by this strategic objective, functioning as a forum or platform for community movements to engage and build collective action. However a number of mobilizing and demobilizing forces operate to either support or weaken the building of a ‘counter power’.

In the building of a movement of movements part of the challenge is in community recasting of the opponent. It is important to recognize that community movements often respond in a reactive manner to the immediate issues and struggles of the time. Furthermore for most community members the adversary is the city, with the policy framework and potential fiscal restraints, guiding city actions, unclear or excluded from the equation of contestation. This differs markedly from campaigns such as Umbane,

constituted of 'expert' activists engaging in advanced debates around the issues of the struggle. However, this dynamic is articulated as the motivator for the position assumed by the Umbane campaign focused on 'information sharing' and 'linking' of community struggles for the purposes of wider mobilization.

The potential reasons for the difficulties in sustaining the community collective resistance – in the face of the empirically clear continuation of household struggles –includes timing, community politics, and addressing power relations within movements. Hence, while building a united front is almost an inherently good idea (R, Umbane) this does not suggest it will certainly succeed.

However, what is significant is that while campaigns, movements and the strategic vision of building a 'movement of movements' appears to undergo a rhythm of struggle, with peaks and troughs, the grounded struggles continue. This suggests that there is always the presence of latent energy, or a spark that can be lit at any time. However at times, this igniting has taken the form of outrage and violence.

11. Conclusion

The research attempted to locate itself along the lines of tension governing water delivery, with a conceptual study, followed by a case study.

At the conceptual level The literature review has made evident the consequences of a particular definition of water on its delivery and access. The current dominant neo-liberal position defines water as a private good, pushing for its outright commodification, and linked commercialization and privatization. It emerges that in the South African context, commercialization has become the more dominant form of water commodification, translated into increased practices of cost recovery.

Furthermore, the literature review underlines that it is under the post apartheid ANC government that the push for cost recovery has been most strongly articulated, influenced by South Africa's economic insertion into the global political economy. This ideological shift has been captured within national and local policy and legislation, as well as the water policy documents, with influence from global governance institutions.

While cost recovery has emerged as a central tenet of South African water policy, a further rationale informing South African water delivery is a rights based approach, insisting on 'access to a basic' quantity of potable water. Attempts to reconcile these policy contradictions were reflected through the introduction of FBW announced in 2000.

This apparent policy transformation, through the introduction of FBW, located within the two rationales reflects lines of tension within the water delivery sector. The literature review shows the critique of cost recovery with progressive analysts viewing non-payment is a consequence of a fundamental problem of affordability; and the use of water restrictors is tantamount to disconnection, as FBW, offered through a restricted flow, does not reflect sufficient household access to water. Furthermore, the affordability of indigent policy and arrangements, for the poor, already dealing with volatile employment and income sources, is questioned.

A climate of growing marginalization of the poor and the inability (or unwillingness) of the state to provide adequate services, has resulted in the growth of contemporary social movements. The review reveals that these movements are emerging within a context of increased economic globalization with detrimental localized impacts. Within the South African context the emergence of many of these movements can be located chronologically. Appearing in the post apartheid period, contesting the neo-liberal state policies, advocated by the ANC led government. However a deeper reading of these movements shows points of continuity and discontinuity from the historical liberation movements.

The case study is concerned with investigating the actual experience and impact of cost recovery, including the impact of measures described as 'equity' measures. And a parallel level of examination focused on the resistance emerging in response to the lived expressions of cost recovery impacts.

The case study was concerned with the cost-recovery policies of the City of Cape Town, the reasons for household non-payment of municipal services within Tafelsig, the impact of cost-recovery mechanisms on interviewed households, and emergent community resistance mobilized against the lived impact of cost-recovery mechanisms.

The results prove that within the community of Tafelsig, non-payment is a consequence of a fundamental problem of affordability, and the use of water restrictors is tantamount to disconnection, as FBW, offered through a restricted flow, does not reflect sufficient household access to water. Furthermore, the offer of an indigent policy and arrangements, emerge as unaffordable alternatives for the poor, already contending with volatile employment and income sources. The main conclusions are discussed further below.

Culture of non payment or affordability

An examination of the households within the case study reveals a profile of large extended family structures, often female-headed, with high levels of unemployment or

precarious employment, and an overall reliance on either informal income generating activities and/or child and disability grants. Within this context, the multitude of household responsibilities are experienced as cumulative financial commitments (each assigned varying degrees of priority); with relational mounting debt in all instances.

Within this context of volatile employment and income sources, competing household priorities and a number of dependents, the researched households all experienced a fundamental problem of affordability. This conclusion supports the existing findings within the literature demonstrating that low-income households simply cannot afford basic municipal services. And further contests the widely held government position that people are unwilling to pay, expressed as a 'culture of non payment'.

Reflecting on Equity measures

Significantly, equity measures were revealed to be limited in their conception and contradictory in their experience. While South Africa is unique in the universal offer of FBW, this measure emerges to have a minimal ameliorating effect when operating within the larger logic of cost-recovery. FBW was found wanting in that it does not account for household size, and has emerged as insufficient to meet the water needs of low income households, with an average of 8 members.

Furthermore, offered through a restrictor, all the interviewed households experienced it as insufficient. Leading to a reliance on the support of neighbours with the dual effect of increasing household shame, and increasing the burden of debt of both households involved in the 'transaction'. These results support the findings of related studies - carried out on a national scale (Peters, 2005; Loftus, 2005) – and undermine the existing paradigm which embraces the primacy of the market at the expense of the people.

Furthermore it emerges that the offer of arrangements and the indigent policy can serve to deepen the burden of debt and struggle of households already trapped within existing

debt cycles. As arrangements are binding agreements, with threats of sanctions if this commitment is not kept.

Furthermore an analysis of the impacts of the restrictor, show it to be an indirect disconnecter, with impacts on household health and well-being and has been shown to lead households to engage in illegal reconnections, becoming 'criminalised' to gain access to water no placed a restricted and controlled flow meter.

Resistance to cost-recovery measures

In reflecting on movement member composition it surfaces that the internal politics as well as the contradictory political roles and allegiances of organizational constituents can serve to mute resistance, and act as a demobilizing force in the emergence of a collective voice against the interests of the powerful. A second significant point is that resistance in post-apartheid South Africa is occurring along blurred lines with political opponents and alliances not entirely distinct, with continuity and discontinuity operating simultaneously between contemporary and historical liberation movements.

In the case of Tafelsig, three levels of membership were evident within the movement as follows. The Umbane campaign, Water for All campaign and community members. Significantly, committee actors representing the groups SAMWU and Ilrig had wider access to information, human and technical resources as well as opportunities to participate within spaces of influence and contestation. This distinguishes them from the rank and file community members, who were engaged in more immediate defensive acts of resistance.

This position also influences the way in which movement members frame the resistance, with 'Water for All' actors responding to immediate issues, while Umbane actors situating the local resistance within a global context both geographically and ideologically, framing the struggle within the anti-globalisation movement.

The way in which the struggle was framed with respect to issues and scale of resistance also informed the acts of resistance engaged in and proposed. Repertoires of resistance included a community meeting, a community march, engagement with city, the proposed advancement of a 'movement of movements' to serve as an effective counter to neo-liberal hegemony – with the Umbane platform meeting reflective at an attempted platform for movement engagement. Within this analysis, while the movement members reveal the capacity to transcend immediate defensive tactics, and participate in movement connections, a number of mobilizing and demobilizing forces operate to strengthen and/or inhibit this development. These forces include movement internal politics, territorialism amongst movements, skewed access to resources and information between and within movements, and the linked potential for the internal organizational structure to reflect similar power relations to the ones movements have emerged to contest.

University of Cape Town

12. Appendices

12.1. Household Interview Schedule

EXAMINING WATER STRUGGLES WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLDS

1. INTRODUCE THE RESEARCH

I am a student at UCT interested in examining the struggle taking place within Tafelsig in response to water disconnections/restrictions. Having attended the community meeting and community march I am interested in knowing more about the impacts of the water cut-offs on the households of Tafelsig.

I would like to speak to the people in their homes to understand what people are experiencing and feeling with no water or restricted water. I am also interested in understanding individual involvement within the community's resistance to water cut-offs.

2. INTRODUCE ASPECTS OF THE INTERVIEW

During the interview, I will be asking certain questions about the household that may be personal/sensitive information. The questions are asked to understand what has lead to your water being cut-off, and the experience of living with restricted water.

Understanding what has lead to your water being cut-off/restricted is important because some government officials believe that people can afford to, but are refusing to pay their bills. I would like to hear your thoughts on this.

Your names will not be used in the paper if you do not wish to be named

Thank you for agreeing to talk to me, I will try to capture what you share to tell your story, and the stories of other people in Tafelsig.

3. HOUSEHOLD PROFILE

1. What is the size of the household?
2. Who are the members of the household?
3. How long have you been staying in this house?
4. Who is the major breadwinner within the household?
5. Who else in the household is employed?
6. What is the nature of employment? i.e. permanent, contract based
7. Are there any other sources of income within the household, for e.g. a Child Support Grant?
8. How many dependents are there within the household?
9. Could you give an idea of the average Household income per month, or the amount available to each household member?

4. THE IMPACT OF WATER RESTRICTIONS ON HOUSEHOLDS

10. Have you had your water cut-off?
11. How often has this happened?
12. Is your water cut-off/restricted currently?
13. When was the household water supply first restricted/cut off
14. How long has/was your water (been) cut-off for?
15. How did you find yourself in a position where your water was disconnected?
- 16. Can you describe a day in the life of your family in dealing with the water cut-offs**

Cover the following:

How does your family cope/ not cope with the water cut-offs/restrictions?

What has been the impact on your family relationships?

How does not having water make members of the household feel?

How do the daily activities take place with respect to water consumption and restrictions

What are the restraints on water usage that have been placed within the family

5. HOUSEHOLD REASONS FOR NON-PAYMENT

17. How did the households find themselves in a position where the water was cut-off
18. What is the **average income** within the household (link to questions on h/hold profile)
19. What is the situation with respect to **employment** within the household
20. How many **dependents** are there in the household
21. What are the **major monthly payments** within the household
22. Are there **certain payments** that are seen as more important than others? according to urgency and ability to enter into credit
23. How frequently are/have water payments (been) made
24. What is the arrears situation within the household
25. Does the household retain municipal accounts or are these discarded
26. What are/have the reasons been for non payment of municipal accounts
27. **Government has said that people are not paying their bills because they are refusing to, not because they can't afford to, what is your response to this?**

6. HOUSEHOLD STRATEGIES FOR ACCESSING BASIC NEEDS

28. Do you and your neighbours support/assist each other in making monthly payments for household debts?
29. If so, whose role is it to obtain neighbourly assistance ?
30. What are the forms of assistance that neighbours offer each other?
31. How do you feel about getting help from neighbours
32. If you did/do not have enough water where did/do you get the water from?
33. Has this placed strain on family/community relationships? (do you have to pay for the water received, how does this make you feel

7. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN WATER RESTRICTIONS AND HOUSEHOLD HEALTH

34. Has water restrictions impacted on the health of any members of the household
35. Has water restrictions had a negative effect on the management of an existing illness
36. Has water restrictions introduced stress and/or conflict within the household
37. Has restrictions introduced strain in community household relations
38. How does water restrictions make the household members feel

8. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN GENDER AND WATER

39. Who in the household is responsible for managing the household income?
40. Within the household whose role is it to make a plan to have water for the daily household needs?

9. QUESTIONING THE ADEQUACY OF 6 KL OF FBW

41. Have households received the 6kl of water (FBW) per month
42. Approximately how much water is 6kl in terms of daily water usage patterns
43. Does the household feel that 6 kl is enough for the household
44. If the 6 kl is insufficient how does the family cope
45. Does the family get water from other sources, e.g. neighbour

10. EVALUATE LEVELS OF HOUSEHOLD ENGAGEMENT WITH THE MUNICIPALITY

46. Do you receive a monthly account for your municipal payments from the municipality?
47. What information do these municipal accounts show?
48. Were you warned about disconnection/restrictions
49. Do you know who was responsible for the water cut-offs/ installation of the water restrictor in your pipes?
50. Have you been provided with any information on FBW
51. Have you been provided with any information on the indigent policy
52. Do you know who to talk to within the municipality about your arrears payments?

- 53. Have you been to the municipality to make arrangements for payment
- 54. If so what has been the outcome of this communication
- 55. How does the household feel about the communication with the Municipality in addressing your issues?

11. TO EXPLORE HOUSEHOLD PERCEPTIONS OF THE MUNICIPALITY -

Do you feel that the Municipality is acting in the interests of the people?

- 56. How do you feel about the councils installation of restrictors/water cut-offs

12. TO DETERMINE IF ANY LINK EXISTS BETWEEN THE HOUSEHOLD AND THE COMMUNITY, AND COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS

- 57. Has the household been involved in any community activity/support?
- 58. Has the household been involved in community struggles/resistance against the water cut-offs and/or other service delivery struggles?
- 59. If so, what has driven you to this form of action?
- 60. What forms of community resistance/ acts of community solidarity have you been involved in?
- 61. What are the issues that have been raised? the demands to the council?
- 62. Are there people in the 'water for all' campaign that you have been engaging with?
- 63. Are there people in other campaigns that they are engaging with?
- 64. Do you feel the community struggles are important in challenging water disconnections?
- 65. What has come of the community resistance thus far? E.g. Involvement in street committees, solidarity, meeting with council?

12.2. Umbane Campaign Interview Schedule

EXAMINING PUBLIC RESISTANCE - INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR 'UMBANE' CAMPAIGN MEMBERS

1. INTRODUCE THE RESEARCH

As you are aware, I am a student at UCT interested in service delivery, and in particular water delivery issues in Tafelsig.

The research aims to examine the struggle taking place within Tafelsig in response to water disconnections/restrictions. It will examine both public resistance and private struggles taking place in households, to completely capture the community's service delivery challenges.

In examining public resistance I am concerned with the activities of the 'water for all' campaign, as well as the 'Umbane' campaign and other community activists.

2. INTRODUCE ASPECTS OF THE INTERVIEW

During the interview I will be asking certain questions about the campaign directed toward understanding the emergence of the campaign, the major focus areas, campaign actors and the activities of the campaign thus far.

3. CAMPAIGN EMERGENCE

1. **When** did the campaign first emerge?
2. What **factors** lead to the emergence of the campaign?
3. Was the campaign always called the 'Umbane' campaign?
4. What are the **issues/major focus** areas for the 'Umbane' campaign?
5. What are the (geographic) locations that the campaign has operated within?
6. Could you provide a summary of the campaign's history, since its emergence (chronology)?

7. What is the **relationship** between the 'water for all' campaign and the Umbane campaign
8. When and how did this relationship develop?

4. ACTORS INVOLVED IN PUBLIC RESISTANCE

9. Could you speak about yourself, where you come from, other positions/roles you occupy in other organisations (and explain how you came to be involved in the 'Umbane' campaign)
10. What has your **role** been in the emergence of the 'Umbane' campaign?
11. Who are the **other actors** that have also been central to the formation of the campaign?
12. Have you been involved in similar/related campaigns in the past?
13. In what capacity are you involved in the 'Umbane' campaign, i.e. as an individual or as a representative of an organisation?
14. Does the different roles you play introduce any difficulties or conflict to your objective(s) in the 'Umbane' campaign
15. Could you discuss the roles of each of the major actors within the campaign
16. Why did the campaign committee take a decision to become involved in the Tafelsig water struggle?
17. Will the campaign be extending to resist in other locations/ alongside other campaigns in the future?

5. ISSUES OF RESISTANCE

18. What are the major issues of resistance for the 'Umbane' campaign
19. What are the common issues that connect the activities of the campaign since its emergence
20. What is the campaign understanding of the reasons for non-payment for service delivery by community members?
21. What is your response to water cut-offs and the installation of water restrictors in the community of Tafelsig?

22. What are the demands of the campaign with respect to water and service delivery issues?
23. Are their connections being made between the immediate issues being addressed by the campaign and related issues and movements (nationally and internationally)
24. How do you understand the position of the campaign in relation to these other movements? (make connection to the platform meeting held on April 14th 2007)

6. CAMPAIGN CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS

25. Could you explain further the connection between the 'water for all' campaign and the 'Umbane' campaign (when and how was it established)
26. The Anti Eviction Campaign has been active (inactive?) within Tafelsig since 2001, what is your position on working with the AEC
27. What is the role of the 'Umbane' campaign in Tafelsig as you understand it?

7. TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

28. Could you discuss the tactics and strategies that have been employed by the campaign thus far, since its emergence and in relation to particular struggles in challenging disconnections (chronology)
29. Could you discuss the tactics and strategies that have been employed by the campaign thus far, in challenging water disconnections (chronology)
30. Have these been initiated by the 'Umbane' campaign, or did you act in support of the 'Water for All' campaign
31. From your understanding what were the objectives of the meeting held on the 14th of April with organizations throughout Cape Town?
32. Do you believe these tactics have been effective/successful (in challenging disconnections)?
33. Do you believe these tactics have been effective in challenging city policy against disconnections? (question of reclaiming power)

34. Following the community meeting, march, and the meeting held at the Samwu offices, are there other activities of resistance that the campaign (actors) has since been involved in/ or plans to be involved in?
35. Are any of the campaign tactics seen as criminal by the municipality
36. What is your position on the criminalization of certain tactics to reconnect water supply

8. CAMPAIGN AND MUNICIPALITY CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS

37. Do you have any information on the amount of pink slips distributed in Tafelsig?
38. A meeting was held between the ‘water for all’ campaign and the municipality, were Umbane members present at this meeting?

IF yes,

- 38.1. When did this communication take place?
- 38.2. Who was present from the campaign and the municipality?

How was this communication/meeting set up?

What were the focus areas/issues of this communication?

What agreements were reached at the end of the meeting?

39. Do you know what the outcomes of this meeting were?
40. What is the relationship between actions of the city council with respect to water, and the emergence and actions of the ‘water for all’ and ‘Umbane’ campaigns (correlation between community action and municipal action)

9. CAMPAIGN, COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS

41. From your knowledge, what are the past and current challenges around municipal services in the community of Tafelsig and other low income communities in the City of Cape Town?
42. What have community responses been to cut-offs and water restrictors?

43. Do you interact with members of the community that have been involved in the public resistance?

10. WIDER CONNECTIONS

44. To what extent do you see a connection between struggles in Tafelsig, and other service delivery struggles elsewhere

45. To what extent do you see a connection between struggles in Tafelsig and economic policies (promoting cost recovery)

University of Cape Town

12.3. Water for All Campaign Interview Schedule

EXAMINING PUBLIC RESISTANCE - INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR 'WATER FOR ALL' CAMPAIGN MEMBERS

1. INTRODUCE THE RESEARCH

As you are aware, I am a student at UCT interested in service delivery, and in particular water delivery issues in low income communities.

The research aims to examine the struggle taking place within Tafelsig in response to water disconnections/restrictions. It will examine both public resistance and private struggles taking place in households, to completely capture the community's service delivery challenges.

In examining public resistance I am concerned with the activities of the 'water for all' campaign, as well as the 'Umbane' campaign and other community activists.

2. INTRODUCE ASPECTS OF THE INTERVIEW

During the interview I will be asking certain questions about the campaign directed toward understanding the emergence of the campaign, the major focus areas, campaign actors and the activities of the campaign thus far. Some of these questions may have been asked during the first interview, but I will be asking them for clarification.

3. CAMPAIGN EMERGENCE

46. **When** did the 'water for all' campaign emerge?
47. What **factors** lead to the emergence of the campaign?
48. What is the **relationship** between the 'water for all' campaign and the Umbane campaign (when and how did it develop)
49. What are the **issues/major focus** areas for the 'water for all' campaign?
50. What have each of your **roles** been in the emergence of the 'water for all' campaign?
51. Are there **other actors** that have also been central to the formation of the campaign?

4. ACTORS INVOLVED IN PUBLIC RESISTANCE

52. Could each of you speak about yourselves, where you come from, other positions/roles you occupy in other organisations (and explain how you came to be involved in the 'water for all' campaign)
53. Have either of you been involved in similar/related campaigns in the past?
54. Does the different roles you play introduce any difficulties or conflict to your objective(s) in the 'water for all' campaign
55. Could you discuss the roles of each of the major actors within the campaign
56. What are the (geographic) locations that the campaign has operated within
57. Why did the campaign begin its public campaign in Tafelsig?
58. Will the campaign be extending to resist in other locations/ alongside other campaigns?

5. ISSUES OF RESISTANCE

59. What are the major issues of resistance for the 'water for all' campaign
60. What is the campaign understanding of non-payment for service delivery by community members?
61. What is your response to water cut-offs and the installation of water restrictors in the community

62. What are the demands of the campaign
63. Are their connections being made between the immediate issues being addressed by the campaign and related issues and movements (nationally and internationally)

6. CAMPAIGN CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS

64. Could you explain further the connection between the 'water for all' campaign and the 'Umbane' campaign (when and how was it established)
65. The Anti Eviction Campaign has been active (inactive?) within Tafelsig since 2001, what is the connection between the 'Water for all' campaign and the AEC

7. TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

66. Could you discuss the tactics and strategies that have been employed by the campaign thus far in challenging disconnections (chronology)
67. Do you believe these tactics have been effective/successful (in challenging disconnections)?
68. Do you believe these tactics have been effective in challenging city policy against disconnections? (question of reclaiming power)
69. Following the community march, are there other activities of resistance that the campaign (actors) has since been involved in/ or plans to be involved in?
70. Are any of the campaign tactics seen as criminal by the municipality
71. What is your position on the criminalization of certain tactics to reconnect water supply

8. CAMPAIGN AND MUNICIPALITY CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS

72. How has the municipality responded to community non-payment for services?
73. How has the municipality since responded to community challenges/struggles with respect to water?

74. Could you provide more detail on how does the council communicates with the community over municipal services? In the previous interview mention was made of the sector crime forum, and a meeting where the mayor was present, as well as Campaigning during the Municipal By-elections
75. Do you have any information on the amount of pink slips distributed in Tafelsig?
76. You mentioned that a meeting was held between the 'water for all' campaign and the municipality, could you discuss this further?
77. When did this communication take place?
78. Who was present from the campaign and the municipality?
79. How was this communication/meeting set up?
80. What were the focus areas/issues of this communication?
81. What agreements were reached at the end of the meeting?
82. In the previous interview you stated that the only outcome has been further disconnections, is this still the case?
83. What is the relationship between actions of the city council with respect to water, and the emergence and actions of the 'water for all' campaign (correlation between community action and municipal action)
84. From your knowledge what has (and hasn't) the municipality done to deal with challenges within the community? Have the awareness campaigns been taking place?
85. From your understanding, how have council understood non-payment by community members for service delivery?
86. How has council been responding to non-payment?

9. CAMPAIGN, COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS

87. From your experience, what are the past and current challenges around municipal services in the community?
88. What have community responses been to cut-offs and water restrictors

89. I have attended the community meeting held in February and the community march (held in March), what other forms of community activities/resistance has the campaign been involved in?
90. Do you interact with members of the community that have been involved in the public resistance?
91. What has been the involvement of community residents within the campaign, specifically those that were elected onto the campaign organising committee

10. WIDER CONNECTIONS

92. To what extent do you see a connection between struggles in Tafelsig, and other service delivery struggles elsewhere
93. To what extent do you see a connection between struggles in Tafelsig and economic policies (promoting cost recovery)

12.4. City of Cape Town Household water access

Table 1: City of Cape Town – characteristics of households access to water

| | Black African | % | Coloured | % | Indian | % | White | % | Total | % |
|---|----------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Piped water inside dwelling | 67795 | 28 | 260028 | 81.6 | 9149 | 92.2 | 189894 | 94.6 | 526866 | 69.3 |
| Piped water inside yard | 81472 | 33.7 | 28481 | 9.3 | 304 | 3.1 | 4295 | 2.1 | 114552 | 15.1 |
| Piped water on community stand: Distance < 200m from dwelling | 44058 | 18.2 | 5633 | 1.8 | 95 | 1 | 1619 | 0.8 | 51405 | 6.8 |
| Piped water on community stand: Distance > 200m from dwelling | 41572 | 17.2 | 10868 | 3.5 | 346 | 3.5 | 4529 | 2.3 | 57315 | 7.5 |
| Borehole | 89 | 0 | 270 | 0.1 | 0 | 0 | 104 | 0.1 | 463 | 0.1 |
| Spring | 29 | 0 | 37 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 79 | 0 |
| Rain-water tank | 211 | 0.1 | 54 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 284 | 0 |
| Dam/pool/stagnant water | 252 | 0.1 | 132 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 88 | 0 | 475 | 0.1 |
| River/stream | 49 | 0 | 52 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 110 | 0 |
| Water vendor | 125 | 0.1 | 106 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 27 | 0 | 261 | 0 |
| Other | 6138 | 2.5 | 1637 | 0.5 | 17 | 0.2 | 163 | 0.1 | 7955 | 1 |
| Total | 241790 | 100 | 307298 | 100 | 9921 | 100 | 200756 | 100 | 759765 | 100 |

(StatSA, 2003)

12.5. City of Cape Town Block Tariff

Table 2: Water block tariff

| SERVICES RENDERED | UNIT | REMARKS | 2006/07 | VAT | 2007/08 | EFFECTIVE DATE |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--|-----------|--------|-----------|----------------|
| | | | R | Yes/No | R | |
| | | | excl. VAT | | excl. VAT | |
| WATER CONSUMPTION : MEETERED | | | | | | |
| Domestic Full | | | | | | |
| Step 1 (0 - 6) | Per kl | Water which is used predominantly for domestic purposes and supplied to single residential properties. | 0.00 | y | 0.00 | 01-Jul-07 |
| Step 2 (+6-12) | Per kl | | 2.63 | y | 3.12 | 01-Jul-07 |
| Step 3 (12-20) | Per kl | | 6.98 | y | 8.27 | 01-Jul-07 |
| Step 4 (20-40) | Per kl | | 11.81 | y | 14.00 | 01-Jul-07 |
| Step 5 (40-50) | Per kl | | 26.75 | y | 31.70 | 01-Jul-07 |
| Step 6 (> 50) | Per kl | | 53.50 | y | 63.40 | 01-Jul-07 |
| | | | | | | |
| Commercial | Per kl | Water supplied to premises predominantly of commercial nature . | 7.48 | y | 8.86 | 01-Jul-07 |
| | | | | | | |
| Industrial | Per kl | Water which is used in manufacturing, generating electricity, land-based transport, construction or any related purpose. | 7.48 | y | 8.86 | 01-Jul-07 |

The block tariff increases by 165% from step 2 to step 3, and consequently been criticized for punishing indigent households, as the household size is not accounted for.

12.6. Household Profile

Table 3: Household Profile

| Household Profile | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Household head | Of the 10 households interviewed, 4 had a male and female household head present, 6 were female headed ⁵⁷ , and none of the households had a single male-head. |
| Adult Children | Of the 10 households 9 had adult (over 18) children living within the home. The maximum number of adult children was 7, and the minimum number of adult children was 1. The overall average of adult children was almost 3 per household. |
| School going children | Of the 10 households 4 had school going children under 18. |
| Extended Family | Of the 10 households, 6 were made up of three generations living within one household, demonstrating an extended family structure within the household. Of these households 3 included the male and female household heads, with the remaining 3 as female-headed households. |
| Grandchildren | Of the 6 extended family households, household 6 included the largest number of grandchildren, totaling 6 within a female-headed household of 11 members in total. Household 5 was the largest household with a total of 15 members, composed of a male and female head, 7 adult children, and 5 grandchildren. |

⁵⁷ Male partners either deceased or no longer apart of the household following a divorce/separation

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Tapes, transcriptions and notes of all interviews can be obtained by contacting the author at: elephanthours@gmail.com