

**THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF WOMEN LIVING IN
COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL UNITS: GLEBELANDS CRU CASE STUDY**

by

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DECLARATION

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The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community residential units: Glebelands CRU case study

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources I have quoted or used have been acknowledged by means of complete references.



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ABSTRACT

Background: Community residential units (CRUs) were introduced in 2006 in South Africa to increase women's access to adequate low-cost housing rentals. The aim of this investigation was to explore the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in Glebelands CRU, in Umlazi after their introduction.

Methods: This qualitative exploratory, descriptive, and contextual study integrated a phenomenological approach which was framed by bioecological systems and feminist perspectives. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a non-probability sample of ten female residents to gather the data. Colaizzi's seven steps were used to analyse the data. The concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability upheld the trustworthiness of the study, and the ethical principles of research were integrated throughout.

Results: The findings indicate that the converted CRUs have not been sensitive to women's housing needs and have failed to elevate their socio-economic status. Issues of overcrowding and lack of privacy; lack of security and management of ongoing violence; challenges of raising children in a male-dominant child unfriendly environment where violence is an ongoing problem; and the severe neglect of governance, maintenance and sanitation of the CRU undermined the wellbeing of the women living there. The benefits the participants identified about living in Glebelands CRU included: mothers and children could live together, the accommodation was affordable and offered residents free services, women had better access to resources, and supportive relationships within the CRU helped them to survive. The participants endorsed the designs of the CRU family units because they were conducive for family life. However, the old hostel blocks had not been converted into family units and the quality of life for single women who lived in those blocks remained poor.

The participants recommendations for improving the living conditions of women residents in Glebelands CRU include: family unit accommodation for women-headed households must be fast-tracked; the Glebelands governance issues require urgent attention; measures must be taken to quell the violence; interventions are needed to increase women residents' employability; and lastly, the representation of women in Glebelands CRU matters is essential.

KEY TERMS: Community Residential Units Programme, hostels, experiences, challenges, coping strategies, well-being, women, block chairmen/committee, violence, overcrowding.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the women of Glebelands CRU who shared their voices in the hope of being heard and contributing to a positive change in their lives. It is also dedicated to my late mom, Mercy “MaChampion” Mthembu, who passed on, on 21 May 2021 before the study could be completed. It was my wish to share my joy with her, but God had other plans for her. May she continue to rest in peace.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Chapter One offers a general overview of the research problem chosen for the study and outlines what the researcher intended to study, why the researcher wanted to study this research issue, what location she chose to conduct the study, and how she planned to conduct it. It is arranged in three parts. Part one, consists of three sections. Sections 1.1 offers an introduction to the research topic and its context. Section 1.2 addresses the research problem formulation and Section 1.3, the rationale of the study. Part two, consists of Section 1.4, the research question, its goal, and objectives. Part three, consists of Section 1.5 that outlines the research approach, and methodology; Section 1.6, research methods; Section 1.7, data collection methods and procedures; Section 1.8 data analysis, Section 1.9, data verification; Section 1.10, research ethics; Section 1.11, the key concepts pertinent for the study as was planned; and lastly, Section 1.12, the structure of the dissertation.

1.1 PROBLEM FORMULATION

Housing is one of the most basic human needs (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19). It is a fundamental human right because the well-being of people is undeniably affected by the quality of housing they occupy (Sobantu & Nel 2019:284). Housing is one of the largest investments governments make, and it rests on the notion that appropriate and affordable housing offers social benefits for both the occupants and broader society. Advantages of good housing include better health, reduction of behavioural problems, improved educational attainment and increased labour force participation (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19; M Newman 2008:295). Manomano and Tanga (2018:19) explain that the provision of housing is inherently a social service function that upholds the dignity and worth of people, as it is the barometer of the social well-being of people, specifically in urban areas (Hoek-Smit 2011:51).

As postulated by Sobantu, Zulu and Maphosa (2019:6), ordinary citizens, government officials and stakeholders who call for improved access to housing are driven to do so not by the idea of entitlement but rather by the need to uphold a constitutional right (the right to suitable housing stated in Chapter 2, section 26, of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996). For previously disadvantaged South African people, this right serves to avert socio-structural problems responsible for homelessness, poverty and unemployment, which cause psycho-emotional and physical pain suffered by the urban poor (Sobantu et al 2019:6).

Housing offers people more than a physical structure. As outlined by the World Bank (2013:6), housing is a significant indicator of social inclusion. Housing represents stability and security for individuals, families, and communities (Olufeni and Reeves in Sobantu et al 2019:5). When a disadvantaged person is allocated a dwelling, it should represent safety and security, protection from bad weather conditions, stability, self-worth, dignity, and a sense of pride (Olufeni & Reeves in Sobantu et al 2019:5). The provision of housing by governments therefore is a purposeful undertaking for uplifting and empowering vulnerable people. Government housing projects must be physically adequate and safe, mitigate overcrowding, be affordable, and create an avenue for low-income group beneficiaries to eventually be able to own their own homes (M Newman 2008:297). Housing must connect beneficiaries to services that enable them to lead peaceful, healthy, and comfortable lives, especially South African women, children and older persons who endure the scourges of abuse and violence (Woollet & Thomson in Sobantu et al 2019:6).

Being a member of the United Nations, the South African government has an obligation to ensure that the right of access to adequate housing of sufficient quality will be upheld and be made available for all citizens, because this is undeniably their legal and human right (OHCHR; SAHRC in Manomano 2018:3). Accordingly, one of the pressing goals expected of the first democratically elected South African government was to reform housing legislation and policies (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216; Ubisi 2013:29). The development of affordable housing for disadvantaged low-income earners, especially those who gravitated towards the cities, and continue to do, is a critical need (Ndinda 2001:62; Sobantu & Nel 2019:284). The White Paper on Housing (1994), the Constitution of South Africa (1996), the Housing Act 107 of 1997, the Rental Housing Act 50 of 1999, and the Social Housing Act 16 of 2008 are examples of legislation adopting an enabling approach that was ratified to promote the delivery of housing (Ndinda 2009:317).

The study focuses on one of the remnants of the apartheid era, hostel accommodation, paying special attention to how this form of housing has changed over the years to accommodate the housing needs of black low-income women, which according to Ubisi (2013:29) was one of the prioritised tasks of the first democratically elected government, the African National Congress, elected in 1994. A brief history is presented about how women gained access to hostel accommodation that was initially intended for black migrant workers, and how South Africa's housing policy, in particular the roll-out of the Policy Framework and Implementation Guidelines for the Community Residential Units Programme initiated in 2004 that has attempted to provide women and their children with living units that are suitable for family life.

1.1.1 Introduction of women to hostel accommodation

Hostels were established in response to the major mining and industrial booms in South Africa to ensure that strong, affordable black migrant labourers could be accommodated close to the areas that needed them (Pillay, Manjoo & Paulus 2002:7). With the introduction of apartheid, African male labourers could be accommodated only if they met the requirements of the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 (Fenyane 2016:84; Thurman 1997:45; Xulu 2014:141). They were housed in hostels built to accommodate large numbers of migrant workers. The men had to have work permits to qualify to live in the hostels, in accordance with the influx control regulations. The access that women had to housing in urban areas was disproportionately affected by legal and policy restrictions from the early 1930's until the abolishment apartheid (Ndinda 2001:62; Pillay et al 2002:7). Black women who had domestic work positions or offered other unskilled labour needed permits to stay in the urban areas. A requirement for a permit for women was that they had to have the consent of a male relative for them to live and work in the city. The authorities conducted regular raids to enforce this ruling, and women without permits were chased away, arrested, or transported back to the homelands (Thurman 1997:45). The situation worsened between 1967 and 1976, when the old South African government stopped building homes for Africans because they were meant to return to live in the homelands. Many women ignored this and joined their partners or male relatives in the hostels or found accommodation in informal settlements on the outskirts of the industrial areas (Thurman 1997:45).

When apartheid was abolished, hostels became overcrowded. People from the rural areas flocked to the cities to find better employment opportunities in the cities, and they needed affordable accommodation. This resulted in the establishment of hostels during the 1960s and 1970s, during what Thurman (1997:43) calls the "grand apartheid years". The hostels were unattractive and uncomfortable, built to house as many men as they could, and located on the margins of the cities, which alienated them from township residents (Thurman 1997:45; Xulu 2014:141).

One could find up to three families sharing a unit of 20 square metres, and 20 people sharing a communal sink, shower, and toilet (Thurman 1997:47). This led to the initiation of the National Hostel Re-Development Programme. The project involved the upgrading and conversion of existing units and the construction of new ones (Thurman 1997:48). From the early 1990's, the government embraced several measures (housing programmes) intended at rehabilitating hostels and converting them into family units (Fenyane 2016:3). The residents made known to government the importance to them of privacy, with private bathrooms and cooking facilities, and of decent finishes (Thurman 1997:50).

From the outset of the National Hostel Re-Development Programme, the entire hostel system provided fertile ground for individual and collective conflict, as well as ethno-political conflict (Zulu in McKinley 2020:39). People secured accommodation in the hostels through making use of personal contacts that led to the formation of homeboy cliques within the hostels. There were many women and their children from rural areas, who joined their partners or male relatives in the hostels, mostly illegally. The situation was somehow aggravated by their new demographic profile, as men-only hostels started accepting women and children after the abolishment of influx control in 1986 as indicated by Ramphele in Vosloo (2020:27), although Xulu (2014:151) avers that the presence of women and children made men feel they had lost their freedom, which is the reason they had chosen to live in a hostel in the first place. They felt they had been forced to forfeit their privacy (Xulu 2014:151).

In 2006, through the Policy Framework and Implementation Guidelines for the Community Residential Units Programme (Department of Human Settlements 2006), the hostels were converted into community residential units (Thani, Ubisi, Hanyane & Mampa 2018:670; Thurman 1997:46; Xulu 2012:8). The hostels were converted to include disadvantaged women and their children, allowing them the benefit of affordable subsidised rental housing (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:223; Xulu 2014:141). The CRU Programme aimed to address the demand for secure stable rental tenure for disadvantaged persons, particularly women who earned between R800 and R3 500 per month. The CRU Programme replaced the National Hostel Re-Development Programme involving a policy adopted in 1994 (Department of Human Settlements 2006). In brief, the objectives of the CRU Programme, according to Ubisi (2013:9), were to address the high incidence of migration into urban areas of rural people and those from neighbouring states, including women, so as to assist low income families to access affordable accommodation close to central business districts and/or industrial areas in cities and to provide them with municipal services, better employment opportunities, and support and care for those living with or affected by HIV and AIDS. The most significant motivation for the project was to provide existing hostel dwellers with an opportunity to enjoy a family life (Thani et al 2018:674).

The hostels at the time of the conversions were unattractive and uncomfortable, built to house as many men as they could, and the hostel residents were alienated from township residents (Xulu 2014:141). The CRU Programme remodelled the hostels from single rooms into flats, dormitories into self-contained units, single sex accommodation into multiple sex accommodation, and workers' compounds into family housing (Xulu 2014:143). Two thousand hostels were converted into 200 000 residential units, but before the renovations

were completed many of the family units were seized by single hostel dwellers (Thani et al 2018:674).

Inclusive consultation was meant to be applied during the planning and implementation of the CRU projects to ensure that the ideas and housing needs of beneficiaries would be taken into consideration and influence the programme development. This is important because participation and ownership are key processes for promoting the social inclusion of disadvantaged people (Madzivhandila & Asha 2012:370). Participation raises the voices of beneficiaries and advances individual and collective action (collaboration), which helps to establish and accomplish objectives that were mutually agreed upon (Todes, Sithole & Williamson 2010:72-75). Creating a space for beneficiaries to verbalise their fears helps authorities to deal with misconceptions and iron out problems, which enables the CRU Programme objectives to be achieved (Kabajuni in Ncube 2017:7). Engaging all stakeholders in a consultative and collaborative manner contributes positively to the promotion of unbiased service delivery within municipalities (Department of Public Service and Administration 1997). Beneficiaries of housing are the best informants of what their housing needs are (Ubisi 2013:61-62). Finally, the factor that motivated the researcher to undertake the study was that participation in the CRU Programme was intended to make the identified housing needs of women living there more explicit (Khumalo 2013:13-14). As presented by Khumalo (2013:13-14), creating a space for women to have their say about housing is an empowering factor that highlights the capabilities of women as valuable agents of change. The researcher wanted to establish if the participants in her study had been given such an opportunity.

The preliminary literature review and analysis of existing records revealed that although community participation is an important measure of democratisation, there was little evidence of that women had been consulted in the development and implementation of CRU Programme projects. There was also no evidence about whether the CRU Programme had successfully addressed the needs of poor black women or met the objective of enabling women to overcome the disabling factors that held them back from escaping the oppressive circumstances that compromised their well-being.

The researcher chose to focus on one specific CRU for the study, Glebelands, and will explain how it was established and what the current status quo is about its development, activities, who resides there and how it is structured.

1.1.2 The context of the study: Glebelands CRU

Glebelands was built as a single-sex hostel in the 1960s as part of the apartheid government's plan to fulfil the labour needs of eThekweni, which was and continues to be a fast-industrialising metropole (Silekwa 2019). Black migrant workers, many from the Eastern Cape, relocated to Glebelands to work in eThekweni's manufacturing and shipping industries. There was significant growth in the number of women who joined their husbands and fathers to live in the Glebelands hostels after 1994 (Silekwa 2019).

Figure 1.1: Map of Glebelands

(Naidoo 2017)

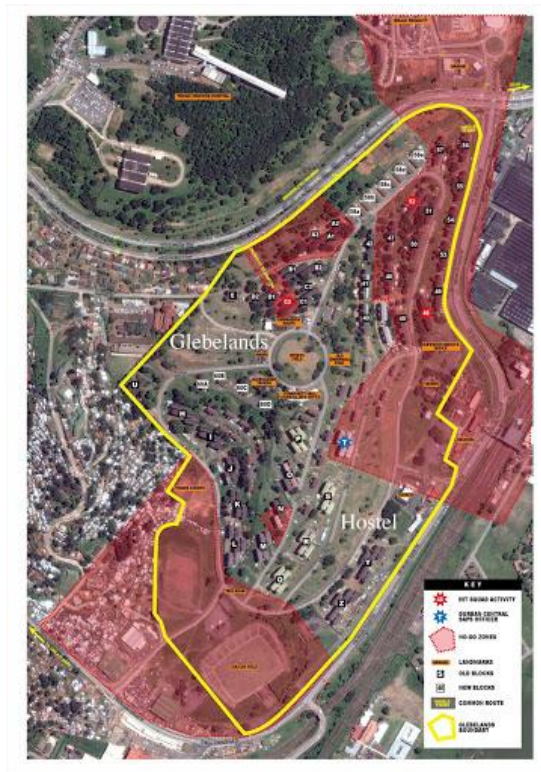


Figure 1.2: Photo of Glebelands blocks

(Asmal 2014)



The Glebelands CRU is one of ten hostels managed by the eThekweni Municipality. It consists of 72 blocks of double-, triple- and four-storeyed buildings that accommodate men, women, and children. The number of units in each block ranges from eight to 128. The blocks are arranged in thirteen rows, and each block is identified by an alphabet letter. There are between three and eight blocks in each row. The old blocks do not have rows; rows are available only in the flats/family units. The designs of the blocks vary: some are family units, while others are rooms. The family units have two, three or four bedrooms, a living area, a private kitchenette, and a bathroom. Most of the accommodation consists of rooms that contain between two and 12 bed spaces. In one-roomed accommodation residents are provided with a bed and a locker. There are communal ablutions and a kitchen on each floor for residents to share. Though washing lines are also communal, they are located at the base of each block. Parking space is on a first come first served basis. Out of the total of 72 blocks in the whole complex, 35 are old buildings (units with different rooms within them and others without) and 37 are new buildings. The old buildings comprise 1 856

units, and new buildings' total is 369, inclusive of family units. The total number of units is 2 225 and the total number of beds is 11 777 (Nyawose 2019).

The last survey conducted in Glebelands in 2016 revealed that there were 11 390 registered residents living there in contrast to the 11 000 the complex was designed to accommodate (Ndaliso 2016). The latest estimation is that more than 22 000 people of different ethnic groups – Zulus, Bhacas, Mpondos and Xhosas – are residents there. As explained by Mr Thabane Nyawose, Senior Manager of eThekweni Human Settlements, accurate statistics are not available because many residents are not legally registered to live there (Nyawose 2019). Despite the reported influx of women and children, Glebelands CRU remains a male-dominated community. It is estimated that approximately 5 000 to 6 000 of the 22 000 residents are female (Nyawose 2019). According to election results the residents of Glebelands are politically divided, and the ANC is the dominant political party (Independent Electoral Commission 2016, 2019a, 2019b).

A municipal supervisor (superintendent) is responsible for overseeing the 72 blocks. The ward councillor resides on the premises and has an office there and is in attendance from Mondays to Fridays.

Concerns are expressed about the lack of governance of Glebelands CRU. Concerns raised are the following: absence of individual metering of water and electricity for individual residents; no database of occupants; non-registration of residents, which is responsible for the high number of illegal occupants in Glebelands; failure to act on or report illegal activities that happen in Glebelands; and poor overseeing of health and safety issues (City assess living conditions at community residential units 2016). In 2017 the Glebelands case was brought before the Public Protector, whose findings revealed that eThekweni's management of the CRUs was inefficient (Oliphant & Naidoo 2017). The Public Protector was cited as saying the eThekweni Municipality had failed to provide non-toxic living conditions and a healthy environment for Glebelands residents and failed to deliver services to the Glebelands hostel community in a financially and environmentally maintainable manner as required by section 152(1)(b) of the Constitution and section 4(2)(d) of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. The Public Protector stated that the eThekweni Municipality was guilty of providing members of the local community with inequitable access to the municipal services to which they should have been entitled (Oliphant & Naidoo 2017).

Living conditions in the Glebelands hostels are described by Silekwa (2019) as including bare pipes sticking out of the walls, no privacy, toilets that are filthy and smelly, kitchen areas that have been turned into storage areas, and basins that are meant for handwashing

outside the toilets but are being used for cleaning dishes and preparing food. In addition, to access the toilets residents must pass by open showers. The unhealthy conditions are amplified by the intense smell of smoke, trash strewn around, and pollution in the air from the entrance gate to the hostel itself (Silekwa 2019).

Glebelands is infamous for the ongoing killings of hostel residents. Many of the killings are associated with political allegiances (Clark 2018; Cameron 2018). The ANC faction is alleged to support the ANC councillor. Mary de Haas, a human rights activist, and violence monitor, alleges that the police side with the ANC faction and support the councillor (Clark 2018; Cameron 2018). This view is supported by the independent activist, Vanessa Burger, who notes that many of those who were murdered in Glebelands had opposed the councillor, as they were ardent supporters of the South African Communist Party (Burger 2017c). Those who oppose the ward councillor accuse him of dividing the community and excluding his non-supporters from consultations regarding development opportunities in the Umlazi area.

The violence has been ongoing, as reported by Silekwa (2019). The Glebelands complex has become war zone linked to politically motivated killings and taxi conflicts (South African Police Service 2019). The South African Police Service listed 76 attempted murders and 68 murders between 2014 and 2019 (South African Police Service 2019). More recent statistics reflected a decline in attempted murders and in murders between 2018 and 2019 and a resurgence in them from the end of 2020 (South African Police Service 2021). An illustration of this escalation is detailed in Chapter Three.

Ndaliso (2016) states that many of the murdered residents were Xhosas from the Eastern Cape or the KwaZulu-Natal town of Harding, who had come to Durban to find employment to support their women, children, and elderly.

Many of the women and children living in Glebelands have lost their sole breadwinners because of the killings and must fend for themselves (Burger 2017b). Most of these women are unemployed (Clark 2018). Among those women who are reported to be working, most work as government volunteers and domestic workers in the surrounding areas or are employed as vendors (Khoza 2014:69). They earn a pittance, which they use to send their children to school. Some do not even receive social grants from the Department of Social Development (Khoza 2014:69). The Public Protector took the Department of Social Development to task for failing to fulfil its obligations to the victims of violence at Glebelands CRU and accused the department of inappropriate conduct (Cameron 2018).

The housing conditions in Glebelands fail to provide women and their children with physically adequate and safe housing that mitigates overcrowding and promotes their socio-

economic upliftment. The conditions mentioned are relevant to upholding human rights and human dignity as outlined by M Newman (2008:297). The researcher therefore contends that it is important to explore the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU from their own perspective, because it is a social work obligation to address systemic issues that keep women living under oppressive circumstances (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19).

People require more than bricks and mortar to survive and flourish (Cohen & Phillips 1997, 471). Place, geography, and living conditions intersect and geography, environmental conditions, built structures impact significantly on the lived experiences of communities. Preventing housing deterioration is a primary way to create healthy families and prevent substandard school performance, amongst other social ills (Cohen & Phillips 1997, 471). Social service providers are therefore obligated to ensure that housing projects are adequate and systemic forces that threaten people's human right to housing are addressed (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19). Yet, as stated by Hohmann (in Sobantu et al 2019:2), people's right to housing remains an "under-studied and ill defined" aspect of human rights discourse. Dominelli (in Manomano 2018:3) asserts that social work has a responsibility to address risk factors, mitigate potential disasters, and provide relief or long-term reconstruction when issues that cause harm to people are apparent.

This concludes the introduction, background, and context of the study. The statement of the research problem that was developed for the study is presented next.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Mathibela (2017:11) explains that the problem statement of a research proposal offers a clear indication of what kind of research action needs to be undertaken. A research problem statement, according to Mouton (2011:48), must be a clear and definite statement of what the object of the study is and indicate what research objectives the researcher plans to develop. In this study the problem statement identifies the gap in knowledge that the researcher has sought to fill; and in the context of this study that gap is the dearth of knowledge about the experiences of women who reside in the Glebelands CRU.

Three themes became obvious when the researcher combined the introduction and problem formulation for this study. Each of the three themes will be briefly highlighted to support the problem statement developed for this study.

Firstly, research and publications concerning CRUs remain limited, even though housing is a central determiner of human well-being. The studies located whilst compiling the research proposal concentrated on housing tenure (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216), the poor living conditions experienced by residents in the CRUs (Dlamini in Ubisi 2013; Mpehle in Ubisi

Commented [KP1]: Insert the new reference -Cohen, C.S., & Phillips, M.H. (1997). Building Community: Principles for Social Work Practice in Housing Settings. *Social Work*, 42, 471-481.

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2013; Thani et al 2018; Xulu 2012, 2014); the unsuitability of CRUs for family living (Ngcongo & Mtshali 2006; Thani et al 2018; Xulu 2014); the resistance from male residents when hostels were converted into CRUs (Xulu 2012, 2014); the poor management of CRUs (Mpehle 2012; Ngcongo & Mtshali 2006; Ubisi 2013; Xulu 2014); and safety and security within existing CRUs (Ngcongo & Mtshali 2006; Smit 2014; Ubisi 2013). There were no straight references to findings addressing the experiences of women residents in CRUs. The researcher contends that understanding of women's experiences is needed to contribute to the national call for strengthened efforts to redress the inequity and disadvantage experienced by marginalised South African women. A better understanding is required of how the living conditions experienced by women in CRUs impact on their perceptions of their role as women and the positions they occupy in the male-dominated environments where they live.

According to Nyawose (2019), the number of women who reside permanently in the Glebelands CRU has increased. This cannot be confirmed by the eThekweni Municipality who is the official landlord because they do not have an updated data base of female tenants (Nyawose 2019). One expects something to be documented about the experiences and needs of the women who reside in a CRU that is infamous for the inferior living conditions it offers residents and its long history of violent crime. The researcher was curious to discover what locally specific challenges the women encountered living there and what coping strategies they had developed to enable them to go about their daily routines. Without realistic evidence of the issues the women had to contend with, lobbying for interventions to change the status quo would be difficult. An exploratory, descriptive, and contextual study was therefore required to make recommendations for appropriate interventions.

Thirdly, whilst South African housing policies and guidelines promote women's participation in the development of housing, the researcher could not find any evidence that the women residents from Glebelands had given voice to their perspectives and concerns about living in converted hostels or whether the housing they had been granted had adequately contributed to their well-being. Failure to consider those perspectives would mean the inequity and disadvantage suffered by those marginalised women would not be properly corrected by making adequate housing available to them.

The researcher was concerned about the gaps in the literature and remained inquisitive.

The problem statement developed for this study is as follows:

Based on the dearth of available literature on the topic, there is a need to explore, describe and contextualise the challenges and coping strategies of women who live in Glebelands

CRU in order to learn more about their experiences, needs and coping strategies. This knowledge could contribute to the development of interventions for female residents living in Glebelands CRU and inform the policies and practices of the human settlements departments at local, provincial, and national levels to improve the living conditions for women who are accommodated in CRUs.

The background to the problem and the problem statement as formulated have now been highlighted. The rationale for undertaking such a study is therefore explained in the next section.

1.3 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The rationale for a study offers the reasons why the research should be undertaken (Holloway & Wheeler 2010:41). It is a researcher's expression of his or her motivation to conduct it (Bouma & Ling 2010). The researcher will share her personal and professional motivation for embarking on this research topic.

The researcher's curiosity in conducting the study originates from her professional experience of working for the provincial Department of Community Safety and Liaison. As part of her responsibilities as a district manager, she was tasked with working with Glebelands residents in 2014 to facilitate dialogues with them in the hope of establishing peace and stability in the CRU. This was a special intervention for the KwaZulu-Natal government under the Communities in Dialogue Programme. The Department of Community Safety and Liaison was mandated to lead the process for the KwaZulu-Natal government.

Most of the participants in the dialogues were men. The dialogues attracted substantial media attention. The media focused on men, alleged to be the ringleaders responsible for fuelling conflict among the residents. Little attention was given to the women and their experiences of living in the CRU. No one attempted to find out how the women had been affected by the conflict and the killings, even though it was obvious that many had witnessed such events whilst living there.

The researcher established that the dialogues failed to provide the women with a safe space to share their experiences of living there. It appears the women were afraid of the consequences of their participation in the discussions. An additional explanation for the limited participation of women is presented by Todes et al (2010:72-75), namely that it is culturally incorrect for black women in attendance at community meetings to affect decisions. This is confirmed by Khumalo (2013:3), who explains that the participation of women in open dialogues remains low, if it happens at all. The researcher therefore committed to create an opportunity for women living in CRUs (Glebelands in particular) to

share their experiences on a one-on-one basis in a safe context where their privacy would be protected. Collating the accounts of several women about their experiences would advance insight into their contextual realities.

After the dialogues, the researcher was approached by several female residents who needed counselling associated with their trauma, social grants applications or social relief (vouchers). The researcher referred some of the women to social welfare services as some had lost their spouses or fathers during the violent conflicts that occurred and were therefore homeless. The researcher's contacts with the women further confirmed that the living conditions of the CRU affect the general well-being of women and their families and therefore were worthy of a more structured investigation. A decision was taken at the outset of the study that any women living in Glebelands who was known to the researcher or who had received supportive services from the researcher prior to the commencement of the study would be excluded from participating in the study, as will become apparent in Chapter Four.

Legislation and policies related to low-cost housing will be detailed in Chapter Three under the literature review, but the researcher wishes to refer to South African legislation and policies that promote equitable housing for women. These documents support the researcher's motivation for conducting this study. They alert us to the reality that women have not been given adequate opportunities to share their concerns about the housing available to them and how their housing needs should be met.

1.3.1 Constitution (1996)

The Constitution (1996, section 26) preserves the right to suitable housing and promotes equality, non-racialism, and non-sexism as basic values. Therefore, provision of proper housing for all is important, and any discrimination in this regard should be avoided. The government, within the limits of its existing resources, must realise this right as stated in Chapter 2 (Constitution of South Africa, 1996). The stories gathered from the women residents at the Glebelands CRU imply that in many ways living in CRUs compromises their well-being. Whilst norms and standards for sub-economic housing have been outlined, the needs of black women who migrate to the peripheries of cities continue to be overlooked. It was important to advance knowledge in this regard to advocate a more justifiable allocation of housing for all South Africans.

1.3.2 National Development Plan and Commission on Gender Equality

Chapter 8 of the National Development Plan (National Planning Commission 2011) focuses on transforming human settlements and making sure that housing allocations and

opportunities are the same. It notes that there remains a lack of housing in urban areas, which impacts severely on women. The Commission on Gender Equality (Centre for Applied Legal Studies 1998) therefore calls for the dismantling of historically entrenched patriarchal values in human settlements as a means of increasing women's access to economic resources and markets. Accordingly, it was important to build a platform where women could share their perceptions and experiences related to low-cost housing and living in CRUs to reveal the progress being made in this regard.

1.3.3 White Paper on Families in South Africa (2013)

The White Paper on Families in South Africa (2013), developed by the Department of Social Development (DSD), strives to normalise the integration of family interests into government-wide, policy-making initiatives, to advocate progressive family welfare and to advance socio-economic development in the country. This policy outlines clear objectives that are essentially intertwined with housing:

- Improve the socialising, caring, fostering and backup capabilities of families to permit their members to add successfully to the growth of the country
- Enable families and their members by assisting them to identify, talk around, and maximise financial, labour market, and other prospects accessible in the country
- Expand the abilities of families and their members to create social relations which make a substantial input towards a sense of community, social unity, and national harmony.

The delivery of safe housing will contribute significantly to each of these objectives. To advance suitable human settlements that contribute to these objectives, it was essential to understand what recipients of housing need and what impedes their receiving of it.

1.3.4 Conversion of CRUs to accommodate women

The conversion of male hostels into CRUs is important in terms of influencing the status of women, but the CRUs are defined by Xulu (2012:7) as "full of chaos, tensions, unhappiness, incongruities, ambiguities and continuities, discontinuities, crime and unemployment", which suggests that these conversions are somehow failing women. It was a matter of urgency that an investigation be commenced to decide what would needed to be done to safeguard the interests of women living in CRUs and to become mindful of their special needs in the design of such accommodation. Yet women have clearly been side-lined in terms of their participation in the conversion process.

The researcher hoped that the study would inspire the expansion of interventions for the women living in CRUs that would lead to their empowerment, social inclusion and participation in economic markets. Engaging the women directly in the study has provided them with an opportunity to voice their concerns, without any negative consequences. The

researcher hoped that this would further lead to their receiving increased support and being empowered and less marginalised.

Hopefully the findings will support the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of CRUs to guarantee that they address the needs of women who depend on such forms of subsidised low-cost housing. Commensurate with this, the findings ought to inform human settlement policies by providing recommendations for guidelines on how CRUs should be designed to reflect the knowledge of women and their housing needs. The recommendations may also help to enlighten architectural designs and remodelling processes when hostels are converted into unisex accommodation.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION, PURPOSE, AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The research question, goal/purpose and objectives that were used to construct the process of the study are presented next.

1.4.1 Research question

The research question offers the basic outline of what the researcher intended to scrutinise within her chosen topic area (Holliday 2012:28; Gray 2009:132-136). Swaminathan and Mulvihill (2017:17) further specify that the research question serves to help a researcher decide if the research topic is important enough to study and whether the level of the topic is suitable. The research question is the starting point of any research; it strengthens the rationale for the study; it controls what academic literature needs to be consulted; it develops the emphasis of the study; it controls its design and methodology; and it affects each stage of the inquiry, analysis and reporting as all of these determine the research outcome (Creswell 2014:31; Daymon & Holloway 2011:100).

The research question that the researcher came up with for this study is:

What are the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi?

To find the answer to this research question, the researcher developed several sub-questions:

- What motivated women to live in Glebelands CRU?
- What were their experiences of living in Glebelands CRU?
- What were the challenges they faced living in Glebelands CRU?
- What coping strategies did they use to address their challenges in Glebelands CRU?
- How could the Glebelands CRU be improved to address the needs of the women?

1.4.2 Research goal

The definitive purpose of any research is to develop, refine and expand knowledge about a specific phenomenon in an empirically grounded fashion (Gray, Grove & Sutherland 2017:78; Polit & Beck 2010:4). Thomas and Hodges (2010:38) define the research goal as the research dream that the researcher wishes to realise. Basically, it provides an outline of what the researcher wishes to scrutinise and achieve in a study (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport 2011:94). The purpose must provide an accurate and clear indication of the intended general direction and motivation for the study (Creswell 2014:50). Hewertson (2014) claims that “purpose” is the superior word and is all about one’s mission, whereas a goal is something striven for that should be associated with the purpose. Reaching a goal helps to achieve a purpose (Hewertson 2014).

The definitive goal of this study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences and coping strategies of women living in Glebelands CRU. This was broken down into research objectives, which are outlined next.

1.4.3 Research objectives

A research objective refers to the steps that must be taken, one by one, to achieve a research goal (De Vos et al 2011:94). The purpose of research objectives is to provide focus and specificity for the researcher on what needs to be done in practical terms to achieve the research goal (Babbie 2009:114; Mathibela 2017:18). Ormston, Spencer, Barnard & Snape (2014:4) state that research objectives in qualitative research should be to regulate and make sense of the lived experiences of participants on the basis of situations they find themselves in, and to make that understanding clear.

The researcher explored the meanings that women living in the Glebelands CRU ascribed to their living circumstances and the coping strategies they depended on to survive within this specific CRU. To achieve such an objective, Creswell (2014:50) recommends that one should identify a culture-sharing group, study their experiences and coping strategies over a period of time, and identify shared patterns within the group with respect to their experiences and coping strategies. From this analysis, one can make recommendations regarding remedial and preventive actions that need to be instituted to improve the group’s situation, as is done in the present study.

The predominant objectives for the study were as follows:

- To acquire a sample of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi
- To explore the women’s experiences, challenges, and coping strategies of living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi

- To describe the findings regarding the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi
- To draw conclusions about the findings regarding the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi and make recommendations about how their living conditions could be enhanced.

This concludes the discussion of the statement of the research question, the purpose/goal of the research and its objectives in relation to the study. The outline of the research methodology follows.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology indicates how research is carried out using a precise set of principles, rules, and procedures well-matched for the study (Carey 2012:83; Daymon & Holloway 2011:100). Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest and Namey (2011:2) further state that the research methodology offers the researcher's motivation for following those precise steps. The research methodology includes the research method, research design, method of data collection and nature of data analysis applied by the researcher during the study (Khan 2014:300; Silverman 2011:109). The researcher explains in this section the research approach she followed throughout the study, her research design, methods of research and procedures.

1.5.1 Research approach

The research approach used in a study regulates how the researcher goes about ascertaining, developing, and confirming information (Saleem, Tabusum & Batcha 2014:1) and creates certain parameters in terms of the processes of enquiry for that study, such as research designs, methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell 2014:3). It is commonly concluded that there are three main research approaches: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout 2019:29; Creswell & Creswell 2018:17; Flick 2011:25-29). The researcher chose to use a qualitative approach because it was best suited to the nature and intended purpose of her research.

Yin (2011:8) and Hammarsberg, Kirkman and De Lacey (2016:498-501) explain that qualitative researchers study the lives of people, contextualise the settings in which they live, record their views and perspectives, contribute knowledge in the form of existing or developing concepts that help to clarify human social behaviour, by using multiple sources of information as proof. The researcher can describe the density of a social problem or issue (Bhattacharjee 2012:35; Kumar 2014:32) after engaging with and probing the findings

logically and thoroughly, so that inferences can be made, and conclusions can be generalised moderately (Kumar 2014:379). Qualitative research strategy focuses on the in-depth understanding of human experiences within certain situations (Maree 2020:66; du Plooy-Cilliers et al 2019:29).

Table 1.1 highlights the differences between quantitative and qualitative methods (adapted from Creswell & Creswell 2018:16).

Table 1.1: Comparison of quantitative and qualitative methods

Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods
The research process is predetermined.	The research process is emergent in response to research and contextual realities.
Instrument-based questions are pre-planned.	Open-ended questions are asked in a flexible manner.
Data collected is about performance, attitudes, observations, and census data.	Data is collected from interviews, observation, documents, and by using audio-visual means.
Analysis relies on statistical methods.	Analysis is reached by examining text and images.
Statistical means are used to reach the findings and expand understanding.	Themes and patterns are detected to advance understanding.

Several important characteristics of qualitative research are mentioned in the literature (Creswell 2014:243; Creswell & Poth 2018:43-44; Flick 2014:15-17). These characteristics are as follows:

- Qualitative research takes place in a natural location. In the case of this study, the researcher planned to conduct the interviews with women of the Glebelands CRU because that was their everyday context.
- The researcher is recognised as the main tool for data collection, and her communication in the field with community members and participants is an obvious part of the research approach. The researcher intended collecting the data herself using an interview guide consisting of open-ended questions that the participants could relate to. The researcher then drew out the meanings they assigned to living in the Glebelands CRU.
- Inductive and deductive forms of data analysis are used for qualitative research. In inductive data analysis the researcher engages with the data thoroughly, working backwards and forwards to identify patterns, categories and themes that could be used to organise the data collected into units of evidence. Deductive reasoning was also applied in this study as the researcher wanted to ensure that themes identified were constantly checked against the data collected.

- Qualitative research is descriptive in nature and scope. The researcher intended developing a complex account of the phenomenon under investigation by encouraging participants to provide their own descriptions and explain the significance that their descriptions had for them. The researcher relied on the words participants used during their interviews to achieve rich descriptions of their experiences, challenges and coping strategies while living in the Glebelands CRU.
- Qualitative research encourages the use of multiple sources of data such as interviews, observations, documents, and audio-visual data rather than only one source. Reviewing the different sources enables the information to be arranged according to relevant codes and themes. The multiple sources of data that were used in this study were observations, in-depth interviews, informal dialogues, documents, and published literature. The researcher planned to take note of the living conditions residents experienced living in Glebelands CRU, such as spatial elements of the rooms, units, functional spaces participants shared with others, and the social milieu within Glebelands CRU so that these could be used to substantiate the findings.
- Qualitative research does not start with a fixed research plan but evolves and changes according to the information obtained from participants who are interviewed and/or the realities the researcher discovers on entering the research site. Thus, the researcher acknowledged that the research plan would unfold as the research study gained momentum.
- Qualitative research attention is focused throughout on gathering different perspectives and meanings from participants without introducing prematurely those of the researcher or other sources that could deflect attention from the participants' perspectives.
- In the absence of objective measures and standardised research processes, the qualitative researcher constantly takes stock of how his or her background, culture, education, profession, and other life experiences may shape the research interpretations, research decisions and research process. Researcher neutrality was strengthened by practising reflexivity throughout the research process.

The section that follows outlines the research design that the researcher developed.

1.5.2 Research design

The research design refers to the research strategy or framework that the researcher plans to use to connect the research questions and the research actions that must be executed during the study (Kumar 2014:122; Marshall & Rossman 2011:89). The research design determines what research actions need to be performed to solve the research problem. Bhattacharjee (2012:35) describes the research design as an all-inclusive plan for collecting data for the study and selecting research actions such as the data collection method, data

analysis, data verification (validity and reliability), population sampling, sampling procedures and ethical considerations that are consistent with the chosen research approach. The research design thus outlines the research actions that must be executed during the study.

For this study the researcher chose a phenomenological case study research design that would integrate exploratory, descriptive, and contextual research elements. The phenomenological approach would be used to dictate relevant research methods as consistent with the philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology. The researcher required depth of information and therefore, exploration, description and contextualisation would be pertinent to the study. As the participants of the study would be bound in terms of time and place, it was feasible to use a case study design. In Chapter Four, the researcher justifies the value of integrating the different research designs.

1.5.2.1 Phenomenological research design

Parahoo (2014:212) describes phenomenology as a set of philosophical principles grounded on loose common beliefs about what the world is like (ontology) and how it can be acknowledged (epistemology). Phenomenology focuses on how humans perceive things, events, actions, ideas, and images rather than on whether they are real or imagined (Glab 2015:151). Research in this category pays attention to people's views of the world in which they live and the values they assign to their personal experiences (Langdridge in Kafle 2011:185). Attention to these details enables the researcher to reconstruct the meanings people assign to their experiences into empirical knowledge to inform others about the phenomenon chosen for the study.

The features of this study highlighted below are characteristic of phenomenological research as described by Creswell and Poth (2018:76):

- The phenomenon that would be the focus of the study was women's experiences of living in the converted Glebelands CRU in the Umlazi district.
- The phenomenon would be explored with a heterogeneous group of approximately ten women differing in terms of their ages, ethnicity and/or reasons for staying in the CRU but all being single. The researcher planned to explore the experiences of the women who had been living in the converted Glebelands CRU in the Umlazi district for three or more years. The exact size of the sample would be determined by when the researcher reached the point of data saturation (Creswell & Creswell 2018:186; Kumar 2014:242-243), and it is discussed in detail in Chapter Four. The number of participants in phenomenological research should be between three and 15.

- The researcher wanted to examine the women's subjective experiences of living in the converted CRU to discover any commonalities in their experiences.
- The researcher intended to remain reflexive throughout the research process, making sure that her personal experiences – as a woman, living in a peri-urban area, with her own political convictions and professional experiences as a qualified social worker, employed within the Provincial KwaZulu-Natal Department of Community Safety and Liaison – did not influence her interpretations of the findings of the study or the way she executed the study.
- Data collection typically would involve interviewing people who had experience of the phenomenon, but other sources of data such as observations and existing documents would be relevant for adding to the information collected from the research participants. Semi-structured interviews with a sample of women who were residents in the Glebelands converted CRU would be combined with existing documents relating to the living conditions and records of the Glebelands CRU, such as human settlement policies and procedures, and other publications about women and housing.
- Data analysis would be a systematic process and the researcher planned to use significant individual statements to create broader units of meaning to offer detailed descriptions of what participants had experienced and how they had experienced it from their personal perspectives.
- The researcher planned to conclude the research process by consolidating and describing the essence of “what” participants had experienced and “how” they had experienced it. Accordingly, the essence of what and how these women experienced living in the Glebelands converted CRU are consolidated in written form as the final chapter of this report.

The advantages of using phenomenological research design for this study are as follows:

- A phenomenological research design gathers in-depth data to create thick descriptions of the women's experiences and viewpoints within their natural setting, the Glebelands converted CRU (Pitcock 2012:45).
- The personalised data provided by the participants of their experiences of living in the Glebelands converted CRU could be used to answer the research questions, if the researcher applied inductive logic (Glab 2015:151). The researcher intended to use the women's opinions, biased accounts, and personal understandings of their living circumstances to achieve this (Glab 2015:151).
- As the study was exploratory in nature, the researcher would conduct her analysis of data in relation to this study alone and would not make generalisations about other, larger populations (Gray 2014:30). This implied that she would conduct a smaller study

with a convenient sample within a realistic timeframe relevant to the requirements of her postgraduate qualification.

- The purpose of the phenomenological research in this case would be to discover the essence of the women's experiences of living in converted CRUs, and no other source offered more dependable insight than their own words (Munhall 2012:129). This would be a humane way of conducting research because it offered an opportunity to a few marginalised women who depended only upon low-rental stock housing to elevate their voices about low-cost housing that was available to them.

The researcher was realistic about the challenges associated with using a phenomenological research design. Amongst the challenges the researcher considered were the following:

- The researcher planned to use participants who could verbalise their experiences of living in the Glebelands converted CRU. She was mindful of the risk that she may not achieve a common understanding of this phenomenon if she failed to select appropriate participants (Creswell & Poth 2018:80).
- The researcher would have to rely on participants' truthful and comprehensive accounts of their experiences, which required important psychological connections between individual participants and the researcher, based on trust which could be difficult to achieve given the time restraints of the study (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtler 2010:40).
- The researcher recognised that even when reflexivity is applied, personal biases are difficult to eliminate completely and therefore a combination of measures had to be in place such as supervision and peer supervision, to augment the researcher's journaling and keep the researcher's subjectivity to a minimal (Creswell & Poth 2018:81). This is discussed in detail in Chapter Four, Section 4.5.1.

In weighing up the advantages and challenges of using a phenomenological approach, the researcher concluded that the advantages of this design outweighed the disadvantages. The phenomenological research design was complemented by a case study design, as is explained next.

1.5.2.2 Case study

According to Creswell and Poth (2018:96), when one wishes to develop an in-depth understanding of an issue or problem, a case study can be used to offer a specific illustration of that phenomenon. This is because, as noted by Bouma, Ling and Wilkinson (2012:110), the case study addresses the question: "What is going on?" The subject of the case study may be persons, social communities such as families, small groups, organisations and institutions, a decision process, or an event (Creswell & Poth 2018:96; Flick 2014:122).

Bhattacharjee (2012:37) defines a case study strategy as an in-depth study of a real-life setting. Creswell and Creswell (2018:247) expand on this definition:

Case studies are a qualitative design in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. The cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period.

The characteristics of case studies, as outlined by Creswell & Poth (2018:97-98), are as follows:

- The researcher studies current, real-life cases so that information could be gathered without being lost in time. In the instance of this study, the researcher would interview women who had lived in the Glebelands converted CRU for a period of three or more years.
- The case identification must be bounded in time or place. In the instance of this research, the research subjects would be bounded in terms of place, as the researcher wanted to focus on women residents living in Glebelands CRU in Umlazi. The research subjects would also be bounded in time, as the researcher planned to include only women who resided in the Glebelands CRU between December 2020 and March 2021, which is when the data collection was planned. Only women who had lived there for three or more years would be included in the study.
- The purpose of the case study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women who lived in the Glebelands converted CRU. To achieve this, the researcher would rely of different forms of qualitative data, which included data obtained through interviews, her observations in the field, and existing documents. The researcher wanted to understand a specific issue, which in this study was the women's experiences of living in the converted Glebelands CRU, and she planned to select specific participants who best understood the issue because of their personal connections to it.
- The findings section of a case study offers a detailed description of the case, emergent themes, and the issues the researcher identified during the study. The researcher hoped that the case study would reveal similarities and differences among the participants who would be interviewed, as presented in a theoretical model.
- The researcher expected that when the study was completed several conclusions would be reached, which Creswell and Poth (2018:122) refer to as "lessons learned."

The advantages of using a case study were as follows:

- The case study offers a very detailed and exact way of capturing the research process, which would provide the detail the researcher needed for the study (Creswell & Poth 2018:122).
- The case study relies on recognised methods of research, which contributes significantly to its credibility (Flick 2014:122).
- The case study draws attention to case-based themes that provide a detailed understanding of the issue concerned, in this case converted CRU housing and how it impacts on women who live there (Yin 2014:4).
- The case study manages to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life issues (Mason 2018:209), such as being a woman who lives in a converted CRU.
- The case study would bring to light inner and external resources the women rely on to cope with the challenges they faced on a day-to-day basis (Daymon & Holloway 2011:115).
- The case study is well suited to a dissertation or small-scale project because it is manageable yet yields rich data, explanation and understanding (Carey 2012:145).

The envisaged disadvantages of using the case study were as follows:

- The focus on one case would create problems of generalisation (Carey 2012:145; Flick 2014:123).
- By selecting several participants, the overall analysis of the findings could become diluted (Creswell & Poth 2018:102).
- The selected participants could fail to create a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon, which could compromise the depth of understanding of this phenomenon in some respects (Creswell & Poth 2018:80). The selection of appropriate participants therefore had to be well considered and defined at the outset of the study.
- The researcher planned a preliminary timeframe for the collection of data which would include only women who had lived in the converted CRU on a permanent basis for three or more years at the time the study commenced.
- As noted by Flyvbjerg (2011:302), many researchers prefer scientific theoretical knowledge that demonstrates validity and reliability.
- Case studies are criticised because they only generate hypotheses instead of testing hypotheses, which fails to build a theory and often merely confirms the researcher's predetermined views (Mesec in Starman 2013:41).

However, the advantages of using the case study for the study outweighed the disadvantages.

Next, the researcher justifies the use of an exploratory, descriptive, and contextual research design.

1.5.2.3 Exploratory, descriptive, and contextual research design

Patton (2015:94) indicates that a research design has three purposes, namely exploration, description, and explanation. The present qualitative study depended on exploring, describing, and developing a contextual understanding of the women's situation of living in a converted hostel. For this reason, exploratory, descriptive, and contextual designs were planned (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016:174). The nature and value of each aspect is elaborated on below.

- **Exploratory research design** – This design is appropriate when one needs to know more about something because one does not fully comprehend it or does not know how to confront it using an intervention method with success (Saunders et al 2016:174; Yegidis, Weinbach & Myers 2012:125). An exploratory design is also called a diagnostic design because its key goal is to find data on a phenomenon about which little is known in the social context (Yin 2011:90). The need for exploratory study escalates when basic evidence on a new area of concern does not exist or when one wants to gain more knowledge about it that will encourage other researchers to put together other research questions that can be tested in the future (Creswell 2014:29; De Vos et al 2011:95). As suggested by Creswell, an exploratory design addresses the “what” question, for example “what is this social reality really about?” (Creswell 2014:29). As previously explained, little had been documented about women's experiences of living in the Glebelands CRU, the predominant issues that challenged them while living there, and what adaptive coping mechanisms they used to survive living there. The researcher was interested to learn about the risks and protective factors that the women experienced at each level of the ecosystem, and how their transactions within these system levels impacted on their sense of self, power and independence.
- **Descriptive research design** – According to Saunders et al (2016:174) and Creswell (2013:18), a descriptive research design allows the researcher to develop ideas about the topic and describe the phenomenon in question. Usually, a descriptive research design enables the researcher to focus on answering three main questions, namely “what?”, “where?” and “how?” (Neuman 2014:39; Yin 2011:12). This design would enable the researcher to develop a more precise picture of the issue and generate answers to the research question (Neuman 2014:39). Such description reveals the characteristics of the different elements associated with participants' experiences and existing relationships between the elements (Neuman 2014:39), to assist the

researcher to define the state of social affairs (Jebreen 2012:163). Some of the elements that the researcher planned to describe were participants' perceptions of living in the Glebelands CRU, the risks and protective factors they experienced while living there, the adaptations they made to adjust to their living environment, the effective and less effective forms of support available to them, and the resources they could access to facilitate their adaptation to living in the converted hostels. This rich data would enable the researcher to discover patterns, themes and relationships between the elements that had not previously been written about.

- **Contextual research design** – Qualitative researchers must consider the overall situation of people's lives and the wider political and social framework of the culture under which their study is undertaken (Holloway & Wheeler 2010:5). By placing research findings into context, the researcher is better able to delineate fundamental elements of the research topic (Carey 2012:229). Contextual research designs encourage research participants to define the relevant phenomena based on their personal awareness and experiences (Yin 2011:26). Their experiences of the issue can then be described and understood in the concrete, natural contexts in which they occur (Babbie & Mouton 2001:272). In other words, it is possible to understand the bi-directional transactions that participants are involved in at each ecological system level (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont in Maphosa 2015:42). An ecological systems approach would be included in the theoretical framework because the researcher wanted to learn about the challenges experienced by women residents of the Glebelands CRU and the coping measures they used in their daily lives. The researcher was curious about personal, cultural, and contextual factors that impacted positively and negatively on them, and how their sense of self, independence and socio-economic status impacted on their perceptions.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODS

The term "research methods" refers to the specific research activities a researcher plans to engage in to pursue answers to the research questions (Khan 2014:300; Taylor, Bogdan & De Vault 2015:3). The activities involve data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Carey 2012:26; Creswell & Creswell 2018:16). This section presents in sequence the research activities that were set at the outset of the study, although in reality some research activities occur simultaneously (Creswell & Poth 2018:185). The research activities planned included choosing the population, sample, sampling strategy and data collection process, exercising interviewing skills, developing the pilot study, verifying data, and adhering to research ethics. The discussion proceeds with an explanation of the population that would be identified to be studied.

1.6.1 Population

A population is a group of people that a researcher wishes to learn more about to arrive at conclusions (Babbie 2011:91; Bouma et al 2012:137; Mertens 2015:4). Simply stated, the term "population" in research refers to every potential entity associated with the research issue being investigated (Ubisi 2013:19), or the unit of analysis (Neuman 2018:54). It includes people, things, towns, or buildings that direct a researcher to the answers he or she is looking for (Kumar 2014:66).

The anticipated population for the proposed study was all female residents of the Glebelands CRU. As noted in the discussion of the context of the study (section 1.1.2), the number of legal female residents of the Glebelands CRU was estimated to be five to six thousand, but the number of illegal female residents who resided there permanently was unknown. Sampling procedures were therefore necessary because not all the women could be interviewed (Bouma et al 2012:137). It is pertinent to explain sampling to clarify why a non-probability or purposive sample was proposed for the study.

1.6.2 Sampling

A sample in qualitative research is a symbolic or small set of cases selected from a whole population that is too big for the researcher to study. Although a sample is relatively small, it can still offer perspectives that exist within the population (Flick 2014:167; Neuman 2011:240; Ubisi 2013:19). If the sample is chosen carefully, the researcher can draw conclusions about the wider population that the sample cases represent (Flick 2014:167).

The plan was for the researcher to purposefully select participants who had knowledge of and could articulate the experience of living in the Glebelands CRU. She would choose women who had lived there legally or illegally for three or more years, because that would indicate that they would have sufficient experience of living in the converted CRU to form their own opinions.

1.6.3 Sampling methods

Sampling refers to the principles and procedures that are followed to identify and access relevant data sources that are representative of the population (Leavy 2020:180; Maree 2020:214). The plan was to choose women who would offer meaningful insights and help the researcher to solve the intellectual puzzle (Mason 2018:53).

Two broad sampling strategies are used in research: non-probability sampling, also referred to as non-purposive or non-random sampling, and random sampling, usually referred to as probability sampling (Bouma et al 2012:137-138; Mason 2018:54-56; Yegidis in Mathibela 2017:24). Each strategy relies on specific sampling techniques (Yegidis in Mathibela

2017:24). Non-probability sampling promised would allow the researcher to understand the research topic in great detail without having to generalise the findings to a larger representative population (Bouma 2012:28). The researcher planned to look for participants who offered the best information that would answer the research question (Carey 2012:39; Creswell & Creswell 2018:185).

The practical and strategic benefits of making this decision were that the researcher would be able to study fewer cases and use fewer resources in terms of time and manpower (Bouma et al 2012:137; Mason 2018:55; Royse 2011:193). She could collect in-depth information that would illustrate the subtle distinctions amongst the women living in the Glebelands CRU to build a complex understanding of what the women's experiences of living in the Glebelands CRU were (Mason 2018:55; Royse 2011:193). Participants could be selected with both distinctive and related features, which is challenging to achieve if studying the wider universe (Mason 2018:57).

Based on the choice of a phenomenological research design, the sampling strategies that were considered most appropriate for this study were criterion and snowball sampling (Creswell & Poth 2018:159), as explained next.

1.6.3.1 Criterion sampling

Criterion sampling relies on identifying a set of predetermined selection criteria that are needed to achieve a specific purpose, to ensure that participants selected will provide the best information needed for the study (Carey 2012:39; Creswell & Poth 2018:159; David & Sutton 2011:232). The plan was to select participants who had first-hand experience of living in the Glebelands CRU at the time of the study and who would be able to articulate their experiences and be willing to do so voluntarily (Creswell & Poth 2018:159; David & Sutton 2011:232). The anticipated benefits of using criterion sampling were that it would increase the relevance of the findings, because the women selected would offer relevant information (Carey 2012:427), and it would be cost efficient in time and money, because resources would not be wasted by involving participants whose insights were inappropriate (Stacks 2011:202).

Several disadvantages were associated with using this sampling strategy. The sample would not be theoretically representative of the whole population, and there was a risk that selection bias could undermine the research findings (Mason 2018:55; Carey 2012:189). It was resolved that the researcher would not exclude participants whose perspective were contrary to hers, or whose personalities, reputation or cultural background offered different perspectives into the study (Carey 2012:189). She would guard against deliberately approaching individuals whose ideas she suspected were closely aligned to her own (Carey

2012:189). On the contrary, the researcher held that the inclusion of diverse opinions would result in a more holistic account of the experiences of women living in the Glebelands CRU. She planned to spend time in the Glebelands CRU, speaking to residents, the community development worker, the superintendent, and ward councillor to understand the dynamics and coalitions within Glebelands CRU before selecting the sample for the study. The efforts to guard against any form of bias during the research process will be explained in depth in sections 1.9 and 1.10 (data verification and research ethics).

The second kind of sampling strategy planned was snowball sampling.

1.6.3.2 Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling is a non-representative sampling technique by which one or two participants who have been interviewed are asked to assist in recruiting other potential participants to increase the sample size (Carey 2012:39; Royse 2011:205). Creswell and Poth (2018:159) describe snowball sampling as a method of sampling whereby the researcher identifies recommended cases of interest with the help of interviewed participants who know others who have not been interviewed by the researcher whom they believe have relevant information-rich data to contribute to the study (Carey 2012:39). Snowball sampling is a variation of criterion or purposive sampling (Bouma et al 2012:140). The interviewed participants explain the purpose of the study to potential participants, and if they are interested in participating, they refer them to the researcher (Carey 2012:39). The benefits of this sampling strategy is that “insiders” have greater success in recruiting others whose experiences are similar to theirs (Khan 2014:305); it helps the researcher to find a big enough sample in situations when there is no publicly available listing of the targeted group of people, such as in this study (Bouma et al 2012:140); and it is especially useful in research where participants are reluctant to contribute because the research subject is sensitive and their need for anonymity is high (Carey 2012:39; Daymon & Holloway 2011:215; De Vos et al 2011:393) – a significant factor in this study.

The criteria the researcher identified to guide her selection of participants are outlined next.

1.6.3.3 Criteria for inclusion in the study

The criteria for selecting the sample would be as follows:

- Females aged 18 years or older
- Legal and illegal residents who had lived in Glebelands CRU for longer than three years, at the time of the study
- Women who could communicate in either English, isiZulu or isiXhosa, as these were the languages the researcher was fluent in, and the researcher would be sure that the women’s meanings would not be lost in translation

- Participants who were willing to provide written voluntary consent to participate in the study.

1.6.3.4 Criteria for exclusion from the study

The following criteria would be used to exclude inappropriate participants:

- Any participant with a low level of functioning in terms of mental, intellectual, emotional, or physical health
- Any participant who legally did not have majority status
- Any participant who could not express herself fluently in one of the languages specified
- Any participant whose motivation to participate in the study was suspected to be politically linked to violence in the Glebelands CRU or who had been coerced by others to promote a particular political stance on South African CRUs rather than to represent their personal experiences
- Any participant whose right to confidentiality and anonymity could not be upheld during the study or in the final research report, because the researcher wanted to be sure that she would protect participants from being accused by others of sharing information that implicated residents in the ongoing violence in the Glebelands CRU.

The researcher planned to stay with the phenomenological tradition of criterion sampling. She would conduct interviews with different people who met the criteria outlined but were heterogeneous in other respects such as age, ethnicity, family composition, employment status, specific life experiences, and personal support structures (Creswell & Poth 2018:150). Instead of including fewer than four or five cases in the study, as expected in case studies (Yin in Creswell & Poth 2018:160), she would use a bigger sample to identify several divergent themes within the women's stories. Phenomenological samples normally consist of between three and ten participants (Creswell & Creswell 2018:186). The researcher planned to interview between eight and ten participants to increase the possibility of different themes being discussed. However, she resolved that this research decision would be determined when she reached the point of saturation during the interview process. Saturation is the point when the researcher stops collecting data because the categories or themes the participants discuss become repetitive (Carey 2012:39; Creswell & Creswell 2018:186; Kumar 2014:242-243). As this was to be a qualitative study, the researcher wanted a small sample that would allow her to collect detailed information using loosely structured open-ended questions (Carey 2012:50). This would allow her to save on research costs in time and money and to manage the large volumes of descriptive data collected from the interviews, which is important when undertaking data analysis.

The researcher's plan for data collection in the proposed study is outlined next.

1.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND PROCEDURES

When one uses a qualitative research approach, data collection should be properly planned to ensure that one gathers evidence relevant to the research purpose (Jebreen 2012:163). Raw data collected from the field is used to enable the researcher to connect with participants' experiences and views (Marshall & Rossman 2011:137). The main strategies for gathering qualitative data are interviews, focus groups, observations, and documents (Creswell 2014:190). The process must be planned and arranged in several steps: preparation for data collection; selecting suitable methods to collect data and choosing the research questions; rehearsing interview skills; developing an interview protocol; and planning the recording and storage methods of all data. The plans that were developed to achieve these in the present study are explained, commencing with the researcher's preparations for data collection.

1.7.1 Preparation for data collection

Researchers must plan ahead about how they will gain access to the location, secure permission from gatekeepers so that they may proceed with the study, familiarise research participants with the research process and the purpose of the research, reassure participants about the steps to be taken to protect their interests, obtain their verbal and written consent to participate in the study, and ensure they fully understand that their participation is completely voluntary (Daymon & Holloway 2011:60-65). The plans the researcher developed to satisfy these preparatory steps before the study occurred are explained.

The plan was for the researcher to gain permission to enter the research site and conduct the study once the Department of Social Work's Scientific Research Committee had approved the research proposal and the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee had awarded ethics clearance (Addendum A). A letter of introduction and request for permission to conduct the study would be submitted to the Head of Human Settlements in the eThekweni Municipality and the eThekweni mayor (Addendum B). Affirmative responses from these two officials would be sent to the offices of the superintendent of the Glebelands CRU and the city councillor representing the ward where the Glebelands CRU was situated. The latter two individuals were considered as the official gatekeepers of Glebelands CRU (Creswell & Creswell 2018:185). The plan was to visit their offices and explain why Glebelands CRU was chosen for the study, outline the nature of the research activities that would occur at the site during the study, how the findings would be disseminated, and the risks and benefits of the study for participants and the Glebelands CRU, and to alert them to potential disruptions that could be experienced in the Glebelands CRU whilst the study was in progress (Creswell & Creswell 2018:185). It would be stressed

that the names of people, places and activities associated with the study would be masked to protect their privacy (Creswell & Creswell 2018:185). The researcher would ask the gatekeepers to assist her by informing women residents about the impending research. The researcher planned to attend one of the Ward 76 Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) War Room meetings usually convened in the Glebelands CRU boardroom to inform residents about the study so that they would distribute the information to other women living in the Glebelands CRU. Letters requesting the participation of potential participants in the research (Addendum C) would be made available on the day of presentation to the whole OSS structure.

The researcher would contact women referred by the supervisor, ward councillor and members of the OSS War Room telephonically to introduce herself, explain the nature of her study, confirm the women's availability, ascertain their interest in being involved, and assess whether they met the selection criteria. This telephonic contact would be an important part of gaining access and developing rapport with research participants (Creswell & Poth 2018:152). She would inform potential participants about the research procedures and their rights as participants and explain why they had been invited to participate in the study (Creswell & Poth 2018:152). An individual pre-interview would be arranged with each participant to properly brief them about the study. The information letter requesting their participation (Addendum C) would be explained carefully. When the researcher was satisfied that a participant was comfortable with the arrangements and understood what was required during the research process, the person would be asked to sign a letter of consent to participate (Addendum D).

The second phase, the data collection, is explained next.

1.7.2 Methods of data collection

Data collection is that part of the research process in which the researcher selects and applies specific methods and performs activities to gather data in a scientific way to be able to answer the research question (Creswell & Poth 2018:148). In this section the researcher explains what forms of data she planned to use and how she planned to gather it from the participants. Because this was meant to be a phenomenological case study, the researcher would need to collect data from multiple individuals who had experienced the issue (living in the Glebelands CRU as a woman) by conducting interviews (Creswell & Poth 2018:150). Participants would be interviewed individually, face to face, in a place that was safe and comfortable for both the researcher and participants (Bouma et al 2012:229). The researcher envisaged using an office within the superintendent's premises. The pre-interview session planned before each research interview was meant to facilitate rapport

between the researcher and individual participant before conducting the research interview (Bouma et al 2012:229). Research participants would be invited to recall their social experience of living in the Glebelands CRU. They would be prompted to explore and describe their specific experiences and how the experiences had affected their lives (Mason 2018:112). The researcher would try to understand the participants' world from their personal perspectives to discover the personal meanings attached to their experiences (Creswell & Poth 2018:164). Her role would be to talk and listen to the participants whilst they shared their accounts of their experiences (Mason 2018:115).

A semi-structured interview facilitated by an interview guide (Addendum E) would be used as the main data collection tool for this study. The semi-structured interview is acknowledged to gather rich and complex information of the phenomenon being investigated (Khan 2014:306). According to De Vos et al (2011:351), semi-structured interviews advance a holistic understanding of the participant's philosophies and perceptions of a particular topic even though only a few definite items are asked (Grinnell & Unrau 2011:306). This offered flexibility for the researcher to explore the subject matter in her own way with each participant. The researcher would have to stay in tune with participants' cues and adjust the research questions to make sure they would be relevant to the participant in that moment (Chan, Fung & Chien 2013:5).

The interview guide would include a few important questions or topics that needed to be raised with each participant. The sequence in which these would be discussed would be determined by the process of interaction that unfolded between the researcher and each participant. The researcher would have to remain sensitive to participants' responses (Daymon & Holloway 2011:226). The preferred languages were IsiZulu, Xhosa and English to allow a free flow of communication from both parties, as cultural sensitivity is important during the research process (Sewpaul & Pillay in Petty 2019:242).

The disadvantages of in-depth interviews were considered. They would be time consuming, and, in some instances, more than one session would be needed to ensure that all general questions would be covered (Bouma et al 2012:229). The flexible nature of the semi-structured interview could allow participants to wander off the topic (Bouma et al 2012:229). Thirdly, some participants could be too brief in their answers. The researcher would have to overcome these drawbacks.

The open-ended questions the researcher planned to include in the interview guide are presented in Addendum E. The questions were reviewed by the Department of Social Work Scientific Research Committee and the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee. They were intended to collect information that offered "depth and detail that is

nuanced and rich with vivid thematic material" (Flick 2014:208) once the interview guide had met with the approval of the Human Settlements Research Committee.

The advantage of using an interview guide was that the researcher would be able to compare the participants' responses, and the questions would structure the kinds of answers the researcher received (Flick 2014:211).

Some biographical information would be collected from each participant, such as their age, marital status, family structure, number of children, number and ages of children living with them in the CRU, employment status, sources of income, level of education, ethnicity and religion, type of CRU accommodation they were renting, and whether they were classified as registered or unregistered residents in Glebelands. These facts would allow the researcher to develop a biographical profile of the research participants, which, as Miller (in Govender 2019:46) explains, would help to highlight some of their characteristics and shed light on both the generalisability and limitations of the findings. The information gathered from the biographical questions would further help to contextualise the findings (Miller in Govender 2019:46).

The researcher would pay attention to participants' non-verbal communication as they responded to the questions or topics. Gerring (in Ubisi 2013:18) notes that observation offers additional evidence. The researcher would take note of which questions participants failed to answer or ignore, because much can be inferred from this (Ubisi 2013:18).

The researcher acknowledged that she would have to lead each interview by asking questions and probing for deeper responses (McNabb 2010:99). In view of this, the planned application of interview skills in research interviews is outlined next.

1.7.3 Role of the researcher and interview skills in a qualitative study

The application of interview skills in research interviews is different from the way they are applied in counselling (Nelson, Onwuegbuzie, Wines & Frels 2013:1). Table 1.2, adapted from Neuman (2014:332), indicates what interview skills and attitudes the researcher planned to use during the research interviews.

Table 1.2: Description and application of the researcher's interviewing skills

Skill	Description	Application	Application to this study
Building a relationship	The researcher intended to build an empathetic link with the participants.	The researcher would create a favourable atmosphere for the interview, one that was quiet and offered a comfortable sitting plan, and where the	Telephone calls and individual pre-interviews were planned for each participant to orientate them to the study and start to build a relationship with them (see section 5.1).

Skill	Description	Application	Application to this study
		researcher could be responsive towards the participant, who could offer personal answers to the inquiring, open questions.	
Lively listening and focusing	The researcher would show lively listening by paying attention to what the participant was sharing through her body language and active speech.	Body language would show attentiveness, while paraphrasing and remembering would indicate interest to the participant. Eye contact would always be upheld.	The researcher planned to use skills such as probing, clarifying, paraphrasing, and minimal encouraging and evaluating, as recommended by Chan et al 2013:5), in response to the participants' replies to each research question. Focusing would be important, as participants in semi-structured interviews may wander off the topic. The researcher planned to ensure that the interview objectives would be achieved (Khan 2014:301) and the discussion stayed within the boundaries of the study (Creswell & Poth 2018:166).
Empathising	The researcher would relate to each participant's feelings by recognising the feelings and by showing concern and empathy.	The researcher would echo back to the participant their feelings by mentioning the feelings that the participant was discharging, for example "I can see that you are getting angry".	The researcher would place less focus on being empathetic when necessary during the research interview to avoid encouraging participants to share personal confidences that were not related to the study (Kvale 2006:482). She would however make sure that she reflected participants' feelings back to them so that they would feel they had been understood.
Probing	The researcher would look for clarity by asking follow-up questions to determine that she had undoubtedly understood the message communicated by the participant.	Probing questions would be used to elicit further detail, for example "Please explain to me what you mean by....".	The researcher planned to pick up on participants' verbal and non-verbal cues (Mason 2018:126) and would encourage them to delve deeper into the subject under discussion. She would use: elaboration probes, such as "Can you tell me a little more about that?"; continuation probes to further expand the story, such as "What happened next?"; clarification probes such as "I'm not sure I fully understand what you mean?"; attention probes such as "That's really interesting"; completion probes such as "So how did that end?"; and evidence probes to confirm the accuracy of the participant's interpretation, such as "What made you so sure that your interpretation of what happened was accurate?" (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005:64).

Skill	Description	Application	Application to this study
Admiration for cultural diversity	The researcher would need to observe and admire the participant's cultural uniqueness.	The researcher would not force upon the participant her own cultural norms and values or be judgemental about the participant's belief classification.	The researcher would be working in an African context where diversity prevails, and she had to recognise the diversity within the local CRU and the differences in the women's values (Chikadzi & Pretorius 2011:265). These unique values, beliefs, customs, cultural norms, and indigenous practices would be used to uncover local knowledges and solutions related to the needs of women in CRUs (D'Cruz & Jones 2014:13-14).
Broad-mindedness	The participant would have the liberty to express herself without fear of judgement. Participants would be free to express their own views and feelings.	The researcher would remain open to each participant's answers without passing any judgement or attributing any personal value to them.	The researcher would choose to view participants as valuable sources of information and recognise the need to decolonise research practices. She planned to elevate the voices of her research participants by adopting collaborative and participatory opportunities throughout the research process (Carey 2012:177).

1.7.4 Interview protocol

The structure for each interview in this study was based on an adapted format of the loosely structured interview guidelines suggested by Mason (2018:121).

The researcher planned to offer an introductory explanation that included how the interview would unfold, give a reminder to participants that they had a right to withdraw from the interview or study at any time, grant permission for them to refrain from answering questions that they considered to be too difficult or too private to discuss, offer a reminder that the questions could be rephrased if they needed to understand them better, provide reassurance that they could stop the interview at any stage if they wanted a break, and remind them of their right to request at any stage that the digital recording device be switched off. The participants would be asked to tell the researcher a little about themselves, and when the ice had been broken the researcher would ask the biographical questions. Next, the research questions would be asked. The researcher would try to stay focused on the participants' experiences, challenges and coping strategies related to living in the Glebelands CRU. Once the main questions had been answered, the researcher would explain how the data would be used and disseminated. Time would be allocated for participants to ask questions about the research process. Each participant would be thanked for their participation and reminded that they would be contacted by the researcher individually to confirm the accuracy of the themes identified during the analysis process.

1.7.5 Recording and storage of data

Each interview would be digitally recorded, with the written consent of the participant (see Addendum D). The researcher, who is fluent in English, isiXhosa, and isiZulu, would transcribe and translate the interviews into English herself, which offered the advantage of allowing her to become immersed in the collected data.

The researcher would keep track of all the interviews and notes and protect the privacy and anonymity of participants throughout the research process (Creswell & Poth 2018:174; Flick 2014:372). Each participant would be allocated a code before being interviewed, as suggested by Flick (2014:389). The code would be inserted on the field note template and be used to label the audio recording file, which would be code encrypted and saved on iCloud and the researcher's external hard drive. A master list that synchronised the codes and names of participants would be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. The printed transcriptions would be stored in the same cabinet together with the original field note template that included the researcher's observations. Once the transcriptions had been edited or cleaned for data analysis, the codes assigned to each participant would be converted into pseudonyms to protect the identities of participants.

Backup copies of computer files and audio recordings would be saved on an external hard drive that could be locked away and saved on iCloud using a password protected code (Creswell & Poth 2018:175).

Before proceeding with the research interviews with selected research participants, the researcher would test her research instrument and interview protocol.

1.7.6 Pilot testing

A pilot study is a small version of the research study, conducted as part of the groundwork for the full-scale study, to pre-test the research tool (Teijlingen & Hundley in Dikko 2016:521). It is a trial run of the research process in preparation for the full-scale study. It allows the researcher to pre-test the research instrument(s) to ensure that the questions are valid; that the internal consistency of the instrument(s) is validated; that the questions are clear, can be asked with ease, and elicit adequate responses; that the format and instructions given to participants are clear; that the time taken to conduct the interviews is reasonable; and that the spacing of interviews is practical (Creswell & Creswell 2018:154; Dikko 2016:522; Yin 2011:37). The plan was to first discuss the interview guide with the community development worker (CDW) of the ward. Thereafter the interview guide would be adjusted according to the feedback received and then tested on two voluntary residents from the Glebelands CRU. The responses of the two voluntary residents would be analysed to decide whether the research questions or research protocol needed to be modified,

before commencing with data collection. The feedback received from the identified role players involved in the pilot study resulted in modifications to the interview guide as will be outlined in Chapter Four, the application of the research methodology and methods. The next section focuses on the plans developed for the analysis of data.

1.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is described by Carey (2012:26) as the activities the researcher engages in to identify patterns, groupings, similarities, and differences within the collected data to answer or further examine the research question or problem. As explained by Kumar (2014:44) and Jebreen (2012:170), data analysis compresses the voluminous data into a reasonable and manageable framework for the researcher to be able to make sense of it (Creswell & Creswell 2018:178).

The researcher moves back and forth from the raw data and the analysed data, repetitively, filtering the findings whilst doing so (Holloway & Wheeler 2010:281; Bhattacharjee 2012:48). Several interrelated processes are involved in data analysis: managing and organising the data, reading and making notes about emergent ideas, describing and classifying the data using codes to enable them to be developed into themes, developing and assessing the emergent interpretations, and then representing the data to offer an accurate account of the findings (Creswell & Poth 2018:186).

Various types of data analysis are available, the two most common being thematic analysis and comparative analysis (Carey 2012:27). Thematic analysis was chosen for this study because it involves looking for emerging themes, relationships and dynamics embedded in the data (Carey 2012:27). The seven research steps that the researcher planned to use during the thematic analysis of her study were developed by Colaizzi (1978:48-59) and are meant to be conducted sequentially (Sanders 2003; Speziale & Carpenter in Paré 2015:2), as depicted in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3: Colaizzi's seven steps of coding

Method		Explanation
1	Writing down all the descriptions of subjects	The researcher reads and rereads the transcriptions to cultivate a general sense of the whole situation. Each transcription is referred to as the protocol. Several subjects may surface during this process.
2	Pulling out significant statements that are directly linked to the investigated phenomenon	After step one, the researcher returns to each transcription to identify important features, in this case related to the experiences, challenges and coping resources of women in the Glebelands CRU. Direct quotations are extracted and saved on a separate sheet, noting each page and line number. The duplication or repetition of statements is eliminated. Extracts that refer to events or feelings are interpreted and expressed in a more general formulation as they become clear.

Method		Explanation
3	Generating formulated meanings	The researcher extracts the meaning for each significant statement and then generates themes for the meanings. The meanings behind the words that each research participant uses are carefully examined.
4	Combining formulated meanings into theme clusters	Significant statements are grouped and allocated specific meanings that differentiate them into distinct clusters or themes. Codes are assigned to the clusters. Groups of clusters of themes are combined to develop a particular concept.
5	Formulating an exhaustive, complete description of the experience as expressed by participants	Findings are assembled to build a comprehensive description of the phenomenon, highlighting its complexity. An independent qualified researcher is used to verify the interpreted findings and validate the thoroughness of data analysis.
6	Categorising the fundamental structure of the phenomenon	The researcher describes the major structure of the phenomenon. In this case ecological systems theory and feminist theory would be used to frame the description. Changes may be made when the connections between clusters of themes and their deduced meanings become clearer. The relationships between clusters of themes and their meanings are highlighted. Those structures that remain unclear or do not add value to the holistic description may be set aside or discarded.
7	Returning to participants for authentication	The researcher returns to participants to make sure that the descriptions and results gathered from her transcribed interpretations match their experiences. They may add more information and correct errors in the transcribed data.

Data analysis may be done using software or by hand, or a mixture of both (Creswell & Poth 2018:187). The researcher chose to do the data analysis manually and planned to involve an independent coder to verify the findings so that data collected would not be contaminated by the researcher's personal or professional interpretations. The researcher planned to recruit an independent coder to verify the accuracy of the researchers coding and arrange a consultation between the independent coder, researcher, and supervisor to finalise the themes and sub-themes related to the findings.

The researcher was confident that this method would enable her to extract and organise the narrative data gathered from the participants' interviews into themes and categories of meaningful information about the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in Glebelands CRU. The intention was to discover "what is going on" and "what it is like" to be a woman living in the Glebelands CRU in as much detail as possible (Bouma et al 2012:237), referring at times to the theoretical framework as outlined. The researcher would rely heavily on what it was like to be there interacting with participants first-hand and would use her experiences to sensitise others to the women's situations (Bouma et al 2012:236).

The next section presents the plans the researcher decided upon to verify the data.

1.9 DATA VERIFICATION

In every study a process must be in place to ensure that the findings will be plausible, well-founded, confirmable and valid (Silverman 2011:234). The plan that would be used to verify data in this study was based on Lincoln and Guba's expression of trustworthiness (in Creswell & Creswell 2018:200; Creswell and Poth 2018:255). Trustworthiness consists of four different elements: the credibility of the study, applicability or transferability, consistency or dependability, and objectivity or confirmability (Creswell & Creswell 2018:200; Creswell & Poth 2018:255; Flick 2014:487-488). These are each defined in column one in Table 1.4. The steps indicated in the literature for upholding the credibility of findings are listed in column two, and the researcher's plan is reflected in column three.

Table 1.4: Data verification elements

Element	Steps to preserve the element	As applied to the study
Credibility This refers to the honesty and accuracy of the research findings (Shenton 2004:64).	Lengthy engagement on the ground (Creswell and Poth 2018:262)	A minimum of two interviews would be conducted with each participant. The researcher would spend time in the research field and throughout the study to make her presence known.
	Accessing several sources of information (Flick 2014:488)	The researcher would rely on interviews with participants, publications on CRUs and living conditions in Glebelands CRU; and informal dialogues with the superintendent, ward councillor, social workers and police officials who interacted with Glebelands residents.
	Availability of peer debriefing and supervision (Flick 2014:259)	Regular feedback would be sought from the supervisor; academic presenters of postgraduate workshops offered by UNISA, and research colleagues based in the provincial office where researcher worked throughout the research process.
	Using an independent coder during data analysis (Shenton 2004:67)	An independent coder would be involved during the analysis of data, and a consultation meeting would be held with the independent coder, researcher and supervisor to ensure that the themes identified were devoid of researcher subjectivity.
	Keeping of a research diary (Creswell and Poth 2018:261)	The researcher planned to use a research diary in which she would record her reflections on the research process to keep in check her personal and professional perspectives as a middle-aged, black, educated, middle-class woman working for the provincial government.

Element	Steps to preserve the element	As applied to the study
	Arranging member checks (Creswell & Poth 2018:261)	The researcher would arrange an interview with each participant to verify the accuracy and credibility of the researcher's interpretations of the transcriptions she had made of the interviews before data analysis was conducted.
	Delivering rich descriptions of the research process and findings (Creswell 2018:260)	Open-ended questions would be asked, and the researcher would use probes to follow participants' cues. Transcriptions would be completed in verbatim format so that the researcher would be able to present participants' descriptions in detail. The research process applied to the study would be presented in a separate chapter to explain each step of the research process.
Dependability or consistency This refers to evidence that the study has been carried out in a stable and consistent manner (Daymon & Holloway 2011:86).	Offering an accurate step-by step outline of the research methods used in the study (Daymon & Holloway 2011:86)	The researcher would indicate how the research plan was applied and note any adaptations that were necessary to accommodate field conditions that were not anticipated before the study commenced (see Chapter Four).
	Establishing interview, recording and data storage protocols to standardise research procedures (Mason 2018:121)	The researcher planned to use interview recording and data storage protocols as outlined.
	Eliminating research bias by involving an independent coder (Tobin & Begley 2004:392)	The researcher and independent coder would analyse the data independently and meet with the supervisor to reach consensus about the different themes, sub-themes and categories detected in the interview transcriptions.
	Checking transcripts several times to eliminate possible mistakes made during the transcription process (Creswell & Creswell 2018:202)	The researcher would be responsible for completing the transcriptions and would use a digital audio recorder that she could replay until satisfied that the transcriptions were accurate.
Applicability or transferability This refers to the extent to which the findings of the situation can be applied in other research situations that are similar (Thomas & Magilvy 2011:153).	Providing rich description of the research context, research participants, and inclusion and exclusion criteria so that others can determine whether the information gathered is applicable to	The researcher would offer details of the research context (see section 1.6.3) and the sampling inclusion and exclusion criteria (see sections 1.6.3.3 and 1.6.3.4). Information would be provided about the biographical profile of participants in the findings section (see Chapter Five, section 5.1).

Element	Steps to preserve the element	As applied to the study
	their contexts (Anney 2014:277)	
	Explaining the research methods clearly and presenting them in detail (Shenton 2004:70).	The researcher would make her plans for the study explicit in Chapter One (section 1.6) and then devote a chapter to describing the application of the research methodology and methods and the adaptations that were deemed necessary as more information became available in the research field.
Objectivity or confirmability This indicates that the research is free of bias and the findings can be corroborated (Shenton 2004:72; Tobin & Begley 2004:392). The findings are shaped by participants and not researcher prejudice (Lincoln & Guba in Niewenhuis 2016:125).	Having regular supervision sessions for the purpose of accountability (Anney 2014:270; Chenail 2011:259)	Supervision sessions would be held face to face and online so that the supervisor would monitor the researcher's subjectivity throughout the research process and be able to verify the authenticity of each research step and the findings.
	Peer debriefing (Flick 2014:488)	Feedback sessions would be held in postgraduate workshops as well as regular meetings with colleagues based in the provincial research office (peer debriefing).
	Verifying of findings by independent coder (Anney 2014:277)	The independent coder, a qualified social worker and researcher would work through the transcriptions independently to identify the emerging themes and sub-themes.
	Doing member checks (Creswell & Poth 2018:261; Flick 2014:488)	The researcher would arrange an interview with each participant to verify the accuracy and credibility of the researcher's interpretations of transcriptions that she had made of the interviews before data analysis was conducted.

Elements of data verification planned for the study have been presented. The next section focuses on the ethical principles that would be upheld during the research process.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethics promotes the integrity of the research and guards against misconduct or indiscretions that could affect the organisations and institutions the researcher represents (Creswell & Creswell 2018:88). Ethical considerations uphold the rights of research participants and protect them from maltreatment that could be incurred by their involvement in a study (David & Sutton 2011:30; Neuman 2011:143). The researcher planned to uphold

the five ethical principles of this study: social justice; respect for persons and their autonomy; beneficence and non-maleficence; trust; fidelity and scientific integrity (Edwards & Addae 2015: 88-92). These are presented in Table 1.5. The definition of each principle is presented in the first column one, the steps to uphold the principles outlined in the literature are presented in the second column, and the actual plans that the researcher made with regard to each of the ethical principles are presented in the third column.

Table 1.5: Five ethical principles upheld during the study

Definition of ethical principle	Research actions needed	Steps that would be undertaken in this study
Social justice The research undertaken must be anti-discriminatory, empower service users, promote their welfare and aim for social justice (Carey 2012:103-104).	Creating a platform for the voiceless and vulnerable to express their needs and challenges (Bouma et al 2012:103)	To promote the inclusion of women in developing housing practices, the researcher would create a platform for women to share their experiences of Glebelands CRU low-rental housing and the living conditions they experienced there.
	Reporting research findings to local and state agencies to effect positive change (Carey 2012:103-104; Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005:132)	The researcher would present the recommendations made by the women participants about their needs for low-cost rental stock to local, provincial and national Human Settlement Departments to motivate for improved housing for vulnerable women.
Respect for persons and their autonomy The participation of research participants in any study must be voluntary and they must be properly informed about what the research entails and what the potential risks and benefits of their participation will be (Creswell & Poth 2018:55; Bouma et al 2012:167; Carey 2012:101).	Informing research participants about the overall purpose for conducting the study and what will be expected of them (Carey 2012:101; Bouma et al 167; Creswell & Poth 2018:55)	The purpose of the study would be explained to each participant during individual pre-interview sessions at a time and place convenient to them. An information sheet about the study would be provided to each participant (Addendum C). The researcher would work through the sheet with each participant and encourage them to ask questions about the study. She would need to make sure that they understood the contents of information sheet, because she anticipated that some participants could be illiterate.
	Ensuring that participants make informed decisions about their participation (Creswell and Poth 2018:55; Anderson and Morrow 2011:101) and know the potential risks and benefits of participating in the study (Mathibela 2017:34)	The participants would be informed about all the research processes planned and be advised that their participation had to be voluntary and they could withdraw from the study at any time they chose without any negative consequences. They should not feel coerced or be tricked into participating in any way. The potential risks and benefits of their participation would be outlined, and the debriefing services as planned for participants who needed them would be explained. Informed consent would be an ongoing process, and

Definition of ethical principle	Research actions needed	Steps that would be undertaken in this study
		participants would be reminded of this throughout their engagement in the study.
	Obtaining participants' voluntary consent, in writing, for the audio recording of their sessions (Carey 2012:101; Anderson & Morrow 2011:101)	Each participant's agreement to participate would be formalised in writing (Addendum D).
<p>Beneficence and non-maleficence towards participants</p> <p>The rule of any research should be to bring about "good" not "harm" when conducting a study (Polit & Beck 2010:121)</p>	Treating all research participants with respect and dignity (Creswell & Creswell 2018:89; Creswell & Poth 2018:56)	<p>The researcher would maintain physical, social, religious, familial, community, linguistic and cultural sensitivity towards participants and this would be monitored by her supervisor, her practicing reflexivity, using her research journal, and peer supervision from research cohorts based in the provincial research office.</p> <p>She would be mindful when presenting the research findings, making sure the answers to the research questions were based on the participants' words without judgement.</p>
	Upholding each participant's confidentiality and anonymity (Bouma et al 2012:166; Creswell & Creswell 2018:89)	<p>Personal information shared by participants would be protected by using a coding system and pseudonyms for them, ensuring that their identities would remain secret. Concrete information about specific locations or people mentioned in the transcripts would be removed or anonymised. Research data and field notes would be meticulously stored in a safe place. Interviews would be conducted in privacy, where interruptions could be avoided, and discussions would remain private. These confidentiality measures are detailed in the confidentiality form (Addendum F).</p>
	Securing the services of a debriefer for supportive counselling for any participants disturbed by their engagement in the study (Daymon & Holloway 2011:72; Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005:132)	The researcher would arrange for a professional social worker to offer debriefing of such participants – see Addendum G (letter requesting the services of a debriefer for the study) and Addendum H (debriefing letter of acceptance to render debriefing services, and his résumé).
	Adhering to COVID-19 rules and protocols as stipulated by the Department of Cooperative Governance (sections 3 and	Regulations would be followed related to social distancing, use of hand sanitisers, wearing of protective masks, conducting of interviews in well ventilated spaces,

Definition of ethical principle	Research actions needed	Steps that would be undertaken in this study
	27(5)(c) of the Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002 (South Africa 2002a)	adhering to COVID-19 screening of all participants and the researcher before interviews commenced. Face-to-face interviews would take place only when permissible according to the lock-down regulations.
<p>Trust of the participants Trust relies upon the researcher's ability to develop a relationship of confidence with research participants (Creswell & Creswell 2018:89).</p>	<p>Making sure that participants are not deceived in any way (Creswell & Creswell 2018:89), and consulting and involving them in making research decisions such as choosing venues and choosing times that suit them for interviews</p>	<p>Pre-interview sessions would be planned with participants so that the researcher could build up trust before the interviews commenced. During the interviews the researcher would be honest and sincere and answer the questions by participants honestly. The researcher planned to be attentive towards them, take note of their needs during the research process and adapt the research methods accordingly (Bouma et al 2012:165). The intention was to equalise the power distribution between the researcher and participants so that participants would recognise that their role in the study was important and respected.</p>
	<p>Respecting the research site and causing as little disruption in the context of the study as possible (Creswell & Creswell 2018:89)</p>	<p>The researcher would work with the superintendent and participants to find suitable venues for the interviews and establish appropriate meeting times so that the research process would not disrupt the routines of the women and staff at Glebelands or compromise the participants' privacy and confidentiality.</p>
	<p>Safeguarding participants' protection, anonymity and confidentiality throughout the study (Creswell & Creswell 2018:89), and using a coding system as part of data protection (Bouma et al 2012:166)</p>	<p>This is discussed under "Beneficence and non-maleficence towards participants" and therefore does not need to be repeated here.</p>
<p>Scientific integrity The scientific integrity of any study is determined by a combination of factors, such as the theoretical constructs that are included, the quality of data sources consulted, the context of the study, and the selection and number of participants</p>	<p>Giving an accurate account of all information presented (Creswell & Creswell 2018:95-97), so that no information is falsified or withheld (Creswell & Poth 2018:57)</p>	<p>This research report (submitted for examination) would share all information gathered during the study. On presentation of the thesis for examination the researcher would sign a declaration of authenticity. The research process would be monitored by the supervisor and research cohorts working in the provincial research office for the duration of the study. The independent coder would contribute significantly to ensuring the objectivity of research themes presented.</p>

Definition of ethical principle	Research actions needed	Steps that would be undertaken in this study
involved in the study (Tracy 2010:841).	Acknowledging all sources consulted and cited during the research process (Creswell & Poth 2018:57)	All references consulted and cited in the text throughout the thesis would be included in the bibliography.
	Preparing a research report that outlines the research process and offers a summary of the research findings and making the findings available to research participants and other interested parties (Creswell & Creswell 2018:95-97)	The thesis would consist of six chapters that would explain the purpose of the study and research plan, the theoretical framework that was developed for the study, the literature review about women's right to housing and low-cost housing options and the development of CRUs, the research methodology applied and the methods, findings, conclusions and recommendations. It would provide a detailed description of each research stage. The research plan would include offering participants a session at which to share the final findings of the study once published. Abbreviated versions of the research report would be submitted to senior management of the eThekweni and provincial human settlements departments.
	Being open about the limitations and weaknesses of the study (Tracy 2010:841)	A section would be allocated to critically review the limitations and weaknesses of this study (see Chapter Six).
	Providing evidence of ethical compliance throughout the research process (Creswell & Creswell 2018:96)	The plan to uphold the ethical principles of research (see Chapter One) and the application of the plan (see Chapter Four) would be presented, enabling the reader to assess the researcher's compliance with the ethical principles outlined in the original research plan.

This concludes the discussion of ethical considerations that were planned for the study. Clarification of the key concepts relevant to this study follows.

1.11 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

As noted by Bouma et al (2012:281), it is customary to define the key concepts at the start of a research study. Several key concepts are relevant to this research topic and have been used consistently during the study, and each is defined and explained in terms of how they have been applied in this study. The key concepts are: Community Residential Units Programme; hostel; experience; challenge; coping strategy; well-being; women; and block chairperson.

1.11.1 Community Residential Units Programme

In this study the Community Residential Units Programme is prominent as the programme that replaced the hostel redevelopment programme in 2007. The CRU Programme is a set of projects completed within the framework of the same set of rules and directed at similar objectives and outputs. In the presentation of Tshangana (2016:5) to the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlement, he explained that the CRU Programme is “a sub-programme of ‘the Social and Rental interventions’ and accessible to households earning up to R3 500 per month”, and he listed the following eight options within this programme: stabilisation; demolition; refurbishment; conversion of other used buildings for residential purposes; new build infill development; new build Greenfield development; complete hostel development; and long-term maintenance – although most of the projects used the redevelopment option and the refurbishment of existing hostels.

The delivery of CRU Programme projects is coordinated mainly at the provincial level but involves engagement with projects across one or more municipalities within the province (McCarthy 2010:6). Understanding more about the existence of CRUs in the eThekweni Municipality, and specifically Glebelands CRU, is important in this study. The researcher was interested in obtaining the views of women residing in this area as a result of the development and implementation of the CRU Programme.

1.11.2 Hostel

The word “hostel”, in the South African perspective, refers to a housing compound developed and intended for black migrant workers in the early days of South Africa’s history, usually in urban areas, to provide accommodation for labourers in the mines and emerging industrial areas (Bhengu 2019:91; *Dictionary of South African English* ©2022, sv “hostel”; Xulu-Gama 2018:40-43). These compounds were developed as single-sex barracks or dormitories and are referred to now as hostels (*Dictionary of South African English* ©2022, sv “hostel”). In the context of this study, the Glebelands hostel is part of the Community Residential Units Programme, as hostels were converted to accommodate women and families.

1.11.3 Experience

Experience refers to what one feels when one finds oneself in a specific event (Karjaluo, Munnukka & Kiuru 2016:527). Experiences from a phenomenological perspective refer to the personified subjective and intersubjective characteristics of a person’s lifeworld (Tomkins & Eatough 2013:269). The experience is made clear by the person when they offer self-reported feedback in the form of a description of their experience, to advance understanding of their “lived world” (Chang & Ramnanan 2015:1163; Landgrebe 1973:1).

In this study, the term “experiences” refers to the meanings that the women ascribe to living in the Glebelands CRU.

1.11.4 Challenge

The *Cambridge dictionary* (©2023b, sv “challenge”) explains this as a difficult situation that challenges a person’s ability and that when faced requires great mental or physical effort to overcome. *Collins English dictionary* (2013, sv “challenge”) defines it as something new and difficult that necessitates great effort and determination. From a psychological perspective a challenge refers to a stumbling block that affects a person mentally and psychologically and affects their mental functioning (IGI Global 2020). In this study, the term “challenges” refers to the difficulties the women face in their daily lives that are related to living in the Glebelands CRU and that impact on their psychological and mental well-being.

1.11.5 Coping strategy

Coping strategies are the adaptive measures that people apply to minimise the stressful effects of their situation and that enable them to master, tolerate, reduce or minimise these effects (Gumede 2014:4). They are the determinations, both behavioural and psychological, that people use to direct, stomach, decrease, or minimise traumatic events. They are the efforts people make to solve personal and interpersonal problems in a composed and satisfactory manner (Kotzé, Visser, Makin, Sikkema & Forsyth 2013:499). Coping strategies in this study are the cognitive, behavioural, psychological and social measures that women living in the Glebelands CRU resort to that enable them to adapt to living there, which include their access to resources or networks that support them so that they survive on a day-to-day basis.

1.11.6 Well-being

Well-being is a multidimensional term that integrates constructs such as happiness, positive affect, low negative affect, and satisfaction with life (Dodge, Daly, Huyton & Sanders 2012:222). It is reliant on people being able to access resources and opportunities in five dimensions that enable them to flourish and fulfil their potential, namely the physical, psychological, cognitive, social and economic dimensions (Pollard & Lee in McFarlane, Kaplan & Lawrence 2011:648). Factors such as social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political issues have a serious impact on people’s well-being (Dodge et al 2012:222; Wiseman & Brasher 2008:358). In this study the term “well-being” refers to the general physical, psychological, cognitive, social, and economic fulfilment of the women who are resident in the Glebelands CRU.

1.11.7 Women

A woman is an adult female human being (*Cambridge dictionary* ©2023e, sv “woman”). The plural “women”, in its broadest sense, refers to all females of humankind, but legally the term relates to females who have reached the age of puberty (*The free dictionary* ©2003-2023b, sv “woman”). The term embodies both sex and gender (Teater 2010:87). “Sex” relates to the bodily or biological attributes that distinguish women from men, whilst “gender” reflects commonly held social constructions, thoughts beliefs and attitudes towards women (Teater 2010:87) that influence how women are socialised, what roles they are expected to play within society, and how they are treated. Socially constructed expectations of women differ from culture to culture and from one timeframe to another (Teater 2010:87). Gendered roles assigned to women have social, cultural, and political implications for them, based on the culture and time into which they are born. In this study, the term “woman” refers to an individual female resident, legal or illegal, above the age of 18 years who lives in the Glebelands CRU. The experiences of these women living in the converted Glebelands hostel was the starting point of analysis in this study. The analysis of their experiences gave some sign of how the CRU housing fulfilled their needs and well-being.

1.11.8 Block chairperson

The *Cambridge dictionary* (©2023a, sv “chairperson”), *Collins English dictionary* (2013, sv “chairperson”) and *The free dictionary* (©2003-2023a, sv “chairperson”) describe a chairperson as the person in charge of a meeting or committee. In the case of Glebelands CRU, “block chairperson” is the term normally used for the person in charge of the alphabetical blocks, usually known as blocks associated with block “R” although others refer to them as committees, “komiti”, but for Madala Stezi blocks or blocks associated with block “52”, those in charge of the blocks are called committees, “amakomiti”, only, as they are against the term “block chairperson”. Whatever term is preferred and used by different blocks depend on them and where they are situated within the CRU, but they all denote a leadership structure in the block, although certain other blocks do not have such a structure that is in power. In Glebelands CRU, this leadership structure comprises a few male residents of the block, and they allegedly set rules, take decisions and ensure adherence to rules among all the residents in that block.

The next section outlines the structure of each chapter of the final research report as tabulated.

1.11.9 Violence

Violence refers to the exercise of physical force to inflict injury on, damage or destroy persons or property; and action that is characterised by this treatment tends to cause bodily

injury interfering with personal freedom (*Oxford advanced learner's dictionary* ©2023b, sv "violence"; *Cambridge dictionary* ©2023d, sv "violence"). The hostels of eThekweni Municipality are notorious for violence (Xulu 2012:8). Ubisi (2013:11-12) says the killings involved are viewed by some women as emanating from limited resources, whilst other women attribute them to political intolerance within the CRUs. Whatever the reasons, the killings can have a direct impact on women, as they may witness these deaths and even end up being murdered themselves, whilst others may lose their significant others who are family breadwinners (Ntuli 2017). In this study, it was important to establish the impact in converted hostels of ongoing violence as one of the major characteristics of the living conditions of women residents; yet women as a vulnerable group are more comfortable in housing where they feel safe and are not worried about losing their loved ones and belongings (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:232).

1.11.10 Overcrowding

Overcrowding is defined as a condition by which more people are located within a given space than is comfortable, safe or permissible (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* ©2023a, sv "overcrowding"; *Cambridge dictionary* ©2023c, sv "overcrowding"). Stohr and Walsh (cited in Thani et al 2018:674) also define overcrowding as an unpleasant living condition that is experienced when the number of people in a household room exceeds the number of beds and space available. Overcrowding experienced by residents in eThekweni and Gauteng CRUs has created substandard living conditions for them (Thani et al 2018:673; Xulu 2012:8). These CRUs' living conditions are perceived as non-conducive for human habitation (Thani et al 2018:673). The researcher was interested in advancing knowledge about the extent of overcrowding in Glebelands and how this was dealt with by the women residents, as a disadvantaged and vulnerable group of our society (Pillay 2017:2).

1.12 RESEARCH STRUCTURE

The research report consists of six chapters as per the presentation in Table 1.6.

Table 1.6: Framework of the study

Chapter	Content
Chapter One	This chapter presents the general introduction and orientation to the study and offers the researcher's autobiographical account of what motivated her to select the topic. It is arranged according to the following topics: introduction and problem formulation, rationale for the study, research questions, goal and objectives, research approach, research design, clarification of key words, and the framework of the research report.
Chapter Two	This chapter explains the theoretical framework developed for the study, specifically the ecological approach and feminist perspective. It orientates the reader to why the combined theories were chosen for the study and how they were used to frame the women's

Chapter	Content
	experiences of living in the converted Glebelands CRU. The important theoretical concepts relevant to the two theories are explained as they relate to the study.
Chapter Three	This chapter is devoted to the literature review. It is separated into several themes: relevant legislation, policies and published works related to low-cost housing; the impact of housing on the well-being and empowerment of women; and the CRU Programme and its role in addressing the housing needs of disadvantaged women.
Chapter Four	The researcher details her application of the qualitative process, highlighting her experiences whilst conducting the study. She explains the research approach, design, data collection, data analysis, data verification, and ethical considerations in terms of how they are operationalised in the study. She details any adjustments where necessary on the basis of emergent field-related factors. She offers an explanation of how the research methodology and methods enabled her to answer the research question. The limitations of the study are also highlighted.
Chapter Five	The researcher presents the findings of the study, arranging the discussion according to the themes, sub-themes and categories that emerged during the data analysis stage. She supports the findings by citing verbatim extracts from the interview transcripts. The researcher reports on meanings that the women ascribed to the living conditions of Glebelands CRU to highlight the essence of their experiences. The findings are used to answer the research questions developed for the study pertaining to the women's experiences, challenges and coping strategies and their recommendations for how the converted CRU could be improved for women living there.
Chapter Six	This chapter offers a summary of the study and contrasts the findings with those of sources highlighted in the literature review. The limitations of the study are mentioned, before the researcher shares her recommendations for the following: practice for housing practitioners; policy development for Human Settlements departments; and future research. The chapter concludes with the essence of the study and how it inspired the researcher.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the general introduction and orientation to the study and offered the researcher's autobiographical account of what motivated her to select the topic. It is arranged according to the following topics: introduction and problem formulation, rationale for the study, research questions, goal and objectives, research approach, research design, clarification of key words, and the framework of the research report.

The theoretical framework developed for this study is explained in the next chapter and presents a combination of bio-ecological theory and feminism as chosen for this study.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework selected for this study, which combines aspects of the ecological systems perspective and the feminist perspective. Relevant theoretical concepts are clarified, and their relevance to the study is explained. The chapter thus orientates the reader to why the two theoretical perspectives were selected and how they were combined to frame the women's experiences of living in the converted Glebelands CRU.

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Creswell (2009:15-17) explains that a theoretical framework helps to structure the research process. The theoretical framework creates a lens through which the researcher sees a phenomenon more clearly, because it provides them with a certain vista (Mathibela 2017:14). The theoretical framework also creates the foundation for the study to enable the researcher to expand on knowledge that already exists (Khumalo 2013:19). It assists the researcher in designing research plans, identifying concepts, and mapping how the findings in the study connect with or contradict the concepts related to the researcher's theoretical choices (Rocco & Plakhotnik 2009:128). The theoretical framework that was needed for this study had to advance understanding of the living conditions, challenges and coping resources of women living in the Glebelands CRU in Umlazi Township and deepen the researcher's insight into the meanings the women ascribed to living in the converted CRU. The discussion begins with the ecological systems perspective and goes on to present the feminist perspective.

2.2 ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE

It was difficult to settle for one ecological systems approach and so the researcher decided to combine Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective and Gitterman and Germain's Life Model of Social Work Practice. Both perspectives are rooted in general systems theory.

2.2.1 Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach

The ecological systems perspective posited by Bronfenbrenner was introduced as a human development theory (Gray, Bird & Coates 2018:51) and then adapted to different contexts to offer more complex contextual explanations of different phenomena. It focuses on individuals, their families, associates or acquaintances and the community around them (Payne 2014:208; Ettekal & Mahoney 2017; Onwuegbuzie, Collins & Frels 2013:4-5). Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach holds that the ecological context in which an

individual is situated is composed of different tiers or layers that afford the individual both resources and challenges. The four tiers or layers are commonly referred to as micro, meso, exo and macro systems (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017; Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:4-5), and a fifth tier, the chronosystem, was added later to capture events affecting individuals and generations as they move through time (Paat 2013:956).

- **Micro-level system** – This system level focuses on the individual and the life changes he/she experiences, as well as his/her interactions with significant others who share his/her living space or home (Payne 2014:189-190; Congress 2013:129). Bronfenbrenner as quoted by Onwuegbuzie et al (2013:5) posited that the micro system is the immediate environment that individuals find themselves in and therefore has the biggest impact on their life. The relationships that they experience at this level are proximal, direct and face to face (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017:239). In the context of this study, the researcher would examine the women's experience of sharing their living space with partners, children and/or fellow roommates in the Glebelands CRU. The researcher wanted to explore the bi-directional transactions the women had with their significant others as they went about their daily business, sharing cooking facilities, ablutions and common living spaces. These proximal networks of support would be relevant for this study because they would potentially enable or prevent the women from adapting to their living spaces.
- **Meso-level system** – Interactions at this level occur between the individual and significant people whom they encounter in their nearby surroundings when attending to their daily activities outside the home. These significant others may facilitate their adjustment to their circumstances or contribute to their stress (Congress 2013:129). Interactions between individuals and their significant others are bi-directional (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017:240). They represent the family unit's relationships within their immediate social milieu (Payne 2014:189-190; Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:4-5). In the context of this study, the meso system would help to explain the interactions that the women and their significant others living in the CRU unit engaged in within their neighbourhood surroundings (Congress 2013:129). The meso level consists of extended families, friends, neighbours, support groups and interest groups (religious, cultural or political) that the individual and significant others belong to and interact with regularly and frequently (Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:4-5). Developing a description of the meso system was relevant for the study because it would alert the researcher to relationships that the participants and their significant others who shared their living spaces had outside their immediate household, which offered the women the support or resources they needed to manage their daily stressors and enabled them to adjust

to living in a Glebelands CRU. Those relationships that satisfied several of their needs – such as for information, resources and opportunities, and/or practical help such as child-minding, short-term micro loans, cooking or shopping – would be good relationships, because these help to make people's lives easier. Conversely, the meso system may generate stress, such as cultural and ethnic conflict, prejudice, social exclusion or factionalism. It was concluded that exploration of the meso-level protective and risk factors would provide some indication of the well-being of the women living in the Glebelands CRU (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017:240).

- **Exo-level system** – This system level refers to the elements of the wider system that the individual and significant others interact with (Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5). It represents the individual's neighbourhood. The neighbourhood should offer resources and networks of support that help to socialise the individual and their significant others with whom they live (Paat 2013:960). These community environments are critical for promoting the well-being of their members. Indicators such as socio-economic status, pollution, community violence, community resources, open green spaces, access to healthy foods, community businesses, crime, discrimination and stigmatisation are distal factors that affect the well-being of people (Eamon 2001:260; Paat 2013:960). The researcher wished to understand the social support services and resources that Section V of Umlazi Township and neighbouring areas like Reunion and Isipingo offered the women who lived in the Glebelands CRU, particularly those who had migrated to the city.
- **Macro-level system** – This refers to the outermost level of the ecological system that creates the person's social blueprint or culture, sub-culture, or broader social context (Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5; Paat 2013:955). The macro system is the system that regulates values, ideologies, belief systems, ethics, economics, policies, laws, customs and cultural norms in a particular society (Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5). It significantly impacts on the other three system levels – the micro, meso and exo systems. As mentioned by Petty (2019:125-127), some of the broad macro-level factors that undermine the quality of life of women are institutional and structural inequalities, socio-economic status and cultural practices. These place external pressures on women that necessitate their adaptation, because these are forces that are very difficult for women to change (Congress 2013:129). Understanding the macro system would shed light on concepts such as participation, resilience and "goodness of fit" (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017:241). In this study the researcher wanted a contextual understanding of the participants' experiences of living in the Glebelands CRU to grasp what socio-structural factors were responsible for their oppression or empowerment.

- **Chrono system** – This system refers to all the environmental changes occurring over a person's life course that impact on their development and well-being. The changes may include socio-historical events and major life transitions (Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:6; Paat 2013:960). In this study, the researcher was interested in exploring the extent to which developmental life transitions such as marriage, parenthood and widowhood impacted on the women's day-to-day coping with or reactions to living in the Glebelands CRU. The researcher was also interested in socio-historical events that affected women living in the Glebelands CRU, such as apartheid, migrant labour and the abandoning of the Group Areas Act.

When Bronfenbrenner, a psychologist, developed the ecological systems approach, he intended his theory to focus on the human development of a child to locate fundamental factors responsible for ensuring that the child's genetic potential is fulfilled. Whilst the information about the five concentric ecological systems was relevant to the study and would help to structure findings about factors responsible for undermining or reinforcing the psycho-social well-being of women living in the Glebelands CRU, the researcher wanted more from the theory. She wanted a social work theory that would offer information about social work interventions that would improve the well-being of the women living in the Glebelands CRU holistically, interventions situated in each ecological sphere. She was therefore attracted to Germain and Gitterman's Life Model of Social Work Practice. This theory offers an expanded explanation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems approach, giving more detail to the protective factors and life stressors that people experience, the coping strategies they use to facilitate their adaptation to their habitat, and their experiences of coercive and exploitative power. Being able to apply these concepts in the study would deepen the researcher's understanding of the meanings the women ascribed to their experiences of living in the converted CRU and would inform the recommendations of the study.

The five ecological spheres and their application to women and housing as relevant to this study are further expanded upon in Chapter Three, Literature review. The fundamental concepts of the Life Model of Social Work Practice are presented in the next section, highlighting the relevance of this perspective.

2.2.2 Life Model of Social Work Practice

The Life Model of Social Work Practice is a theoretical perspective that motivates the social work profession to perform its social purpose of helping people by developing responsive environments for them to live in that support human growth, health, and satisfaction in social functioning (Gitterman & Germain 2008:51).

In the early stages of the Life Model of Social Work Practice, much focus was given to the person in his/her environment. As the theoretical perspective developed, Gitterman and Germain paid more attention to the transactional processes that occurred between the different entities of the ecological system (Ungar 2002:482). Gitterman and Germain (2008) started commenting on the struggle that social workers experienced in finding ways to respond effectively and efficiently to the needs of vulnerable populations who were overcome by their oppressive daily struggles with poverty, discrimination and difficult life circumstances. People in this category have little control over these factors (Gitterman & Germain 2008:51). It was this focus that appealed most to the researcher.

Assumptions of the Life Model of Social Work Practice perspective

- The Life Model of Social Work Practice is consistent with general systems theory. It focuses on the relationships among people, other ecological entities and different elements of the environment in which people find themselves in (Weick, Rapp, Sullivan & Kisthardt 2020:5).
- The Life Model of Social Work Practice entertains a notion of the goodness of fit between people and their environment. The physical and social aspects of the environment may create a good or poor fit between the individual and their environment. It further holds that culture may affect the interchange between these factors (Littlefield 2003:6; Teater 2010:24).
- The physical environment as explained by Gitterman and Germain (2008) encompasses both the natural world and the built-up world that has been constructed by society.
- The Life Model of Social Work Practice perspective holds that people are inherently adaptive and tend to adjust to their environment on condition that they can manage their transactions within each of the layers of their ecological system (Gitterman & Germain 2008:51).
- The Life Model of Social Work Practice uses two concepts to explain an individual's experience of broader social forces (Littlefield 2003:5-6). The first is the concept of "environment niche", which refers to the status assigned to a person or group of people by their community and broader society. The second is the notion that niches are created and sustained by socio-structural factors such as politics and social and economic factors.
- The Life Model of Social Work Practice believes strongly in the growth, development and potential of human beings, especially when they are situated in an environment that is responsive to their needs (Teater 2010:24).

However, the Life Model of Social Work Practice also acknowledges that when people are vulnerable, oppressed, abused or manipulated by those more powerful or are exposed to social and technological pollution, they become overwhelmed (Gitterman & Germain 2008:2). People become stressed when their needs and capacities, on the one hand, and the environmental responses to these needs on the other are not aligned (Gitterman & Germain 2008:7; Weick et al 2020:5). Stressors may be real or perceived, and they include threats of harm, loss or painful life events experienced by a person or group of people, and the inability to access resources needed to promote their well-being. The stressors challenge the existing coping resources of the individual, group or community; and when the stressors become intense, they can cause physical or psychological complications (Teater 2010:27). Personal skills and environmental resources are required to restore people's environmental fit (Gitterman & Germain 2008:2). In the absence of such skills and/or resources, people develop dysfunctional perceptions, emotions, thoughts and behaviour (Gitterman & Germain 2008:2). By clarifying how an environment is structured and how it affects the adaptability of the person, social workers can develop interventions to improve the fit between the person and his/her environment.

Social workers have a distinct duty to enhance the coping patterns of people and improve the environments in which they live by assessing people's adaptive needs and potential and the quality of their physical environment (Gitterman & Germain 1976:602). Social workers can intervene at three levels to promote the well-being of people: at individual, group and community levels (Gitterman & Germain 2008:51). Interventions directed at individuals should increase a person's self-esteem, self-worth, coping skills, autonomy and competence and reduce their psychological distress. Similarly, improving the transactions between persons, families, groups and/or communities reduces psychological tension. Finally, applying interventions that modify the environment may improve the adaptive fit of individuals (Gitterman 2009:232), such as interventions designed to eliminate discrimination, oppression and prejudice and increase people's opportunities and access to resources (Gitterman 2009:232).

The concepts used by Germain and Gitterman (1995:817-820) that resounded positively for the researcher are highlighted in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Concepts used by Germain and Gitterman (1995)

Concept	Explanation of the concept	Application to the study
Person–environment fit	This refers to the actual fit between, on the one hand, the person's needs, rights, objectives and capacity and, on the other, the qualities and operations of their physical and social	The researcher was interested in exploring the goodness of fit of the women living in the Glebelands CRU. She would learn of the sources of discord or harmony between the

Concept	Explanation of the concept	Application to the study
	environments, given the person's cultural and historical context. This fit may be categorised as favourable, minimally acceptable, or unfavourable.	women and their environment (Teater 2010:24; Littlefield 2003:5).
Adaptations	This refers to the constant, change-oriented, cognitive, sensory-perceptual and behavioural processes a person engages in so that they will be able to tolerate or increase the level of fit between themselves and their environment (Littlefield (2003:3).	In this study the researcher wanted to discover how women adapted to the stressors associated with living in the Glebelands CRU without the stressors disrupting their daily functioning and overall psychosocial security.
Life stressors	These refer to life-threatening issues that people believe require more than the personal and environmental resources they have at their disposal to manage them. A stressor usually signals severe harm or loss and therefore generates the feeling of being at risk.	The researcher wished to identify the nature and location of stressors that undermined the women's ability to cope with living in the Glebelands CRU.
Stress	This term refers to the way a person reacts to a life stressor. It is recognised by the disturbed emotional and/or physiological states it generates within the person.	In the context of this research, the researcher was interested in discovering whether the women living in the Glebelands CRU experienced any stress.
Coping measures	These are the distinct behaviours a person develops, often new, when confronted by a life stressor, that are used to manage the new or unexpected demands that the life stressor places on them. Coping refers to the person's ability to manage despite the new demands and can be promoted by different environmental and personal resources. Coping measures emerge from a person's perceptions of their environmental demands and resources, and their review of their personal response capabilities (Gitterman & Germain 1976:602).	The researcher wanted to establish what coping strategies the women used to manage the life stressors they encountered while living in the Glebelands CRU.
Relatedness	This refers to the attachments, friendships and positive relationships a person experiences that provide them with a sense of belonging, associated with having a supportive social network.	The researcher wanted to learn from the women living in the Glebelands CRU whether they experienced a sense of relatedness within their living environment and to discover which relationships offered them psychosocial support.
Self-direction	This refers to a person's inner ability to exert some control over their life and take responsibility for their choices and actions whilst concurrently respecting the rights and needs of others. A person's self-direction is endangered	The researcher was interested in learning about the extent to which the women living in the Glebelands CRU experienced their ability to take control of their lives and make self-sustaining

Concept	Explanation of the concept	Application to the study
	when they experience oppression, discrimination and lack of independence (Congress 2013:129; Teater 2010:24).	decisions that improved the quality of their lives.
Niche	This refers to the social status that a person, family or community holds in the social structure of the community where they are located (Littlefield 2003:6).	The researcher was curious about the status that the women living in the Glebelands CRU believed they held both in the hostels and in the broader community that they found themselves living in.
Coercive power	This refers to the use of power by forceful groups to suppress other groups on the basis of their personal and cultural characteristics. This is the source of oppression (Gray et al 2018:52).	The researcher was interested in discovering whether there were any dominant groups living in the Glebelands CRU that took away the personal liberties of the participants.
Exploitative power	This refers to the abuse inflicted by dominant groups, often in the name of development and technological advancement, endangering the health and well-being of other people and communities through things such as pollution and depletion of natural resources (Gitterman & Germain 2008:2).	It was important for the researcher to discover whether the women living in the Glebelands CRU experienced air, water or noise pollution and/or the loss of open spaces and natural habitat while residing in high-density living quarters built on the periphery of an industrial area.
Habitat	This refers to a combination of the physical and social settings an individual or group of people finds themselves in (Gitterman & Germain 2008:7).	The researcher intended to contextualise the physical surroundings and social milieu the women experienced while living in the Glebelands CRU.

The researcher wanted to discover whether there was a goodness of fit amongst the women who lived in the low-cost housing rental stock in the Glebelands CRU. She would explore sources of friction between the women and their environment to find out how their living conditions contributed to their human problems (Teater 2010:24; Littlefield 2003:5). The purpose of the study was to appraise holistically the experiences of female residents in the Glebelands CRU, identifying both the stressors that negatively affected their well-being and the strengths they used to manage those stressors (Gray et al 2018:52; Schenk, Mbedzi, Qalinge, Schultz, Sekudu & Sesoko 2015:96; Congress 2013:129; Teater 2010:24). The intention was to examine the factors that stressed the women living in the Glebelands CRU and discover coping strategies they used to overcome challenging living circumstances. The researcher was particularly interested in the built-up world and how migrating women who had moved into the Glebelands CRU were affected by their physical environment. She would explore their experiences and discover the adaptations they had to make to adjust to their physical environment. She would investigate the resources they accessed to enable them to adjust to their living conditions. The researcher was curious about the quality of

social relationships the Glebelands women encountered while living in the CRU and how their perceptions of their physical surroundings impacted on the frequency and quality of the social connections they experienced. By exploring the social relationships described by the women, she would gather cultural and contextual descriptions of their experiences, challenges and coping strategies of living in the Glebelands CRU at Umlazi Township. As pointed out by Teater (2010:25), Gitterman and Germain's view is that physical, social and cultural environments shape a person's identity, competence and autonomy. Understanding these contextual realities would help to generate recommendations on how the existing Glebelands CRU could be improved to advance the well-being of women dependent upon low-cost rental housing stock in the city.

There were distinct advantages of using the ecological perspectives of both Bronfenbrenner and Gitterman and Germain for this study:

- The participants' individualised perspectives of their situation would be advanced in keeping with the qualitative approach and phenomenological research design as planned for the study.
- The connection between direct services, administration and policy planning would be illuminated (Congress 2013:129). Such empirical evidence could influence role-players involved with organisational structures (such as architects and town planners within the Department of Human Settlements at national, provincial and local government levels), community liaison services, governmental and non-governmental social services, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the South African Police Service to make them more responsive to the needs of women who live in the Glebelands CRU (Woolley 2013:6).
- Service providers could be sensitised about the role they had to play to facilitate the adaptive fit for the women who were dependent upon low-cost rentals in converted CRUs.
- The findings of the study would challenge the status quo to find cultural and contextual measures to enable vulnerable women to achieve a better person-in-environment fit, which, according to Germain and Gitterman (in Teater 2010:28), generates diverse, supportive environments and positive human growth and development.
- Inherent in improving the environmental fit of an individual, group or community is the dismantling of discrimination, oppression and prejudices, and the creation of new opportunities for vulnerable individuals, groups and communities (Teater 2010:25). This is consistent with the human rights and social justice purpose of social work.

The use of an ecological approach would not be without some negatives that the researcher had to consider:

- It would be challenging to develop and maintain collaborative relationships with research respondents, given their experiences of dealing with politicians and housing and municipal authorities. The researcher planned to overcome this by spending time with participants and establishing trusting relationships before she would expect them to share their personal, interpersonal and environmental experiences (Teater 2010:33; Gitterman 2009:232; Gitterman and Germain 2008:51).
- Dismantling socio-structural forces such as inequality and the abuse of power is very hard (Teater 2010:33). Whilst the researcher acknowledged this, she strongly believed there was a need to create a platform for the women in Glebelands to give voice to these experiences, and she would have to disseminate the women's experiences in different personal and professional contexts after the research report had been assessed.
- Achieving a good level of fit between people and their environments is difficult in practice. Recommendations emanating from the study would be shared with eThekweni Human Settlements to motivate their response to the Glebelands women's needs and help them to overcome the obstacles that kept them trapped in their challenging situations (Gitterman 2009:232).
- Unless appropriate interventions are developed in consultation with the clients about what perceptions and interactions are required to mobilise stakeholders to create new resources, authorities will focus on standardising policies and procedures rather than responding to what is needed (Gitterman & Germain 1976:605). The researcher planned to involve the women of Glebelands in the advocacy process for their situation and be part of the change they wished to see as residents in the Glebelands CRU.

This concludes the outline of the ecological approach and the researcher's justification for selecting this theoretical perspective for this study. The next theoretical perspective is that of feminism, which addresses women's rights from a social justice perspective, as presented next.

2.3 THE FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

The feminist perspective is described as "an attitude, a lens, a body of ideas about gender hierarchy and its impact on people and society, rather than a specific model" (Carter in Collins, Jordan & Coleman 2010:334). Feminist social work, according to Dominelli (in Teater 2010:90), is

[a] form of social work practice that takes women's experiences of the world as the starting point of analysis and by focussing on the links between a woman's position in society and her individual predicament, responds to her specific needs, creates egalitarian relations in 'client'-worker interactions and addresses structural inequalities.

The development of the feminist movement was driven largely by grassroots movements as early as the 1800s. Women came together to give expression to their dissatisfaction about being oppressed by men and society at large. The women's movements gained momentum during the 1960s (Corey 2014:352), and a thrust of gender-bias research emerged in the 1970s and 1980s (Corey 2014:332; Teater 2010:88). Subsequently several hybrids of feminism have developed: liberal, radical, socialist, Black, cultural, and postmodern feminism (Corey 2014:332-334; Teater 2010:89). The researcher will not explain the different hybrids but will instead focus on their shared assumptions.

In every known human society men and women are treated differently. Masculinity and femininity are highly political constructs that determine who must be perpetually submissive in society (Makama in Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). Feminist theory seeks to determine why in every society "men appear to have more power and privileges than women" (Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). It further seeks to understand how discrimination against women can be redressed by people joining forces to defeat patriarchal super-structures that dehumanise women and reduce them to mere objects of reproduction (Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). All efforts are made to help men to realise that it is harmful for them to lord it over women (Thobejane in Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). However, as pointed out by Corey (2014:331), feminism essentially challenges any form of psychological oppression of people and strives to uphold multicultural diversity and social justice in an effort to achieve democratic relationships between all people (Corey 2014:331). Feminism regards men and women as interdependent, and it advocates for equal empowerment of both genders, giving permission to people to redefine themselves independently rather than follow historical social prescriptions of gender roles and positions in society (Corey 2014:353).

As mentioned by Ndinda (2009:320), feminist theory asserts that empowerment of women can be achieved by focusing on three things: resources, agency and achievement. Resources refer to human, material and social capital that women should be able to acquire because of their relationships with family, market and community. The rules and norms that decide how resources should be distributed must be just. Agency refers to the personal motivation, drive and commitment behind a person's actions, or what Kabeer (in Ndinda 2009:320) refers to as "the power within". Achievement is measured by the extent to which the basic needs of people are satisfied and how well represented they are in political sectors (Ndinda 2009:321). All three factors were relevant for this study: the resources that participants were able to secure when living in the Glebelands CRU; the personal drive,

commitment and “drive within” of the women interviewed; and, finally, the extent to which the women’s basic needs were satisfied and addressed in the Glebelands CRU.

2.3.1 Assumptions on which the feminist perspective rests

Several assumptions on which the feminist perspective rests as outlined by Corey (2014:337-338) were relevant to this study:

- **The personal is political.** The problems that women experience are in most instances caused by their political and social context. Women are marginalised, oppressed, subordinated and stereotyped, which undermines their well-being and development.
- **Commitment to social change is embraced.** The purpose of feminism is to transform society by righting the wrongs that women suffer so that women are not oppressed by gender role expectations or dominated by men.
- **Female voices and female ways of knowing are valued.** The patriarchal perspective is replaced with feminist consciousness. Women’s voices are recognised as authoritative and are considered as valuable sources of knowledge.
- **Attention to power is vital.** Feminism strives to create egalitarian relationships in which women are recognised as experts of their own lives. Giving women this recognition advances their personal empowerment and growth and development.
- **The focus is on strengths and the reframing of psychological distress.** The psychological distress of women is considered in most instances to be caused by the unfair system that compromises their well-being. Symptoms of psychological distress are viewed as motivators of strategies that women can devise to survive their difficult circumstances. Humans have an inherent capacity within to deal with psychological distress, and one strategy they use to get by is to reframe what is happening to them.
- **Feminism is anti-oppressive.** Feminism targets all types of oppression. It opposes all types of social and political inequality, such as racism, classism, ageism, and prejudice levelled at other cultures. The purpose of feminism is to empower and liberate all people from all forms of stereotyping, marginalisation and oppression.

These assumptions offer insight into why this theoretical perspective was relevant for this study. The researcher’s motivations for including feminism in the theoretical framework are made more explicit in the next section.

2.3.2 Advantages of adopting the feminist perspective in research

Advantages of this perspective comprise the following:

- Feminism is anti-oppressive in nature and directed towards promoting social change (Corey 2014:337; Teater 2010:97). The motivation behind this research was to find

ways to make sure that the development, design and administration of the Glebelands CRU would be sufficiently responsive to the needs of women residents who lived there. The researcher wished to establish whether the current set-up at Glebelands needed to be adapted to better suit or satisfy the fundamental needs of women who were reliant upon this form of low-cost housing. Regrettably, women's housing needs remain hidden despite their significance in terms of uplifting their socio-economic wellbeing (Watson 1986:2).

- The feminist perspective can be used in conjunction with other theories (Teater 2010:97). The researcher would use the feminist perspective in conjunction with the ecological perspective, which has much in common with feminism.
- The feminist perspective is empowerment based – it sets out to create opportunities for women to use their strengths and access resources they need on personal, interpersonal and societal levels so that the boundaries that prevent them from achieving their potential can be removed (Teater 2010:97). The researcher planned to provide the women living in the Glebelands CRU with a platform to voice their concerns about the resources and opportunities they lacked as a result of the form of housing they had been allocated. The researcher perceived her role in the research process as being that of a co-researcher rather than an “expert” and the research participants as experts of their own situations. She believed that the participants’ contribution to the research was equal to hers. Therefore, the research process was egalitarian and collaborative in nature (Teater 2010:98).
- The feminist perspective advances gender-sensitive practice and awareness of factors in the cultural context that are responsible for the multiple oppressions women experience (Corey 2014:353). The oppression of women in housing has been overlooked by town planning and human settlements departments, as noted in the second draft of the Women’s Charter (National Women’s Coalition 1994) and by Pillay et al (2002:7-8). The researcher wished to advance social justice and equitable living conditions for male and female residents in the Glebelands CRU.
- The feminist perspective has been successfully applied in social awareness research that addresses the social injustice of women (Corey 2014:354). Social awareness and social justice are important principles relevant to housing for women.
- The feminist perspective offers a clear framework for conducting research that involves women (Jayat 2013:132). The framework helps to structure research findings and ascribe meanings to participants’ responses.

2.3.3 Justification for choosing the feminist perspective for a study on women and housing

The feminist perspective is relevant in a study such as this because it appreciates women's experiences and political realities and the distinctive role allocated to women in a patriarchal system (Corey 2014:331). The feminist perspective challenges male assumptions of what constitutes a mentally healthy person and aims to equitably distribute power amongst men and women. The relevance of the feminist perspective in this study is highlighted by Watson (1986:1), who notes that a "house" for many women represents the site of domestic labour and a place of violence and oppression. Sadly, the processes in the housing system reinforce women's dependence on men's economic status, which marginalises and excludes them further, particularly within housing tenure (Watson 1986:2). The marginalisation of women in housing affects their identity, personal development, self-concept, goals and aspirations, and emotional well-being because their inferior status is reinforced (Watson 1986:1). When women are unable to secure adequate housing, their ability to access employment opportunities is significantly reduced. Equally, when women struggle to secure employment, they never get to choose where they would like to live (Watson 1986:2).

The researcher is aware that there were several limitations to using a feminist perspective for the study, as is explained next.

2.3.4 Limitations of the feminist perspective

Several limitations associated with using a feminist perspective in the study were identified before the study. The limitations considered were the following:

- Feminist practitioners are not neutral, and there is a risk that the stance they take during the study can influence the people they work with (Corey 2014:355). This is unacceptable in research unless precautionary measures are taken to uphold researcher neutrality. Researcher bias or influence undermines the credibility of research findings. In this respect the researcher recognised the importance of putting measures in place so that her personal and professional values would not influence research participants and the research process (see Chapter One, research reflexivity, data verification).
- Eliminating personal bias from the research process, according to Corey (2014:356), is an arduous task that must be undertaken throughout the research process. Reflective practice was built into the research process (see Chapter One and Chapter Four, data verification).

- Focusing on contextual explanations of a person's problems can obscure the intrapsychic factors responsible for a woman's problems (Corey 2014:356). The researcher would have to consciously balance her perspectives about external factors responsible for the problems experienced by women living in CRUs and acknowledge that some of the women may have had inner issues responsible for their stress and poor adaptation whilst living in the Glebelands CRU. The researcher hoped that her inclusion of the ecological perspective would balance this potential bias.
- Feminism requires interventions at multiple levels – individual, interpersonal and socio-political (Teater 2010:98). As noted by Teater (2010:98), not all social work organisations support advocacy on behalf of service users at a macro level, and therefore many social workers shy away from tackling socio-political issues. The researcher would remind herself that studies and statistics indicate that low-income women of all races are evicted at much higher rates than men, and Black women are overrepresented in court-ordered evictions (Phillips 2015:323). The researcher was mindful that social justice had to be upheld at all costs, even if findings of the study upset the status quo of the local and provincial governments. Advocating for social justice is an integral objective of social work (Edwards & Addae 2015: 88-89).

The feminist theoretical perspective is congruent with the first theoretical approach chosen for the study, the ecological perspective (Teater 2010:87), which acknowledges the interdependence and interconnection of the person and environment (Teater 2010:97). Consistent with both theoretical approaches, the researcher's plan was to respect the diversity of women and their cultural differences. She set out to establish an equal, democratic research relationship between herself and the research participants, hoping that the women's participation would become an empowering process for them (Corey 2014:333; Teater 2010:90). The researcher therefore believed that the advantages of including the feminist approach outweighed its limitations.

The purpose of combining the ecological systems and feminist perspectives was firstly, to prompt a deep understanding of the protective and disabling elements situated within the different levels of ecological system that enhanced or threatened the wellbeing of women living in the Glebelands CRU. Secondly, the inclusion of the feminist perspective highlights how the intersectionality of gender, poverty, culture and unemployment, disproportionately reduces the access that marginalised women have to housing, that can be considered adequate, and keeps them and their children trapped in poverty.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explained the theoretical framework developed and implemented for the study. It commenced with an explanation of the ecological perspective, arguing in favour of a combination of Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and Germain and Gitterman's Life Model of Social Work Practice. The central concepts of both these perspectives were outlined before explaining the assumptions on which they are based. The advantages and disadvantages of using these for the study were weighed up, and it was decided that each had relevance for this study and their objectives were well aligned. The feminist perspective was introduced, and the central concepts and assumptions of the perspective were explained. The advantages and disadvantages of adopting a feminist perspective for the theoretical framework of the study were considered. A section related to feminism and housing was presented to highlight how the feminist perspective could contribute to the empowerment of the participants and improve their human rights. The rationale for combining the two ecological perspectives above with the feminist perspective was presented. The chapter has explained how the researcher hoped to use the theoretical framework to frame the participants' experiences of living in the converted Glebelands CRU.

Chapter Three focuses on women's position in terms of housing and how the conversion into CRUs of hostels originally designed for male migrant workers was meant to provide vulnerable women with housing that would increase their access to better socio-economic opportunities and contribute to their empowerment. Detail is offered about legislation and housing policies introduced to improve access to low-cost housing rentals for women. The policies and structures responsible for the conversion of male hostels into CRUs are explained. The living conditions experienced by residents living in CRUs are described, before turning attention to the Glebelands CRU and sharing some of the main concerns that residents have about living there.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Housing is a basic human need that contributes hugely to the optimum functioning of individuals, families and communities (Lee cited in Sobantu et al 2019:4). When housing is adequate it connects beneficiaries to services that enable them to enjoy peaceful and comfortable lives (Sobantu et al 2019:6). Quality housing for women empowers them and increases their social inclusion but also contributes significantly to the well-being of their children because it increases their access to education and healthcare (Sobantu et al 2019:4). The provision of adequate housing is therefore a positive means of accelerating social development: it promotes equality, social justice, human rights and dignity; and therefore the provision of housing for vulnerable people, especially women, should be escalated according to the rights-based perspective (Noyoo in Sobantu et al 2019:3). However, as indicated in Chapter One, the right to housing remains one of the most “under-studied and ill-defined” elements in human rights dialogue (Hohmann cited in Sobantu et al 2019:2).

This chapter reviews available literature on international approaches for increasing housing for low-income families. It then outlines the background of the integration of women into hostels and CRUs in South Africa. At the outset the researcher must report that only limited locally specific literature could be found about CRUs, women and housing, and the participation of women in the development processes of housing for low-income groups. Whilst some sources cited in this chapter may appear to be dated, the researcher maintains that the content extracted from the older works remains relevant to this study.

CRUs are family housing complexes developed by the government to replace single-sex workers’ hostels (Xulu 2014:140). The literature review commences with existing South African legislation introduced to protect the interests of low-income residents and provide affordable rental stock in the form of CRU rentals.

The chapter explains how the apartheid hostel system intended for migrant workers was modified by the post-apartheid government to increase rental stock for disadvantaged women and children. The concept of CRUs, their purpose, and how they were introduced in South Africa are elaborated on. The challenges associated with CRU projects are mentioned, and the chapter concludes with what is reported about the ongoing challenges that residents living in Glebelands contend with daily.

This chapter commences with the available international approaches used for low-income families.

3.1 INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES FOR INCREASING HOUSING FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES

Being able to provide sufficient and adequate housing for low-income families is a global challenge (Charitonidou 2022:1345; Eagle 2017:301; Gurrán, Maalsen & Shrestha 2022:10; Janakipour, Zarhamfard, Hajisharifi & Hoseinzadeh 2022:185; Hussain, Saha, Rabbani, Pervin, Shamma & Khan 2015:1; Sabela & Isike 2018:9; Sabri 2018:44). The provision of adequate, affordable housing for all is therefore one of the primary developmental goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Ebekozién, Abdul-Aziz & Jaafar 2018:249; Jarbandhan, Viljoen, de Beer, Blaauw (2016:169). The premise of this objective is that by securing adequate housing for all the upward income mobility of low-income earners will improve which will help to enhance their socio-economic wellbeing and the socio-economic wellbeing of nations (SJ Newman 2008:895; Visagie & Turok 2020:4). A range of housing policies have been developed throughout the world to ease the housing crisis experienced by the poor. The most popular approaches to housing mentioned in the literature that have been internalised into international housing policies include:

- **Public housing**, which consists of housing units owned and administered by local public housing authorities that are reserved specifically for subsidized rental for low-income families who satisfy a means test (SJ Newman 2008:898)
- **Privately owned developments**, that charge affordable rentals determined by national and local housing authorities, also commonly referred to as social housing. Social housing and is common practice in Western European countries such as Austria, China (Liu, Dong, Cui, Wang & Guo 2022:1), England (Crook, Bibby, Ferrari, Monk, Tang & Whitehead 2016:3388) as well as the United States of America, Malaysia (Ebekozién, et al 2022:1736), and Nigeria (Agbole 1990:59) and South Africa (SJ Newman 2008:898). Certain properties, or structures are reserved for subsidised rental housing according to a formalised state policy that regulates what the identified property's purpose will be and how it must function (Hansson & Lundgren 2019). Government funding is made available to private developers to enable them to construct and or administer the low-cost housing rentals. Those who apply for the subsidized rental accommodation are subjected to a means test (Bengtsson 2017). The advantages of social housing are that people of all races and backgrounds can access fair housing that is affordable and adequate in well-located areas, usually in the inner city. This increases their

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Visagie, J & Turok, I. 2020. Social housing and upward mobility. *Human Sciences Research Council Research Paper No. 191.*

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access to resources that contribute positively to their wellbeing and socio-economic development (Eagle 2017:301). One of the drawbacks is that low-income beneficiaries often default in their rental payments (Agbola 1990:59; Onathi 2023) which threatens the economic viability of these projects.

- Homeownership through capital housing subsidies** (Gil & Celhay 2022:1148; Sabela & Isike 2018:9; Sabri 2018:44). This form of housing rests on the premise that by enabling low-income families to own a property one will enhance their social mobility and economic development (Gil & Celhay 2022:1148). Subsidized housing is common practice in countries such as Brazil (Vecchia, & Medvedovski 2021:589), Chile (Cawley 2019:587; Gil & Celhay 2022:1148), Malaysia (Ebekoziem et al 2018:249), Turkey (Aljurida, Asang, Syahribulan & Rusdi 2021:3712) and Ukraine (Shteingaus, Kuznyetsova & Achhimovich 2021:178). Unfortunately, subsidized housing is a costly expense for governments and the money allocated is never adequate (Agbola 1990:16), the demand for subsidised housing exceeds the supply, corruption and exploitation commonly undermine the positive outcomes of subsidised housing (Ebekoziem 2021:165); the mass production of dwellings compromises the quality and sustainability of their construction; and the inclusion of housing beneficiaries in the planning and implementation of the housing developments is often overlooked (Nyakala, Ramoroka & Kemlall 2021:23; Sabela & Isike 2018:9)
- Self-build or self-help housing** (Obremski & Carter 2019:167). This form of housing relief is practiced in different forms. In some countries communities are assisted by the government to build their own homes such as in England and Wales (Obremski & Carter 2019:167). In others, non-governmental organisations guide community members on the design, site layout, technical and legal details of housing delivery and promote their participation in the process (Ndinda 2009:322). Amongst the benefits of this empowering approach to housing is that it advances social cohesion, social capital, and participation at the outset of the programme. However, these gains wain over time unless ongoing social structures are in place to support the communities.
- Upgrading of slums or informal settlements.** Construction companies, funded by the state, upgrade existing informal settlement areas, and assist residents living in the informal communities to upgrade their dwellings. Countries such as Colombia (Yunda, Ceballos-Ramos & Rincón- Castellanos 2022: 1877), (Pakistan Observer 2021:1), and Turkey (Aljurida, Asang, & Rusdi 2021:3712) have housing policies that promote the approach to improve public space in informal settlements, rather than expand the housing supply that never meets the demand.

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Despite the variety of housing approaches integrated into housing policies reflected on paper, the execution of the existing policies falls short. Some of the reasons being: there is a failure to implement them, dishonesty derails their implementation, housing allocations are inadequate, and 'political resistance' persists. Once the housing has been built those with political power or wealth take control of it and those that it is intended fail to take occupation (Hussain et al 2015:1). Housing recipients are seldom included during the design and construction phases of low-cost housing projects and so it fails to meet the families' needs (Özen & Aksoy 2021:1; Vecchia & Medvedovski 2021:589) because little consideration is given to the social and cultural aspects of the daily lives of the poor (Charitonidou 2022:1345). Lastly, housing recipients also exploit the housing system. Recipients are known to under-declare their income to qualify for low-cost housing. Some sell the house they have received the subsidy for within the stipulated moratorium period for house owners to access cash (Ebekoziem et al 2018:249).

The researcher's efforts to explore international scholarship on the topic of community residential units as a suitable option for low-income families failed. The articles the Google Scholar search engine and international journal database sites EBSCOhost and ScienceDirect identified that used the key words "community residential units" was used in a different context than the one used in this study. The key words were used to refer to semi-protective residential care units for patients with mental health problems in several different countries such as Australia (Korman, Ng, Gore-Jones, Dark & Parker 2023:213; Parker, Arnautovska, Sisking, Dark, McKeon, Korman & Harris 2020), Greece (Lakioti 2014:119), Ireland (Usman & Spelman 2022:710) and the United States of America (2022). The key words 'community residential units' in this study refer to the transformation of former single sex hostels into family housing by the South African government to replace colonial-government created single-sex hostels for migrant workers (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:223; Thurman 1997:46; Thani et al 2018:670; Ubisi 2013:29; Xulu 2012:8; Xulu 2014:140; Xulu 2015:75). It was therefore concluded that the concept, community residential units is a South African homebred solution to increase subsidised low-cost housing rental accommodation for disadvantaged families by remodelling the old migrant hostels. This type of housing is situated somewhere between public subsidized low-cost rental accommodation and social housing.

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The second section to be discussed refers to national policies related to affordable rental stock for disadvantaged low-income earners living in South African cities.

3.2 NATIONAL POLICIES RELATED TO AFFORDABLE RENTAL STOCK FOR DISADVANTAGED LOW-INCOME EARNERS LIVING IN SOUTH AFRICAN CITIES

When people migrate to urban areas, they expect to access housing that offers healthy living conditions (Ubisi 2013:29). Sadly, the expectations of those in the low-income category are seldom met because urban housing is expensive and people with limited resources are relegated to living in cheap accommodation, usually in the most densely populated urban areas (Slater 2011:8; Hoek-Smit 2011:51). The population increase in poor urban neighbourhoods breeds unhealthy living conditions that perpetuate diseases such as cholera, malaria and typhoid (Cheserek & Opata 2011:320). Those living in such neighbourhoods are exposed to many risks, social problems such as substance abuse and crime, and the struggle to access resources (Kleinhans, Van der Land & Doff 2010:382).

It is a constitutional obligation for the South African government to deliver basic services to its citizens, such as water, electricity, sanitation and housing (Ndinda 2001:62; South Africa 1996a: section 26(2)). Housing legislation and reformed housing policies have been developed by the South African government in accordance with its strategic goals to reduce poverty and improve the living conditions of previously disadvantaged groups (Ngcongo & Mtshali 2006:216; Ubisi 2013:29). The South African government opted for an enabling approach to housing delivery to address the disabling factors that had kept black South Africans trapped in poverty and to enable the government to achieve these strategic goals (Ndinda 2009:317).

Legislative and policy documents most relevant to this research topic are listed in chronological order in Table 3.1. The first column in the table reflects the name and date of the legislated document or policy, and the second column explains its purpose.

Table 3.1: Legislative and policy documents and their purposes

Policy and legislation	Purposes
White Paper on Housing (1994)	The White Paper: A New Housing Policy and Strategy for South Africa (South Africa 1994a) was introduced to operationalise the objectives of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (Sobantu & Nel 2019:284). This White Paper on Housing provides a comprehensive strategy for the government to realise the RDP (Ndinda 2001:62). The South African government committed to providing 338 000 units annually to reach the target of one million houses for the poor before 2000. The policy offered a mix of project-based and individual subsidies to address the needs of differentiated groups (Manomano & Tanga 2018:20; Ndinda 2001:63). Based on this document, citizens who have satisfied a means test should be entitled to a lasting residential structure with protected tenure that offers them privacy and acceptable shelter from the elements. The homes are meant to have potable water, sanitary facilities, including waste disposal, and a domestic electricity supply (Ndinda 2001:63).
Constitution of South Africa (1996)	The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa defends the right of every South African citizen to suitable housing and advocates equality, non-racialism and non-sexism as basic values (South Africa 1996a: section 26). The Constitution mentions explicitly the South African government's responsibility to "take reasonable legislative and other measures, given available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right" (South Africa 1996a: section 26(2)). The Constitution acknowledges every citizen's right to housing that offers privacy and upholds their dignity and that is allocated equitably for both men and women (Khumalo 2013:10). Therefore, provision of proper housing for all is important, and any discrimination in this regard should be avoided. The Constitution can therefore be used to assess whether women residents at the Glebelands CRU enjoy housing that promotes their well-being, and whether the housing they access satisfies the norms and standards for sub-economic housing. The needs of black women who migrate to the peripheries of cities should not continue to be overlooked. Without such an assessment and deepened knowledge, it cannot be determined whether the housing that this vulnerable group can access advances the equitable allocation of housing for all South Africans.
Housing Act 107 of 1997	The Housing Act 107 of 1997 outlines terms and conditions of South Africa's intended sustainable housing development process. It defines the general principles for housing development in all spheres of government and the functions of national, provincial and local governments apropos the development of housing. Section 2(1) of the Act orders that all spheres of government must prioritise the housing needs of the poor and engage in meaningful consultation with individuals and communities who are likely to be affected by housing developments. The Act emphasises the positive role that consultation should play to ensure that housing projects will be successful.
Rental Housing Act 50 of 1999	The Rental Housing Act 50 of 1999 was ratified to safeguard the interests of people living in rented accommodation. The Act regulates the relationship between landlords and residents in all types of rental housing. The main purpose of the ratification of the Act was to redress biased housing practices commonly reported to existing rental housing tribunals. Section 7 of the Rental Housing Act provides for the

Policy and legislation	Purposes
	<p>establishment of provincial rental housing tribunals to resolve disputes between landlords and residents and to reduce biased practices by both parties. Section 15(1)(f) defines different types of discriminating practices that must be curtailed: altering locks, destruction to property, withholding deposits, forced entry or obstruction of entry, failing to comply with house procedures, using intimidation, failing to issue legal receipts, non-compliance in terms of establishing residents' committees, failure to deliver municipal services, demolitions and conversions, being a nuisance, overcrowding and health problems, improper activities of residents, failure to conduct routine maintenance, and issues related to rebuilding or renovations.</p>
Social Housing Act 16 of 2008	<p>The Social Housing Act 16 of 2008 was introduced to create and endorse sustainable social housing. It outlines the functions of national, provincial and local governments in respect of social housing and regulates the actions of housing delivery agents who are allocated contracts to build houses with state-allocated public money. The Act determines the conditions under which social housing institutions can be appointed legally and provides for the establishment of the Social Housing Regulatory Authority, which is responsible for regulating social housing institutions that receive or are in the process of receiving funds earmarked for creating housing.</p>
Integrated Residential Development Programme (2009)	<p>The RDP was later replaced by the Integrated Residential Development Programme (IRDP) (Department of Human Settlements 2009a). The IRDP offers an integrated approach to housing projects to address the social and economic needs of people in different income categories, not just the poor. The programme advances subsidised and finance-linked housing, social and rental housing, commercial and institutional developments, and other land uses. The aspect of the programme relevant to this study is that the IRDP should provide rental housing, such as CRUs (Department of Human Settlements 2009b:9). The IRDP is meant to ensure that beneficiaries enjoy housing in well-located areas to increase their social inclusion and access to urban facilities and employment opportunities (Department of Human Settlements 2009a). In the document, the government acknowledges that it is unable to provide every indigent person with a house and offers a perspective of housing as both a product and a process. Hence, the provision of good quality housing requires support from community-based organisations and collaborative partnerships. This integrated approach is intended to increase the capacity of poorly housed communities and encourage them to form groups to work together to build their own homes. For example, church-based organisations (CBOs) and non-profit organisations (NGOs) are considered to have sufficient capacity to facilitate training and development of the community members to build sustainable homes.</p>

The documents detailed in Table 3.1 point to how and why housing subsidy schemes and programmes plan to provide adequate rental stock for disadvantaged people (Ubisi 2013:29). The themes that run through these South African housing policies and pieces of legislation are clear. Housing is recognised as the right of every South African, and all citizens are entitled to access affordable accommodation without discrimination. Creating affordable housing is meant to restore the dignity of previously disadvantaged persons and increase their social inclusion so that they can access the facilities and employment opportunities they need to uplift themselves from poverty. The state encourages and supports individuals and communities (including cooperatives, associations and other community-based bodies) to work together to access land, services and technical assistance to address the housing backlog. A developmental approach to housing is consistently advocated to facilitate socio-economic transformation and change in South Africa. The common premise on which the housing legislation and policies are built is that people must be assisted to drive their own economic empowerment, develop the physical environments in which they live, and become responsible for satisfying their own basic needs. Despite the South African government having developed houses on scale, it continues to come under criticism (Sobantu & Nel 2019:284). This is a global problem. The number of needy and vulnerable people who are unable to access safe housing increases at an alarming rate. Some authors question whether the developmental approach to housing is the best option to satisfy the enormous demand for suitable housing for vulnerable people (Manomano 2018:1).

As suggested by Madzivhandila and Asha (2012:370), two major factors that determine the quality of service delivery and the provision of housing are the quality of local government leadership and the extent to which citizens are included in matters related to housing. Neither of these is currently adequate. Prevalent citizen protests fuelled by poor service delivery confirm that the government has failed to fulfil its promise to the people (Ndinda, Uzodike & Winaar 2011:780-782; Neocosmos 2010:535; Pithouse 2014:43). Msindo (in Sobantu et al 2019:7) notes that housing-related protests are four times more prevalent than protests about other forms of poor service delivery. Inadequate sanitation and hygiene, particularly access to clean water and toilets, make living conditions in the housing projects extremely hazardous (Makube & Zuzile quoted in Manomano 2018:2). Manomano (2018:2) adds that tensions are fuelled by the way in which housing allocations are managed and the failure of housing authorities to provide beneficiaries with the social amenities they need.

The South African government has been criticised about the way housing has been developed. The processes have lacked pro-poor planning and implementation, failed to facilitate adequate deliberate collaboration between various housing delivery stakeholders,

and adopted a top-down approach to housing planning and implementation (Sobantu & Nel 2019:284). Several authors assert that the quality of local government housing is seriously flawed (Mbecke & Mokoena 2016:96; Mbelengwa 2016:3; Ubisi 2017:9), and an overriding issue is the omission of residents from the process of housing development (Madzivhandila & Asha 2012:370).

The position of South African women in housing is addressed next.

3.3 WOMEN'S STATUS IN SOUTH AFRICA – PRE- AND POST-APARTHEID ERAS

The need to promote the status of South African women has belatedly received attention (South African History Online 2011). Traditionally, South African women were expected to be subordinate to men. Accordingly, men were bestowed with the authority to make decisions on behalf of women, both in society at large and within their own homes (South African History Online 2011). The gender-based role allocated to women has for centuries been a domestic one. Women were expected to raise their children and attend to the well-being, feeding and care of their families. During the last three to four decades the suppression of women has been seriously challenged in South Africa (South African History Online 2011). Despite the growing consciousness of the need to promote equality between men and women, the oppression of many South African women continues. For example, Loliwe, a member of parliament (MPL), spoke out in the South African National Assembly about the plight of South African women who face multiple obstacles daily (Unrevised Hansard 2017). Amongst the challenges Loliwe mentioned were patriarchy, sexism, violence and many forms of discrimination within all sectors of South African society that stunt women's development and advancement. These obstacles are in direct contravention of the resolution to which South Africa was party at the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (OHCHR 2012:12). Part.14.2 of the resolution states that State Parties shall undertake appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women and, in particular, uphold women rights to enjoy acceptable living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply and communications (OHCHR 2012:12).

The deleterious effects of colonialism, apartheid laws, migratory labour, socio-economic status and child custody issues are felt mostly by South African women. One area where the oppression of women is particularly evident is the access women have to healthy, humane and affordable housing. The researcher's occupational observations confirm that many South African women do not receive equal housing opportunities.

3.4 WOMEN AND HOUSING

During colonial and apartheid eras, blacks were used as a strong labour force to promote the economic development of South Africa, particularly in the cities (Pillay, Manjoo & Paulos 2002:7). However, under the harsh colonial and apartheid laws and policies, they were denied access to housing that provided them with suitable living conditions. Factors responsible for women's disadvantaged position in terms of housing are referred to next. The discussion builds on points raised in the introduction of Chapter One about the plight suffered by women whose male family members worked in mines and industries in the cities as regulated by the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950.

South African women's right to housing has been seriously compromised by patriarchal norms and values (Ndinda 2001:62; Pillay et al 2002:8). The South African government historically favoured couples when allocating housing. Households headed by single females did not meet the societal definition of a family and therefore failed to qualify for housing subsidies. Accordingly, many of the most vulnerable South African women, the young, the poor and those with dependants were denied housing assistance (Ndinda 2001:62; Pillay et al 2002:8).

In addition, customary and religious laws and practices further compromised women's housing rights (Pillay et al 2002:9). Amongst the housing rights prejudicial to women were practices under customary law such as patrilineal succession, minority legal status of women, and formal or informal polygamy (Pillay et al 2002:9). Male traditional leaders favoured men when granting families traditional land, as men were recognised as the heads of households. Women's right to housing was inextricably linked to their relationships with their male relatives (Pillay et al 2002:9). Women could own property only if they could prove they had the consent of a male relative. Common law partners of male hostel dwellers suffered a further injustice when apartheid was abolished. Several male hostel residents displaced their common law partners by bringing their wives and children from rural areas to live with them (submission to the Housing Bill by the Housing Rights and Gender Working Group 1997). Urban common law partners were forced out of the common home to make way for rural wives and children. These women failed to qualify for subsidised housing. In discussing the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, the Gender Research Project (1998:5) noted that customary laws continue to deny black women equal decision-making powers within their marital unions. Under customary laws, men retain control over marital property and the custody and guardianship of their children, no matter what the circumstances are. A significant number of black women do not freely consent to their marriages or choose their spouses, and their rights after divorce or the dissolution of their marriages are limited in comparison to their male partners (Gender Research Project

1998:12). Despite significant changes in marital laws in South Africa (the abolition of the marital power in terms of the Matrimonial Property Act 88 of 1984), in most instances the legal registration of a house is issued in the name of the man rather than the names of both partners, resting on the notion that the man is the primary “breadwinner” (Khosla 2014:13). It is very rare even for women married out of community of property to have the marital home registered in their name.

A debilitating social reality that has affected women more than men is HIV/AIDS (Pillay et al 2002:9; Sharpe, Voûte, Rose, Cleveland, Dean & Fenton 2012:251; Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:13). Women’s susceptibility to HIV/AIDS forces them to work in the informal economy, where they have little or no security at all (Khosla 2014:15). Women experience the complicated consequences of HIV/AIDS: their ability to negotiate the terms of their sexual relationships is severely compromised given their subordination in their relationships, which means they are often exposed to the virus because their partners fail to use protection; they are generally left with the responsibility of caring for those family members living with HIV/AIDS; and the women take over the responsibility for caring for their relatives’ children who are orphaned as a result HIV/AIDS (Pillay et al 2002:9). Pillay et al (2002:9) point out several issues that affect the financial circumstances and future employment prospects of women and make them dependent upon others: they are often precluded from formal employment; they experience stigmatisation and rejection when disclosing their HIV status; domestic violence or abandonment are commonly associated with the disclosure of a positive HIV/AIDS status; and the progression of the symptoms of the virus is more rapid in women than men (Sharpe et al 2012:251).

The negative impacts of rapid, high urbanisation and poor housing on low-income women are interconnected (Khosla 2014:15). Women’s poverty and lack of access to and control over assets, their marital status, their exposure to gender-based violence, and their susceptibility to HIV/AIDS force them to work in the informal economy, where they have little or no security or protection (Khosla 2014:15). The psychosocial circumstances of women impact profoundly on their housing rights. Women are known to remain in dysfunctional and dangerous relationships because their abusive male partners provide the only roof over their heads that they can access (Govender 2019:153-154; Pillay et al 2002:8). Women who want to leave their unhappy relationships and retain custody of their children must convince officers of the court that they have secure housing, which many cannot do.

Many South African single mothers struggle to access finance to support themselves and their children (Kotwal & Prabhakar 2017). Their income earning capacity is restricted by their family responsibilities; they lack the education and training they require in order to

secure well-paying employment in the open labour market; and generally they are allocated menial forms of employment that do not offer them opportunities to uplift themselves (Ndinda 2001:64; Picklesimer 2015). Additionally, as highlighted by Parnell (in Ndinda 2001:62), most South African women have their first child when they are still in their teens. Being unmarried and younger than 21 denies them the right of access to a housing subsidy. Women's economic circumstances determine the quality of housing they can secure (Thurman 1997:8; Holborn & Eddy 2011:3). Single mothers applying for a housing subsidy must produce birth certificates for their children and sworn affidavits. Many single women fail to register the births of their children when they are born (Ndinda 2001:65). It becomes even more difficult if the children's surnames are different from theirs. It can be concluded that the subordinate position assigned to women reduces their access to housing despite post-apartheid housing dispensations.

The process that has been used to address the housing needs of disadvantaged women is flawed because in most instances women have not been included in the planning process, either as individuals or as groups (Manomano & Tanga 2018:33; Ndinda 2009:318). Inadequate space and poor-quality houses affect women greatly, but they do not get an opportunity to discuss their housing concerns and the effects it has on them. Poor housing undermines their self-esteem, sense of identity and belonging, participation, citizenship and empowerment (Arifin & Dale 2005:216; Manomano & Tanga 2018:33). These effects are the antithesis of empowerment.

The next section introduces the South African democratic government's vision of introducing CRUs to increase the quality and access to low-cost housing for vulnerable women.

3.5 THE CRU PROGRAMME IN SOUTH AFRICA AS AN EFFORT TO INCREASE WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LOW-COST HOUSING

Because housing is a basic essential of human beings, the South African Constitution (1996: section 26(2)) emphasises that national, provincial and local spheres of government must provide housing for those unable to access it independently. The CRU projects were a logical measure initiated to address the limited housing stock for this special sector.

The Community Residential Units Programme complements and runs parallel to the National Social Housing Programme, which caters for people who earn R3 500 or more per month. The CRU Programme was introduced in 2004, and a policy framework and implementation guidelines were ratified in 2006 to replace the National Hostel Redevelopment Programme and the Affordable Rental Housing Programme (Thani et al 2018:670; Thurman 1997:46; Xulu 2012:8). The process of converting the old male hostels

to include disadvantaged women and children was intended to increase women's access to affordable subsidised rental housing stock (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216; Xulu 2014:141). The conversions were meant to cater for groups who failed to qualify for the social housing market (*South Africa yearbook 2011/12*; Xulu 2012:8). Thurman (1997:44) notes that CRUs would increase the supply of high-density, low-income rental stock so that the government would deliver on its promise to provide housing for all.

The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, section 35(1), prescribes that local governments must develop and execute integrated development plans (IDPs) to facilitate general service delivery (Kwa-Zulu Natal Planning & Development Commission 2010). The IDP is a principal strategic instrument used to guide and inform all planning, budgeting, management and decision-making in municipalities so that all activities in the national, provincial and municipal spheres are coordinated and aligned (Cloete & Thornhill 2005:119-121). Municipalities are expected to develop a framework to promote the economic and social development of vulnerable groups and to fulfil their obligation to improve housing for this sector (Latakomo 2011:2). Municipalities are expected to commit to housing development in their IDP as legislated in the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act 28 of 2002 (Department of Minerals and Energy 2009:6; South Africa 2002b) and increase housing stock to relieve the burgeoning number of disadvantaged South African residents who cannot afford housing. Municipalities are expected to fulfil two tasks: develop new public rental stock; and gather information from existing and potential beneficiaries about what their special needs for housing are and how their housing needs can be met (Thani et al 2018:670). Little has been documented about the inclusion of disadvantaged women in the consultation processes that were followed when the hostels were redeveloped into CRUs.

This background helps to explain the motivations behind the objectives of the CRU Programme, as outlined next.

3.5.1 Objectives of the CRU Programme

According to the CRU policy framework (Department of Human Settlements 2006), the main objectives of the CRUs are to achieve the following:

- Facilitate the maintenance of the housing environment and market in townships, suburbs and inner-city areas
- Support the incorporation of community housing into the broader housing market and environment
- Ensure the formation of sustainable public housing assets
- Attend to problematic and dysfunctional buildings in the inner cities

- Make rental housing available to poor-income groups who do not qualify for the social or other housing programmes introduced
- Implement the capitalisation strategy, a one-off allocation that includes capital works and long-term maintenance, the operational costs of which are meant to be realised from rental income.

These objectives rest on a distinct set of principles, as explained next.

3.5.2 Principles of the CRU Programme

The CRU policy framework is based on five distinct principles that underpin the CRU Programme (Department of Human Settlements 2006:5). The principles are to achieve the following:

- Facilitate communication and participation/inclusion of residents throughout the process
- Facilitate choice by providing a variety of rental housing accommodation options
- Ensure equity as far as possible through the application, implementation and management of the programme
- Provide a secure, stable rental housing tenure for low-income persons and households
- Provide and ensure a realistic funding programme for this housing in order to ensure viable, long-term rental charge structures for the tenants of properties built under this programme.

The section that follows highlights the importance of inclusive consultation in projects of the CRU Programme.

3.5.3 Importance of inclusive consultation in CRU projects

It is noted that the success of the CRU Programme depends on consultation with the intended beneficiaries, and opportunities must be created for them to share their housing ideas and needs. Such feedback must be integrated into the development of the CRU Programme and projects. There are several reasons for doing so:

- Participation and ownership are key processes for promoting the social inclusion of disadvantaged people (Madzivhandila & Asha 2012:370).
- One of the Batho Pele principles is to promote consultation to foster effective and efficient service delivery in communities. *Batho pele* is a "Sotho" expression that means "people first" (Department of Public Service and Administration 1997). Consultation is a way of promoting unbiased service delivery within municipalities.
- Potential and actual beneficiaries are expected to be involved in the planning, implementation and administration of housing development projects, because they are

the most knowledgeable about how their well-being can be promoted (Ubisi 2013:61-62).

- The benefits of including individual service users' perspectives are to raise their voices, find out what is important to them and to advance individual and collective action to help accomplish common objectives (Todes et al 2010:72-75).
- When project managers give potential CRU housing beneficiaries opportunities to make recommendations for the conversion of CRUs, the beneficiaries can verbalise their fears, which CRU project/programme managers can then address, which contributes to successful conversion outcomes for the units (Kabajuni in Ncube 2017:7).
- As noted by Khumalo (2013:13-14), women have special housing needs that when overlooked affect their well-being. Women deserve to be recognised as valued agents of change. Sadly, women are often thwarted when decision makers of CRU projects fail to acknowledge their value and create opportunities for their inclusion (Khumalo 2013:13-14).
- Housing is more than just a physical structure; it embodies social and even spiritual relations. The eviction of disadvantaged or marginalised people without any consultation about their post-eviction circumstances is a gross violation of their human rights. Evictions dislocate people from their sources of livelihood and expose them to living in hazardous environments (Hohmann cited in Sobantu et al 2019:7).
- Excluding potential beneficiaries in the planning process of CRUs creates a lack transparency that fuels citizens' beliefs about corruption and mismanagement in state departments. Some argue that the lack of participation of community members and other stakeholders has resulted in feelings of hopelessness, because those who most need housing cannot access it and therefore suffer lack of access to social amenities, which makes it almost impossible for them to uplift themselves (Lemanski & Levenson quoted in Manomano 2018:2).
- Lack of grassroots participation in housing delivery, especially within CRU developments, is a major criticism in South Africa because intersectoral collaborations are central to the process of democratisation (Sobantu & Nel 2019:285). There is little academic evidence about the extent to which women (more specifically residents who lived in the old hostels and prospective beneficiaries of CRU housing) were consulted before or during the development of the CRUs.

In the absence of academic publications on the topic, the researcher resorted to finding periodical news articles about participatory processes in the redevelopment of hostels into CRUs. The findings of this information search are consolidated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: News articles about participatory processes in the redevelopment of hostels into CRUs

Source	Synopsis of the article
South African Government (2013)	An amount of R34 million was spent on the Mahikeng CRU project. Residents and those responsible for the CRU complained about the high influx of residents from rural areas, which placed a strain on the resources in the hostels. It was reported that an integrated approach was needed to change the conditions of the CRUs, one that included the residents in the development of CRUs, who had been overlooked. No mention was made about female participation in discussions about the Mahikeng CRU project.
Pule (2016)	The article quoted the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs in Limpopo province as referring to consultations that had taken place with communities before the 89 CRUs were developed in Seshego township. The consultations consisted of dialogues with stakeholders, who included CRU beneficiaries, and of large surveys that were conducted with communities where the CRUs were developed. No mention was made of the representation of women in the consultations or any specific needs that women had identified relevant to their housing needs.
Silekwa (2019)	CRU beneficiaries in the Durban area stated that they were dissatisfied with the consultation process followed during the conversion of the hostels into CRUs. Matters that they were consulted about, such as lighting and the setting up of CCTV cameras, were superfluous in comparison to the matters that concerned them. The lack of privacy that the CRUs offered beneficiaries, particularly sleeping areas for couples, was a pressing issue that the authorities had disregarded. Residents were clearly dissatisfied about the participatory processes that had been followed.

The articles highlight public discontent about the participatory processes followed during the conversions of the CRUs. The reports fail to mention the extent of the inclusion of women in the CRU planning processes or their experiences of any participatory processes that were followed. The articles confirm the need for integrated consultation processes that would include CRU beneficiaries.

Based on the lack of evidence of women's participation in the development of CRUs, the researcher questioned whether the special housing needs of poor women had received adequate consideration. The researcher concluded that there was a need for women's voices to be amplified about what it was like to live in CRUs and what needed to be done to address their housing needs.

The next section offers a sketch of the general living conditions in CRUs to indicate the physical environment and social milieu that CRU residents encounter daily.

3.5.4 Poor living conditions in CRUs

The transformation of hostels into CRUs unsettled many of the hostel beneficiaries (Elder cited in Xulu 2014:144), and the living circumstances of CRU residents are far from what the democratic government intended to offer them (Xulu 2012:2). The common problems

associated with living in the CRUs, as mentioned in the literature, are explained in this section. The seven most problematic issues are overcrowding, poor maintenance of buildings, inadequate family-centred housing opportunities, struggles to integrate the women into a previously male-dominated environment, poor administration and management of the CRUs, safety and security issues, the existence and roles of block chairpersons, and uncertainty about the provision of accommodation needs. Each concern is discussed briefly.

3.5.4.1 Overcrowding

Overcrowding is a serious CRU concern, particularly in eThekweni and Gauteng CRUs (Thani et al 2018:673). The extent of the overcrowding has created substandard living conditions for the residents (Xulu 2012:8). Some even describe the living conditions in the CRUs as non-conducive for human habitation (Thani et al 2018:673). The poor outcomes of overcrowding as mentioned include: poor health conditions amongst residents, the spread of communicable diseases, an increase in social problems, and scarcity of fundamental necessities such as space, water and ablutions (Thani et al 2018:674). Legally introducing women and children into the CRUs further increased the occupancy of existing overcrowded living spaces. In the study by Thani et al (2018:675), almost three-quarters of the participants (72 per cent) shared a room with other households. Children who live in such environments are likely to be affected academically because they do not have conducive spaces for completing their homework tasks, and their exposure to communicable diseases increases the risk of recurring illnesses, which results in high school absentee rates (Thani et al 2018:675).

Many rooms in CRUs are subdivided to create more bed spaces. In places such as Saulsville Hostel (Thani et al 2018:673) residents use curtains to demarcate spaces for the different households who share a room. Conflict about the allocation of spaces in CRUs has led to violence and revenge killings (Ntuli 2017; Thani et al 2018:674; Thurman 1997:44). Some CRUs were invaded by people who had not completed the application processes and occupancy rules, because the lack of property management in CRUs made it easy for them to do so. The influx of illegal residents has further exacerbated the congestion problems associated with CRUs (Fenyane 2016:11).

3.5.4.2 Poor maintenance of CRUs

The accommodation offered in CRUs, particularly those in Gauteng and eThekweni, is substandard according to a submission made in the House of Assembly by Sithole (in Unrevised Hansard 2017). The problems, according to Thurman (1997:44), include bad design and poor building of the single-sex hostels and the neglect of their maintenance over

the years. Some lawlessness witnessed in the hostels is associated with the collapse of maintenance (Fenyane 2016:11). The most frequently mentioned maintenance issues include burst sewerage pipes, sewage spills into residents' units, leaking water taps, griminess, broken-down walls and building rubble, long grass where rats can breed, residents using open areas, and hostel grounds that are dirty and muddy (Dlamini cited in Ubisi 2013:11; Mpehle cited in Ubisi 2013:11; Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:227; Thani et al 2018:671; Thurman 1997:44). These conditions contribute to unhealthy and unsafe living conditions that are associated with rheumatic fever, childhood pneumonia, influenza, tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases, skin rashes and diarrhoea (Thani et al 2018:671).

3.5.4.3 Inadequate family-centred housing

The designs of the original hostels were unsuitable for family living, which made the conversions difficult (Thurman 1997:44). Even hostel residents were sceptical about how the existing buildings could be converted into family-centred units (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:229). Residents in the Umlazi hostels expected the conversions to inconvenience them in many ways, such as having reduced spaces for their private parking, for drying their washing, and for children's recreational activities. They were concerned about the number of bathrooms and toilets that the families would be able to use. They questioned how the eThekweni Municipality could be so short-sighted as to build family units in badly designed hostel blocks that were notorious for violence (De Haas cited in Ntuli 2017). De Haas claimed that the living conditions in CRUs posed a serious threat to children being raised there (Ntuli 2017).

Overcrowding in CRUs is known to generate stress and anxiety for the families, breed infections among households, and contribute to intimacy and marital problems, which are precursors to other social issues (Thani et al 2018:675). For some families, sharing living space with other households is a threat. For example, a participant in the study by Xulu (2014:150) complained about having to leave his wife in the room when there was another man resident in the adjacent room. He suspected that living close to other households enabled male neighbours to take advantage of other men's wives (Xulu 2014:150).

At the time of the conversions, the demand for accommodation exceeded the supply, so when family units were built they were invaded by single hostel dwellers, which forced families to live in one-roomed accommodation that was intended for single individuals. In many instances the single rooms were subdivided to accommodate several families (Thani et al 2018:674).

3.5.4.4 Integration of women into a previously male-dominated environment

A study conducted in KwaMashu reported that male participants who had lived in the hostel prior to its conversion resented women moving into their living spaces (Xulu 2014:142). The women were blamed for many of the social ills witnessed in their CRUs (Xulu 2014:142). Male residents felt that the introduction of women and children cost them their freedom – a strong motivating factor for choosing to live in a hostel in the first place. Men complained that they were forced to forfeit their privacy (Xulu 2014:151). Some said that the government had stolen their manhood and headship status by giving women and children residential rights (Xulu 2014:151). Female participants in the same study described the KwaMashu CRU as *indawo yamadoda* (places for men) (Xulu 2014:143) and not places for women to live. Those women described their accommodation as spaces of unmet needs and unfulfilled aspirations, where their employment struggles continued. Xulu (2014:151) concludes that the introduction of women and children into hostels represented a loss of the power, rights and identity of the men who lived there (Xulu 2014:152). It therefore appears from the findings that the integration of women into the hostels was not well received. Xulu (2014:143) expands on this, saying that CRUs demolished the cultural and official spaces that the men who lived in hostels had been accustomed to for many years. The CRUs created something new and unknown to them (Xulu 2014:143).

Similar findings were reported among hostel dwellers in Kagiso Hostel in Mogale City Gauteng (Thani et al 2018:674). Men resisted the conversions because they wanted to live alone, separate from their families. Living separate from their families offered men their freedom (Thani et al 2018:674).

3.5.4.5 Poor management of CRUs

The way the day-to-day operations of CRUs are managed has been severely criticised. Mpehle (cited in Ubisi 2013:38) refers to the inefficiency of municipal officials and their poor recording skills, which have created two problems. The first is that the registers of legal residents are poorly maintained, which has led to many illegal residents occupying rooms without suffering any penalties (Fenyane 2016:11). Bed spaces in the hostels are illegally sublet, which contributes to the serious overcrowding already mentioned (Ubisi 2013:11-12). Secondly, it is difficult to enforce collection of rentals amongst illegal residents (Fenyane 2016:11). The non-payment of monthly rentals among residents has escalated because of dissatisfaction with the poor management of the CRUs (Ubisi 2013:11-12). Xulu (2014:142) refers to the total disregard that CRU residents have had for municipal services since 1986, when influx control was abolished. As a result, many residents refuse to pay their contributions for consuming municipal services such as electricity, water and

accommodation. The hostels therefore are not financially viable, and their maintenance is neglected.

Maintenance problems are exacerbated by the gross mismanagement of CRUs by government departments. A trust of R4 billion was created by the state to convert the hostels into family housing (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216). Because of poor management, there is little evidence of how the money was spent during the redevelopment process (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216). Ngcongco and Mtshali (2006:216) refer to inadequate local leadership, resistance among officials and residents about the conversions taking place, tariff hikes for basic services and rentals, corruption among officials, poor support among local and provincial government officials for displaced persons, ongoing conflict about community developmental programmes initiated where CRUs were situated, and a lack of accountability for the spending of trust money.

The problems mentioned were still evident in 2017. Shelembe (in Unrevised Hansard 2017) raised his concern in the House of Assembly about the poor administration of CRUs. He stated that the expansion of CRU projects was severely hampered by poor coordination, failure to establish partnerships, and poor cooperation between government departments responsible for human settlement developments. A motion was passed that called for urgent state intervention (Sithole in Unrevised Hansard 2017).

3.5.4.6 Safety and security issues

Residents complain that their living spaces are unsafe because intruders have easy access to their units and communal areas. Their personal belongings are frequently stolen (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:232). The high rate of violence and killings in the hostels makes them feel very unsafe. Some allege that the violence is linked to a struggle for resources, and others attribute the violence to political differences (Ubisi 2013:11-12). It is generally acknowledged that hostels have a long history of political violence, dating back to the apartheid regime, and the clashes continue to occur (Smit 2014:65). The eThekweni Municipality CRUs are notorious for politically motivated violence (Xulu 2012:8), yet the ANC strongly denies that the Glebelands killings are politically motivated and blames the killings on criminal activities and contending factions who wish to have control of the sale of beds in CRUs (Burger 2019c:10). The Marikana massacre of 16 August 2012 in the Marikana mines, formerly known as Rooikoppies, in Rustenburg in North West province, is reported to have been linked to political clashes between residents (Thani et al 2018:672).

Concern is raised about the safety of women living in such a hostile environment. Several women in the eThekweni CRUs have been murdered to avenge the deaths of others (Ntuli

2017). Residents complain that the murders are not taken seriously and fail to receive the publicity they deserve (Xulu 2014:150).

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 illustrate the attempted murders and murders in Glebelands CRU during the period 2014 to 2019. Figure 3.3 illustrates the escalation from late 2019 to 2021 in both attempted murder and murder incidents in the Glebelands CRU (South African Police Service 2021). The impact of this escalation is detailed in Chapter Four (research methodology).

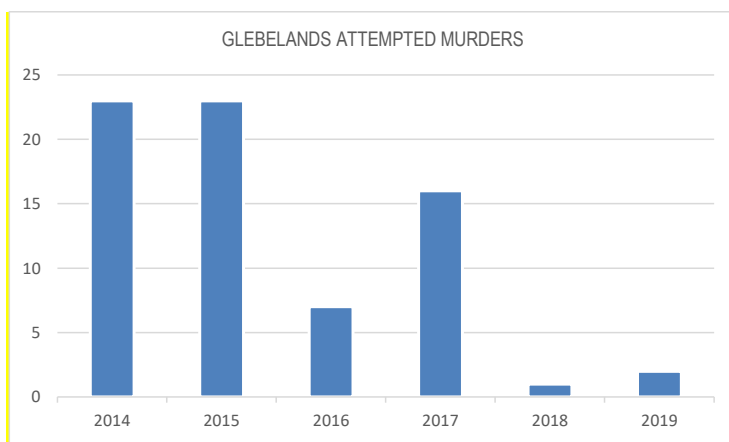


Figure 3.1: Glebelands attempted murders from 2014 to 2019

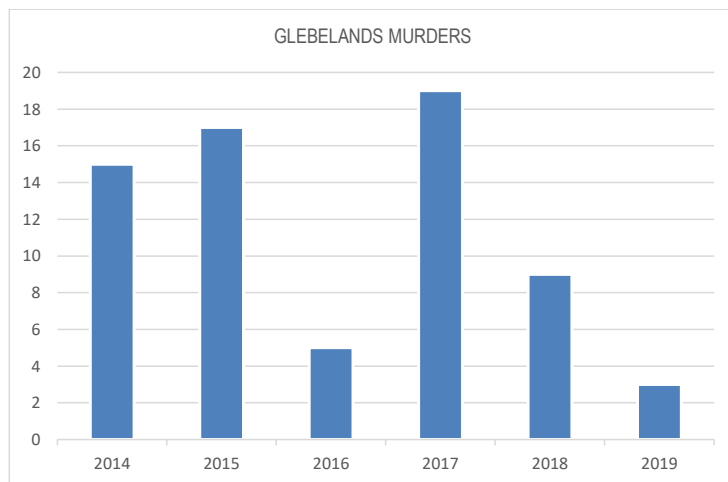


Figure 3.2: Glebelands murders from 2014 to 2019

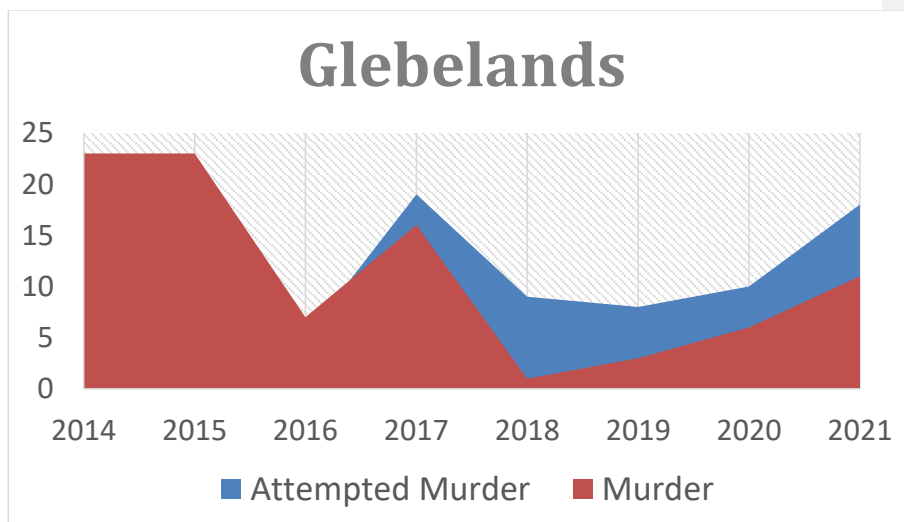


Figure 3.3: Illustration of the escalation of attempted murder and murder incidents in the Glebelands CRU from late 2019 to 2021, just before the actual data collection

A further issue of concern is the presence of block chairpersons and committees as people with power and authority in the hostels.

3.5.4.7 Block chairpersons and block committees

The role that self-appointed block chairpersons and committees in hostels play in the poor management, criminal activities and violence in the CRUs is questioned by residents and other officials.

Before 1994, every hostel block had a block committee that was appointed to fulfil certain administrative duties, such as managing internal conflicts within their block and room allocations (Burger 2019c:8). The block committees were elected by residents. They liaised with hostel administrators and enforced law and order daily, and when necessary they assisted with the relocation to other spaces of residents (often women) living in overcrowded rooms or sleeping in the kitchens or corridors. This arrangement changed in 1998, when the eThekweni Hostels Policy officially delegated the role of bed allocations to the ward councillors elected in the wards where the hostels were situated. This brought the ward councillors into direct conflict with long-serving block committees. The implementation of the new housing policy generated political opportunism, patronage and nepotism (Burger 2019c:8). Some allege that the block committees continue to sell beds even though bed allocations are the responsibility of ward councillors (McKinley 2020:46).

3.5.4.8 Uncertainty about accommodation needs

The harsh, unforeseen, unexpected and undesired social, cultural, economic, political, spatial and demographic changes within the CRUs that have been discussed leave residents apprehensive about their future. They are doubtful that their housing needs will ever be fulfilled (Xulu 2014:143). This is very unsettling for those who have nowhere else to go.

The review of literature confirms that there is little empirical evidence available about the perspectives of women living in these situations specifically. The gap in knowledge confirmed the need for this study to be conducted.

Some information has been published about the Glebelands CRU. This context-specific information throws some light on the challenges faced by residents living there.

3.6 CONTEXT-SPECIFIC HISTORY OF THE GLEBELANDS CRU

Glebelands hostel was built by the apartheid government in the 1960s to meet the labour needs of a rapidly industrialising city (Clark 2018). Glebelands was designed to consist of several multi-storey buildings made up of small dormitory-type rooms with common ablution facilities and cooking areas, and each block was built to house 200 to 300 people (Burger 2019c:1; McKinley 2020:39). Generations of men from the Eastern Cape and the outskirts of KwaZulu-Natal have been housed there ever since. Xolo (2019) describes the Glebelands hostel as a “monument” of a prejudiced and cruel era for black South African labourers pre-1994, where the original concrete tables and metal lockers are still used.

Over the years the most common way for people to secure accommodation at the Glebelands hostel became the use of personal contacts or the companies that employed them. With time “homeboy cliques” were formed because residents organised themselves into social groups based on their geographical places of origin and ethnicity (Zulu cited in McKinley 2020:39).

At first the Glebelands hostel was administered by the KwaZulu-Natal province, but from the late 1990s the eThekweni Municipality took over this responsibility (Burger 2019c:9). However, hostel communities started organising themselves into grassroots spokespersons and structures, which have come to be known as the Glebelands block committees; these were democratically constituted structures formed long before 1994 (McKinley 2020:45). The block committees fulfilled administrative duties, acted as security mechanisms to resolve internal conflicts within each block, and oversaw the room allocations (McKinley 2020:45). Around 1994 corruption crept into the block committees, and some block committee members started selling bed spaces but were never apprehended for doing so.

Conflict and violence related to territorial clashes between party members of the IFP and ANC emerged at the same time, abated, and reappeared in 1997 (McKinley 2020:44). The 1997 conflicts were reported as ethnically related, specifically between Xhosa and Zulu members of the ANC (McKinley 2020:44). The violence abated at the end 1999 after peace talks but reawakened in 2008. The root of the conflict at that time was the breakaway of some ANC members from the party in order to join a new political party, Congress of the People, or COPE (McKinley 2020:46). Several deaths and hundreds of evictions were suffered by those in the Glebelands hostel suspected of defecting to the new political party (McKinley 2020:46). Supporters of the ANC councillor of ward 76 during this period enjoyed immunity from the attacks and evictions because his followers had taken total control of the Glebelands hostel. The former COPE defectors who returned to the ANC were not fully accepted, and that led to the existence of two groups, the so-called criminals and non-criminals (Burger 2019c:2).

In 2011 Glebelands was among the 419 disputed ANC branches that were highlighted nationwide as “irregularly constituted” (Burger 2019c:10), and when no action was taken, community discord grew (Burger 2019c:10). The ANC’s unwise narrative of linking intra-party contestation with criminality led to more than 100 murders, including of women, others being displaced, and over a dozen allegedly being tortured by police between 2014 and 2015 (Burger 2019c:2). Burger alleges that divide-and-rule tactics were exercised (Burger 2019c:10) and the community could not speak openly as the matter was politically sensitive and volatile (Burger 2019c:2).

Despite the Public Protector’s raising the alarm about leadership issues and intra-ANC conflict within the Glebelands hostel, there is little evidence of any coordinated and comprehensive efforts to quell the violence and disarm residents in the Glebelands hostel (Burger 2019a; De Haas 2016:43). For this reason it is alleged that politics is the primary cause of violence in the Glebelands hostel, and local and provincial administrators of peace and order benefit from the chaos (Burger 2019c:6).

Burger (2019c:3) is of the view that the implementation of conflicting, unconstitutional and discriminatory legislation, which included the prevention of women from raising their babies in a volatile community like Glebelands hostel, also contributed negatively; the introduction of the eThekweni Hostels Policy of 1998 also had an impact as it recognised the ward councillor’s role in room allocation (Burger 2019b).

Burger (2019c:7) further highlights the decision that was made, without consultation, to increase security measures – in the form of CCTV cameras, as previously reported (Silekwa 2019), expensive perimeter fencing and a biometric access control system – instead of

addressing the overcrowding and the appalling living conditions (Burger 2019c:10; 2019b). Despite vast budget allocations for upgrades, maintenance has declined, which has led some community leaders to conclude that politicians are making money from their blood (Burger 2019a).

Burger (2019c:12) reports that problems included inexperienced managers and readings that were unreliable, inconsistent, incorrect or corrupted, which led to disconnections and litigations, as reported by the media, and contributed to the rent boycott.

At Glebelands, services for grass cutting, cleaning, repairs and private security, including that of the ward councillor, were awarded to companies allegedly without adhering to required financial procedures; beneficiaries of those employed in the role of unskilled labour were supporters of the ward councillor; and assessors of repairs appeared to be connected to the councillor as well (Burger 2019a). Burger (2019b) states that "the hostel dwellers' deplorable living conditions are a brutal indictment of the ANC's terminal allergy to accountability". The agents of the violence and its victims have been linked to the competition between aspiring ward councillors and legislators hoping to ascend the heights of elected leadership. This has aggravated the very poor living conditions at Glebelands hostel (Chaturvedi 2019:6, 8) and hampered efforts to turn the situation around.

Burger (2019b) indicates that the unprecedented levels of violence at the hostel and the forced and unlawful evictions of dozens of women and children were reported to the Public Protector by the Commission for Gender Equality but did not get attention right away. By that stage in 2015 there had been some 100 evictions and 30 murders (Burger 2019b). Other evictions were because of administrative issues where residents' names had been changed without their knowledge and double billing had occurred but the municipality at all times refused to accept responsibility and take steps to mitigate the causes of the problem (Burger 2019c:10). Burger (2019b) got a report from the community leaders that relatively affluent people from other areas had been given new family units while residents squashed into grossly overcrowded rooms were neglected; hence the allocation of rooms has been contentious.

The room allocation role was shifted from block committees to the ward councillor, yet the block committees had previously led a protest against him, complaining about not being consulted and being side-lined on development issues. A lot of victims were somehow linked to the block structures by blood or association (Burger in De Haas 2016:47). De Haas (2016:48) states that the provincial government's official stance on the violence, articulated in the media, has been inconsistent. While acknowledging intra-party tensions, it initially blamed the violence on sale of beds, and this was used to justify the dismantling of the

block structures. Sibiya, the spokesperson of former Premier Mchunu, is reported by Asmal (2014) to have said that committees were disbanded because they and the block chairpersons were charging people rent and protection fees, and that the policy was developed so that the committees and block chairpersons could stop fighting over what belonged to the municipality.

Zungu (2021) emphasises that residents live in fear as warring groups allegedly fight over what is called protection fees, and some of those who rebelled against this have paid with their own lives. A Glebelands, splinter group called Glebelands eight, comprising eight men, including a police officer, were arrested in 2017 for allegedly stoking violence in Glebelands and were charged with murder, attempted murder and extortion (Zungu 2021). Zungu (2021), citing Burger, claims that the Glebelands violence resulted in about 120 people dying between 2014 and 2019. Such victims, in the words of Burger (2017a), die “either violently, from the bullets of hitmen, or slowly, from stress-induced illnesses caused by the fear of living daily in the shadow of death”. Burger (2017b) avers that many of the women and children living in Glebelands lost their sole breadwinners because of the killings and have had to fend for themselves. Although post-1994 democratic governments have made much of their efforts to reform hostel living conditions, in reality little has changed, other than the provision of a few family units introduced in 2007, and many residents claim that service delivery has actually deteriorated since the days of apartheid (Burger 2019c:8).

CONCLUSION

Chapter Three has presented literature relevant to the study. It commenced with International approaches for increasing housing for low-income families, followed by South African legislative and policy documents that were designed to address the housing needs of low-income groups who depend upon affordable rental stock housing. The tenets of the housing legislation and policies reflect that housing is the constitutional right of every South African, and that a developmental approach to addressing housing will encourage people, especially women, to drive their own economic empowerment, develop the physical environments in which they live, and become responsible for satisfying their own basic needs. The status of women in pre- and post-apartheid South Africa was discussed. Prejudicial practices that make it difficult for women to access housing in South Africa were examined, and it was concluded that women’s access to housing continues to be compromised despite the post-apartheid housing dispensations. The chapter then introduced the development of CRU Programme projects, their objectives and underlying principles to explain the intended outcomes that the South African government hoped to achieve by creating suitable rental stock for people in the lower socio-economic groups. Consultation was identified as an important principle on which the CRU Programme projects

should be built. Despite the benefits of including participants in the development and planning of CRUs, literature and press releases examined indicate that little effort was made to include women to discuss their housing needs and experiences. The chapter explored the development of the Glebelands CRU and some of the social, political and economic conditions experienced by people living there. Acts of violence and evictions experienced by Glebelands residents were examined more closely. The circumstances discussed highlight the grim living conditions that women who live in the Glebelands CRU are likely to experience. The success of the Glebelands CRU project in achieving physically adequate and safe housing for women seems questionable.

The overall theme that emerged in each of these sections was the absence of women's voices about why they chose to stay in the Glebelands CRU, and at what cost they did so to themselves and their children. Compelled by the social work mandate to highlight the systemic issues that keep women trapped in their oppressive circumstances (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19), the researcher was motivated to explore the topic further and to discover the meanings that the Glebelands women ascribed to their housing circumstances.

The next chapter focuses on the research methods that the researcher applied in the study and the changes she had to make to the original research plan outlined in Chapter One, section 1.6, in response to unanticipated research events and conditions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

Chapter Three focused on literature relevant to the study. This chapter discusses the application of the research methodology and methods that were outlined in Chapter One. The researcher explains how the research methods chosen to define the population and sample and to select the sample were implemented, and she informs the reader about the adjustments that had to be made in response to emergent field-related factors once the research plan was operationalised (Taylor et al 2015:3). The reader is taken through the collection of data, data analysis and data verification processes as implemented (Durand & Chantler 2014:176; Hesse-Biber & Leavy quoted in Nieuwenhuis 2016a:53) and is informed about the application of ethical principles during the study.

The discussion for this chapter commences with the researcher's review of the application of the qualitative approach.

4.1 AN APPLIED DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

The qualitative research approach was chosen for the study to enable the researcher to deepen her knowledge on the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in CRUs (Creswell 2014:31; Du Plooy-Cilliers et al 2019:29; Hammarsberg et al 2016:498-501; Maree 2020:66; Yin 2011:8). Research participants were given a platform to describe and interpret in detail their daily experiences of living in the converted Glebelands Hostel (Bhattacharjee 2012:35; Kumar 2014:32; Merriam & Tisdell 2016:15). The researcher succeeded in exploring the participants' human experiences and was able to establish the meanings they ascribed to their situation (Creswell 2014:32), which was one of the research goals.

The researcher was satisfied once the study had been operationalised that the approach adopted remained consistent with the characteristics of the qualitative approach:

- The study was conducted in Glebelands CRU, the natural location where the women lived and interacted with others, all of whom were observed up close. The researcher met with participants face to face and spent a significant amount of time with them trying to understand their realities (Creswell & Creswell 2018:181; Daymon & Holloway 2011:7). Pre-interviews and first interviews were mostly conducted within the Glebelands CRU at their request, which enabled the researcher to experience first-hand the social milieu of the women within their setting. The second interviews with

participants were conducted at venues close to Glebelands CRU, in Umlazi, when it was evident that participants needed more privacy and confidentiality to feel comfortable enough to share sensitive information about what it was like to live in Glebelands CRU, when they suspected that they could suffer reprisals from others who disapproved of their involvement in the study. The time that the researcher spent transporting participants created an additional opportunity for her to learn more about the participants' daily life circumstances.

- The researcher kept her focus on the meanings that participants associated with living in Glebelands CRU (Creswell & Creswell 2018:182). Digital audio recordings and field notes were recorded by the researcher during each interview, which enabled her to capture accurately the participants' perceptions of their living circumstances, challenges and coping strategies, in their own words. The participants remained the primary contributors of the information to the study throughout the research process (Creswell & Creswell 2018:182; Daymon & Holloway 2011:7).
- The researcher kept checking that her personal background and professional knowledge and experience as an employee of the Department of Community Safety and Liaison did not interfere either with participants' responses related to their experiences or with research decisions that she made when the study got underway (Beinhocker 2013:330). The researcher therefore used reflexivity to stay neutral during the study. She kept a research journal throughout the research process to keep track of her personal perceptions and experiences. Also, supervision served to keep her subjectivity during the study in check. Each interview transcription and research decision taken was discussed with the supervisor to make sure that the researcher's position during the study remained neutral throughout, starting from the pre-interviews and ending with the presentation of the research findings (Flick 2014:15-17). Regular peer supervision sessions took place with a group of qualitative researchers, who were based in the provincial offices, who met regularly to offer support and feedback on one another's studies.
- The researcher remained the key research instrument throughout the study. She collected the research data personally by conducting semi-structured face-to-face individual interviews with each participant. She used an interview schedule that consisted of several simply worded open-ended questions to keep the research interviews focused, and then she used digital recordings of the interviews to transcribe them verbatim herself (Creswell & Poth 2018:43-44). The participants were observed in the Glebelands CRU context whilst the study was in progress, and the researcher made notes of these observations in her research journal. She referred to these notes when transcribing the research interviews before the data was analysed and again

when she reported on the findings. The researcher analysed the data and later involved an independent coder to verify the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data (Creswell & Creswell 2018:181). It can therefore be concluded that the researcher immersed herself fully in the study (Tesch cited in Creswell 2014:186).

- Multiple sources of data were used to answer the research questions. The sources consisted of the ten participants who were interviewed; the researcher's observations of different aspects of the living conditions at Glebelands CRU experienced by women, such as spatial elements of the rooms or units and functional spaces participants' shared with others, and the social milieu within Glebelands CRU; insights gathered from several different stakeholders who rendered services to residents in Glebelands CRU, such as social workers, teachers, South African Police Services officials, the ward 76 councillor, municipal workers and volunteers; the researcher's personal reflections taken from her field notes and research journal; and documents and publications about women and housing and the conversion of the old male hostels into CRUs (Creswell and Poth 2018:43-44).
- A holistic account of the experiences of the women living in Glebelands CRU was achieved by choosing a theoretical framework that was consistent with the qualitative approach, a combination of the feminist perspective and ecological systems approach. The theoretical framework enabled the researcher to structure the information she gathered during the study (Creswell & Creswell 2018:182; Daymon & Holloway 2011:8). The risks and protective influences of women living in low-rental subsidised housing became overt, and it was possible to identify how their living circumstances impacted on their well-being. More specifically, the researcher succeeded in pinpointing how socio-structural factors were responsible for the kind of housing that the women had been allocated and that further shaped their destinies (Daymon & Holloway 2011:8). The researcher concluded that the combination of the research approach and theoretical framework offered more insight about the customs, beliefs and political affiliations of the women and explained how they ended up living in the male hostels that had been converted in the Glebelands CRU.
- The researcher remained flexible and allowed the research process to evolve over time, which enabled her to shape the research methods in response to unexpected factors and developments that presented themselves during the research process (Creswell & Creswell 2018:182; Daymon & Holloway 2011:8; Edwards & Holland 2013:30). Several amendments were made to the original research plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as postponing face-to-face interviews in accordance with state COVID-19 lockdown regulations and protocols until they eased and permitted direct face-to-face contact with participants. The plan to interview participants in one of the

superintendent's offices for their convenience and privacy changed when they requested to be interviewed in their own rooms/units or other places in the Glebelands CRU instead because they feared that others would discover that they were involved with the study. The venues for the second interviews were changed when the researcher realised that participants had held back information during the first interviews because they needed more time to trust the researcher and realised that their privacy and confidentiality were compromised because others interrupted the sessions. A second interview was arranged with each participant when it became apparent that participants needed more time to feel secure in their relationship with the researcher than she had anticipated. This decision to have a second interview paid off and participants were willing to share information about the complicated dynamics they experienced living in Glebelands CRU, especially the ongoing violence.

- Inductive and deductive analyses were used to help the researcher to reach the empirical findings of the study. The verbatim transcriptions of all interviews were used, and the researcher engaged with the data systematically and worked backwards and forwards until she had identified the themes and sub-themes that enabled her to answer the research questions (Creswell & Creswell 2018:182; Daymon & Holloway 2011:7; Neuman 2014:209).

The researcher is satisfied that the qualitative research approach as adopted benefited the study in several ways:

- The qualitative research approach was consistent with the theoretical framework that was developed for the study, the ecological systems approach and the feminist perspective (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:14). By using the qualitative approach in conjunction with the theoretical framework the researcher achieved an in-depth understanding of several aspects of the women's living experiences in Glebelands CRU: their interactions and relationships with their intimate partners and children and those with other residents they shared their living spaces with; the broader social milieu that the women found themselves living in; the power structures that were recognisable in different residential blocks; the kinds of resources the women could access and the extent to which lack of resources led to their unmet needs; the broader macro factors that determined who had access to what housing; and lastly, historical factors that continued to affect the socio-economic status of women. These findings are presented in Chapter Five.
- The research process was an empowering experience for the women of Glebelands CRU, as they were positioned as the primary informants and the study magnified their voices about the realities of the living conditions in their low-cost subsidised rental

accommodation and their perceptions of the CRU Programme (Masten 2013:579). The resilience of the women was acknowledged as they shared the coping strategies they had relied upon to adapt to their harsh living conditions and overcome the daily obstacles they faced (Neuman 2014:204). These are presented in Chapter Five, sub-section 5.2 (Presentation of themes and sub-themes).

- The participants' recommendations about what had to be done to improve the well-being of the women through the housing they were offered became explicit. The evidence-based recommendations would be directed to eThekweni Human Settlements. The intention was to make recommendations that would ensure that housing provided for women in Glebelands CRU would be compatible with their identified needs. The study produced evidence that the participants needed affordable rental housing because they did not qualify for social or other housing programmes that would enable them to care for their family members. The women needed suitable spaces and services to uplift their well-being (Department of Human Settlements 2006; Zepeda 2012:19). Women's access to and enjoyment of adequate housing is a basic human right and an aspect of social justice for them, countering the consistent housing discrimination against them (United Nations Fact Sheet 21 [sa]:17).

Several acknowledged limitations about adopting the qualitative approach prompted the researcher to take measures to counteract them:

- It was difficult to stick to the research plan as developed for the study, which was presented in section 1.5. The researcher had to address and respond appropriately to the research realities she encountered on the ground. The number of interviews held with each participant, the interview venues and the timing of the interviews were changed to accommodate participants at specific moments in their research journey, as indicated in beginning of this section (Section 4.1) (Creswell & Creswell 2018:182).
- The researcher stayed focused on the main topics listed in the interview guide to guard against participants' deviating from the focus of the study and discussing irrelevant things, as noted by Creswell and Poth (2018:67), which is a common drawback of using the open-ended questions associated with qualitative research. As soon as a participant's conversation deviated from the purpose of the research, the researcher brought her back to the study and repeated the question contained in the interview guide.
- The amount of information gathered was voluminous and difficult to manage (Creswell in Lekganyane 2017:91). Winnowing was used to condense the findings into a manageable number of categories and themes (Creswell in Creswell & Creswell

2018:192) so that it was easier to report the findings, without distorting the participants' meanings.

The researcher realised that time had to be allocated for building her relationships with research participants so that they would feel comfortable enough to open up about their experiences. She underestimated just how long this would take. When it was obvious that participants found it difficult to be open and honest in the first interviews, the researcher rectified this by inviting them to participate in a second round of interviews. She and each participant chose a neutral space for the second interviews, and the researcher arranged the transport they needed to get to the interview venues. The negotiated neutral spaces for the second interviews were situated in and around Umlazi. Participants raised sensitive issues during the second interviews. The researcher realised that the participants had been afraid during their first interviews that they would be victimised if others in Glebelands CRU found out that they had discussed sensitive issues, such as the violence in the CRU and the alleged illicit activities of some block chairmen or committees.

The qualitative approach directed the researcher's choices of research design, methods of data collection and data analysis (Creswell 2014:31). The section that follows commences with the researcher's application of the research design that was chosen for the study.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Several authors describe the research design as a comprehensive plan that offers direction about how the research questions should be answered, commencing with data collection and covering data analysis, data verification, the population, the sample, sampling techniques and ethical considerations (Bhattacharjee 2012:35; Polit & Beck 2010:51). The research design planned was a case study that integrated exploratory, descriptive and contextual research designs, using a phenomenological approach (see section 1.5.2). The case study created the overarching umbrella, and the phenomenological position determined how the case study was studied. The discussion that follows explains how the final integrated research design assisted the researcher to select the research questions and research methods and apply them to solve the research problem as outlined in section 1.5.2.1 (Kumar 2014:122; Marshall & Rossman 2011:89; Thyer 2012:115).

Next the researcher offers an explanation of the basic tenets of phenomenological and case study research designs.

4.2.1 Case study integrating the phenomenological approach

Table 4.1 explains the design considerations of both phenomenology and the case study to explain why the case study was applied using a phenomenological approach.

Table 4.1: Comparison of the phenomenological and case study methods

Design considerations	Phenomenology	Case study
Purpose of the study	Understanding the essence of the experience	Developing a detailed depiction and analysis of a research issue
Unit of analysis	Several people who have shared the research issue	The study of an event, programme activity, or one or more people who have shared the research issue
Type of research problem best suited to the approach	When there is a need to describe the real meaning of a lived phenomenon	When there is a need for a detailed exposition of a case or several cases that are affected by the same research issue
Forms of data collection	Primarily the interview, but potentially also the analysis of documents, observation, and artistic works	Consulting different sources of data such as interviews, observations, documents and other objects
Strategies of data analysis	Analysing data for significant statements, finding relevant words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs that suggest the meanings participants associate with their experiences, developing textual and structural descriptions that offer detail about the "essence" of the phenomenon	Analysing data by examining the descriptions gathered and the emergent themes within each case, and then doing a cross-case analysis

The researcher decided to adopt a phenomenological approach for the case study.

In brief, the phenomenological approach, with its strong philosophical underpinnings, influenced the way in which the researcher tackled the research topic. The researcher held the belief that there was no single unified truth about women's experiences of living in Glebelands CRU because individuals perceive and experience situations differently and everyone's "truth" is different (Bouma et al 2012:49). Accordingly, the researcher sought the "truth" by going to several individuals to understand the research topic (Bouma et al 2012:49; Creswell & Poth 2018:75). Multiple realities had to be described to reflect the women's personal lived experiences of living in Glebelands CRU (Bouma et al 2012:49; Creswell & Creswell 2018:13). The researcher supported the idea that the participants were cognitive beings whose perceptions of their living circumstances created their meanings of what it was like to live in Glebelands CRU (Bouma et al 2012:50). After interviewing several women participants, the researcher was satisfied that she could describe the essence of their experiences of living there (Creswell & Creswell 2018:13; Creswell & Poth 2018:75). She used the words of different individuals to report their different perspectives about what it was like to live there (Creswell & Poth 2018:20). It was essential to learn about all aspects of the women's lives in Glebelands CRU to develop a holistic understanding of their situation (Bouma et al 2012:50). The different sources of information as discussed in the outline of the case study design are presented next.

The motivations for using the case study design for the study overlapped considerably with those relating to the phenomenological approach. The topic was explored by focusing on the women's experiences of the Glebelands CRU. The findings were based on the insiders' perspectives, the women who lived in the Glebelands CRU low-cost subsidised rental accommodation. Several women's experiences of living there were explored to achieve a broader understanding of the range of experiences women encountered while living in the Glebelands CRU. The ten female participants were the primary source of information for the study (Daymon & Holloway 2011:115; Mason 2018:209) and provided the detailed description of the research issue. Several secondary sources were used to augment the information provided by the women: the literature review, which advanced understanding of housing legislation and policies; the CRU Programme and contextual information about Glebelands CRU; the theoretical framework, a combination of the ecological systems approach and the feminist perspective; and finally the observations and contextual information that the researcher gathered when she visited the research site.

The purpose of the study was to develop a precise description and analysis of the experiences of a small group of women participants who lived in the same place, Glebelands CRU, at the same time between December 2018 and December 2021 (Creswell & Poth 2018:67, 96; Flick 2014:121) to find out how the Glebelands CRU satisfied the housing needs of low-income women. Qualitative studies that involve multiple cases bounded by time and activity, where the purpose is to gather detailed information about a programme, event, case or several cases, using several different data collection methods, are classified as case studies (Creswell & Creswell 2018:247). The type of case study that the researcher used was a collective case study (Creswell & Poth 2018:99). The researcher maintained prolonged contact with the participants from December 2020 to December 2021. She applied the research and interview protocols she had developed for the study (see section 1.7.4), which enabled her to explore multiple accounts of the research issue, in a reasonably regular manner (Creswell & Poth 2018:99).

The researcher was satisfied that the case study created a flexible research structure to explore the research topic in an in-depth way. She gathered detailed data about the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in eThekweni hostels that had been converted into CRUs (Bhattacharjee 2012:247; Creswell & Poth 2018:96; Daymon & Holloway 2011:115).

There were several reasons why the case study was relevant for this study:

- The data gathered contributed to a holistic understanding of the women's real-life experiences of living in the Glebelands CRU (Baskarada 2014:3; Boblin, Ireland,

Kirkpatrick & Robertson 2013:1267). As noted by Ryan (2012:545), the strong advantage of using the case study was its substantial contextualisation of “real life”. This was needed to achieve the research goal.

- The multiple sources of information contributed significantly to an in-depth understanding of what it was like for women to live in the converted Glebelands Hostel (Daymon & Holloway 2011:115; Mason 2018:209).
- The data gathered were analysed and the themes and sub-themes that emerged were developed into findings that highlighted the commonalities and differences of participants’ views and compared and contrasted them against scholarly published works (Creswell in Khan 2014:301). After analysis of the participants’ “thick rich descriptions” (Bhattacharjee 2012:37), several aspects of the study became explicit: the tipping points; commonalities; positive and negative feedback mechanisms; issues of status and power plays; and participants’ emotions. These confirmed that significant understanding of the participants’ experiences, challenges and coping mechanisms related to living in Glebelands CRU was achieved (Ryan 2012:543). The process of coding the data took place between April 2021 and June 2021.
- The findings were arrived at in a detailed and exact way (Creswell and Poth 2018:122; Flick 2014:122). The researcher used the research plan to break the research down into manageable steps: prepare for data collection; collect data; conduct a pilot test; and analyse and verify the data (Creswell & Poth 2018:122).
- A limited number of participants were selected, ten, which meant that a significant amount of time could be spent with each participant and the researcher was able to gather the rich data that was needed. A minimum of three interviews were conducted with most participants. The data attended to during the analysis process were manageable because the sample size was small enough for the researcher to manage (Carey 2012:145).

The regular criticisms of case studies (see section 1.5.2.2) were addressed where possible or necessary. Case studies are criticised for their lack of scientific rigour (Creswell & Poth 2018:102; Starman 2013:32) and the findings cannot be generalised to the whole population as can be done in statistical studies (Carey 2012:145; Creswell and Poth 2018:80; Flick 2014:123; Starman 2013:32). This did not concern the researcher because the intention of this study was not to make broad generalisations about the research issue based on a wide spread of information but rather to gain a relative depth of information from selected individuals in a specific context (Creswell & Creswell 2018:63; Flick 2014:123). Secondly, the participants of the study were chosen on the basis of the researcher’s prediction that they were best informed about the research issue (Creswell & Poth 2018:104-105). Specific

selection criteria were developed at the outset of the study so that the researcher could hand-pick participants who presented the deep descriptions that were sought (Creswell & Poth 2018:80). When the data were analysed, several patterns were recognised: the overlaps in participants' tensions, the differences of participants' experiences of living in Glebelands CRU, and the intricate dynamics of their situations. The researcher was conscious of the risk of researcher bias in case studies (Mesec in Starman 2013:43) and used several strategies to uphold the trustworthiness of the findings, as outlined in detail in section 4.5.1, and to compensate for the study's limitations. In brief, the following strategies were used: detailed, descriptive data were gathered from the research participants and verified using member checks; an independent coder was used to ensure that the findings were not biased; a broad theoretical framework was created for the study (the ecological systems approach complemented by a feminist perspective); the literature study augmented the holistic understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of the women living in the Glebelands CRU; supervision uncovered the researcher's blind spots and monitored the research findings to ensure that the researcher could justify how she arrived at her conclusions. In respect of the latter, the researcher applied reflexive practice using a research journal, peer debriefing and supervision to process her experiences and conclusions and was confident that she had not swayed participants' ideas and perspectives or dominated the research process and decision making about the research process (Creswell & Poth 2018:260-261; Flick 2014:485).

The relevance of exploratory, descriptive and contextual research designs for this study is presented next.

4.2.2 Exploratory, descriptive and contextual research design

The exploratory, descriptive and contextual research design allowed the researcher to explore, describe and contextualise the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU between December 2020 and June 2021 (Patton 2015:94; Saunders et al 2016:174). The researcher was satisfied that she had had prolonged engagement with the research participants.

4.2.2.1 Exploratory research design

The exploratory research design enabled the researcher to gather new information about the living conditions of Glebelands female residents, their daily experiences, challenges and risks, and how they managed the pressures of their situation. This topic can now be explored on a broader scale, using advanced statistical research methods (Creswell 2014:29; Neuman 2014:38; Saunders et al 2016:174). Prior to this study, nothing had been documented about women's experiences, challenges and coping strategies while living in

the Glebelands CRU. New information and insight about the social context of the women (Yin 2011:90) have emerged from this study, including the risk and protective factors they experienced within each level of the ecosystem. The exploratory research design created a research space where the women could freely share their unique experiences of living in the converted hostel (Creswell 2014:29).

The relevance of the descriptive research design is discussed next.

4.2.2.2 Descriptive research design

The descriptive research ensured that the researcher stayed with the “what?”, “where?” and “how?” factors of the participants’ experiences of living in the Glebelands CRU, which enabled her to construct a detailed tapestry of their situation (Creswell 2013:18; Neuman 2014:39; Saunders et al 2016:174; Yin 2011:12). The researcher developed comprehensive answers to the research questions (Neuman 2014:39), as are presented in Chapter Five. Themes emerged about what it was like to be vulnerable women dependent upon low-cost subsidised rental accommodation in the form of the Glebelands CRU. The intersectionality of socio-structural factors responsible for the women’s challenging experiences became clearer (Jebreen 2012:163; Neuman 2014:39). The findings revealed several patterns and themes about the women that had not been documented before (Neuman 2014:39; Yin 2011:12), as presented in Chapter Five.

The researcher’s experience of using a contextual research design for the study is presented next.

4.2.2.3 Contextual research design

The contextual research design meant that the researcher was able to position the participants’ experiences within a wider political and social framework, which delivered a contextual and cultural understanding of the research topic (Carey 2012:229). A systemic understanding of the participants’ actual experiences of living in a CRU highlighted the bi-directional transactions that transpired between the women and different elements that were positioned within each of the five layers of the ecological system: the micro, meso, exo, macro and chrono system levels. The personal, cultural and contextual factors that impacted positively and negatively on the women and affected their sense of dignity, autonomy and socio-economic status are reported in Chapter Five (Creswell 2014:47; Yin 2011:26).

This concludes the discussion of the application of the study’s research design. Attention now shifts to the research methods the researcher used to achieve the research objectives.

4.3 RESEARCH METHODS AS APPLIED

The data collection activities required for the case study were as follows: to identify a bounded system of multiple individuals; to gain access to the research site and research participants; and to select appropriate cases, gather different sources of information, record the information, and maintain and protect the research records (Creswell & Poth 2018:103). Discussion of how these activities were managed follows.

4.3.1 Population

The selection of the population for this study was based on the explanation by Neuman (2014:69) that the population of a study is a unit of analysis which is relevant for the study's purpose(s). The purpose of this study was to gather detailed information from female residents of Glebelands CRU who had lived there for three or more years at the time the study commenced so that recommendations could be made to improve the well-being of women residents. In 2019 it was reported that there were between five and six thousand women registered as legal residents in Glebelands CRU (Nyawose 2019). It was also mentioned that, many other women residents lived there illegally on a long-term basis, on top of the estimated figures or numbers by Nyawose (Ntaka 2021). Given the time, manpower and monetary constraints linked to postgraduate research, it was impossible to study the entire population (Stacks 2011:202). Therefore, a decision was made to focus on a smaller group of different cases who were good representatives of the entire population (Bouma et al 2012:137). Accordingly, a sample was chosen using appropriate sampling strategies consistent with the case study research design.

4.3.2 Sample

The sample in this qualitative research was a limited set of cases selected from the entire population (all the blocks in Glebelands CRU) that was too big for the researcher to study, to provide a range of different experiences or perspectives that could be encountered within the population (Flick 2014:167; Neuman 2011:240; Ubisi 2013:19). This chosen sample enabled the researcher to reach conclusions about the broader population (Flick 2014:167). Case study samples normally include between four and five participants (Creswell & Creswell 2018:186), whilst phenomenological studies normally include between three and ten participants (Creswell & Creswell 2018:186; Creswell & Poth 2018:159). The researcher stuck to the original research plan of interviewing between eight and ten participants to make sure that general conclusions would be reached when the data were analysed (Creswell & Poth 2018:102; Flick 2014:122). A sample of ten women participants were selected in total. The women selected lived in five different blocks of the seventy-two blocks of Glebelands CRU, and the researcher was satisfied that a broad range of experiences,

challenges and coping strategies pertaining to women residents living in the Glebelands CRU was collected. The researcher stopped interviewing participants when no new material had emerged during the last two interviews. The last two participants' answers were repetitions of what others had already shared (Carey 2012:39; Creswell & Creswell 2018:186; Fusch & Ness in Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:6). There was no point in gathering more material since the possibility of new insights was slim (Carey 2012:39; Creswell & Creswell 2018:186; Kumar 2014:242-243). The researcher was satisfied that she had reached the point of data saturation (Creswell & Creswell 2018:186) and had gathered enough differing perspectives from the ten participants.

There were advantages to using a smaller sample for this study. The researcher spent more time with each participant and collected in-depth information, as required for a case study. Because the contacts were face to face, she could detect subtle nuances within participants' unique experiences of living in Glebelands CRU. The researcher actively responded to participants when prompted by their non-verbal responses; for example, when participants were stressed or uncomfortable answering interview questions, she adjusted the questions she had asked. It was possible for her to rework the research plan and research interview protocols so that they remained sensitive to individual participants' needs (Bouma et al 2012:135). Some of the changes made were as follows: changing the order of questions to stay in step with what participants considered important; altering the number of interviews that were held with each participant from one to two; and reassessing interview venues and interviewing participants off site so that they felt safer when sharing their stories. When it came to analysing the data, it was easier for the researcher to identify distinctive and connected features as are discussed in Chapter Five under the findings (Bouma et al 2012:135; Mason 2018:57). There were cost benefits too: fewer resources such as time, labour and money were used without compromising the integrity of the data that were gathered, and clear conclusions were reached about the research topic (Bouma et al 2012:137; Mason 2018:55; Royse 2011:193; Saunders et al 2016:279).

Details of the sampling techniques applied during the study are presented next.

4.3.3 Sampling techniques

The researcher interviewed the research participants, who offered meaningful insights about the research issue and assisted her to resolve the research puzzle (Leavy 2020:180; Maree 2020:214; Mason 2018:53). Naturally, specific ideologies and measures were used to identify relevant data sources who adequately represented the broader population, namely women residents living in Glebelands CRU.

Of the two broad sampling strategies used in research, namely non-probability and probability sampling (Bouma et al 2012:137-138; Mason 2018:54-56; Yegidis in Mathibela 2017:24), non-probability sampling was the most relevant for this study. The researcher wanted to understand, in great detail, the specific experiences, challenges and coping strategies of living in Glebelands CRU, from a woman's perspective, rather than to generalise her findings to a bigger representative population (Bouma 2012:8). The participants she chose offered the information that was needed to answer the research question and resolve the identified research problem (Carey 2012:39; Creswell & Creswell 2018:185).

The sampling techniques used were criterion and snowball sampling. The application of each is explained below. The two different sampling techniques complemented each other because the criteria used for participant selection were consistent. The only difference was the way in which the sample participants were sourced.

4.3.3.1 Criterion sampling

Criterion sampling is synonymous with purposive sampling (Bouma et al 2012:10; Carey 2012:39; Creswell & Creswell 2018:185). Predetermined specific selection criteria were established when the proposal was developed (Creswell & Poth 2018:159; David & Sutton 2011:232; Saunders et al 2016:301) based on the researcher's ideas of the kind of data she needed to gather from each participant to deepen her and the readers' understanding of the women's explanations of their experiences of living in Glebelands CRU (Mason 2018:55). To choose participants who offered the best information (Carey 2012:39; Creswell & Creswell 2018:185; Saunders et al 2016:301), several inclusion criteria were used, as presented in section 1.6.3.3. All participants were aged 18 years or more, had lived in Glebelands CRU for three or more years, and were willing and able to communicate their experiences in either English, isiZulu or isiXhosa (the languages the researcher was fluent in). Their voluntary written consent to participate in the study was recorded to uphold this important ethical consideration in research (Carey 2012:101; Creswell & Poth 2018:55). At the end of the study the researcher was satisfied that the selection criteria had enabled her to recruit participants who had contributed positively to the quality of the findings that were developed at the end of the study (Carey 2012:427), as presented in Chapter Five.

The original plan to engage the superintendent and ward councillor, who were authoritative figures placed in Glebelands CRU by the eThekweni Municipality, to assist the researcher to identify suitable participants was abandoned. On entering the research field, it was established that Glebelands CRU was a highly political arena where the researcher had to be cautious about whom she involved in the study. Informal conversations with women

residents in Glebelands CRU, block committees, the councillor and the superintendent pointed to tensions within the CRU formal and informal structures. The researcher resolved to use the community development worker (CDW) employed by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), whom the women described as better known to them and who was recognised as a politically neutral figure in Glebelands CRU. The meeting was arranged with the CDW and was outside of the Glebelands CRU. He was briefed about the purpose of the study and about the assistance he would be required to provide, which was to assist the researcher to identify women participants living in Glebelands CRU, in different blocks, who could provide the information the researcher needed in order to answer the research question. The inclusion criteria for participants were explained. The researcher confirmed that the ward councillor, superintendent, block committees and chairperson of the Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) War Room were aware of the intended study and were satisfied that the study should proceed. Upon agreeing to identify potential participants, the CDW signed a confidentiality form (see Addendum F).

Initially the CDW introduced the researcher to five women who satisfied the inclusion criteria. The researcher called the women to arrange pre-interview meetings, but only three agreed to participate. One participant completed the consent form during the pre-interview session, but when the researcher contacted her to arrange the first interview, the woman said she was waiting for a political directive from the ANC Women's League chairperson. Similarly, another woman who had participated in the pre-interview and completed the consent form later contacted the researcher to say that she lived in a block where women were not welcome, and when she had tried to find out more about the study from her block committee, she was told that the committee were not informed about the study, and therefore she no longer felt comfortable about participating. The researcher had a pre-interview with the remaining woman who was available, who consented to participate in the study. The CDW recruited six more women. The researcher had pre-interviews with them, and four agreed to participate in the study.

Whilst the participants selected were homogeneous in terms of the specified selection criteria, they were heterogeneous in other respects such as age, ethnicity, level of education, family composition, employment status, specific life experiences, personal support structures and religious affiliations. The diversity of the research participants is outlined in section 5.1. The diversity amongst them had benefits because the researcher was able to gather different perspectives from them in response to the research questions, an important characteristic of multiple case studies (Creswell & Poth 2018:99).

The criterion sampling method was complemented by the snowball sampling method because, as predicted in the research proposal, it was very difficult to secure a big enough sample using criterion sampling alone.

4.3.3.2 Snowball sampling

Use of the snowball sampling strategy was necessary in the absence of a public list of women who lived in Glebelands. The eThekweni Municipality did not have an updated list of women residents living in Glebelands CRU at the time of the study (Nyawose 2019), and many female residents' names had never been included in the municipality's data list because they had moved in before it was legal for women to live there (Bouma et al 2012:140). Secondly, the research subject was of a sensitive nature and the participants' need for anonymity was high, which made it difficult to locate participants (Carey 2012:39; Daymon & Holloway 2011:215; De Vos et al 2011:393).

When the participants who had been selected using the criterion sampling method were being interviewed, the researcher asked them if they could assist to enrich the study by recruiting other potential participants who were known to them and who had relevant information-rich data to offer (Carey 2012:39; Creswell & Poth 2018:159; Maree 2020:220; Royse 2011:205). This strategy worked because "people from within" are more successful than outsider researchers in recruiting others who have had similar experiences to themselves (Khan 2014:305). Two participants later referred the researcher to three other participants, whom they introduced to her individually. The trust between the researcher and those two participants helped to secure the three referrals by them (Creswell & Creswell 2018:89). One of the referrals was in isolation, however, because of COVID-19, and the second declined to participate, indicating that she was not comfortable talking about her experiences with a stranger.

The two sampling techniques complemented one another. The snowball sampling method was a useful strategy for replacing the participants who had decided to withdraw after the pre-interviews.

The researcher's execution of the planned data collection process presented in Chapter One is discussed next.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION

In this section the researcher discusses the application of the different phases of data collection and the research methods used in each phase that enabled her to achieve the research objectives (Daymon & Holloway 2011:100; Taylor et al 2015:3). The discussion commences with stage one, the researcher entering the community to prepare for data collection, and then outlines her experiences of the actual data collection phase and the

methods she used, the pilot testing process that occurred, and finally the data analysis and data verification procedures. Amendments to the original research plan presented in section 1.7 are mentioned, with reasons for the changes initiated.

4.4.1 Gaining access to the community in preparation for data collection

Consistent with Singh and Wassenaar (2016:42), consent had to be sought from important gatekeepers to enable the researcher to enter Glebelands CRU so that she could conduct the study. Once the University of South Africa's Social Work Scientific Research Committee had approved the research proposal, it was submitted to the College of Human Sciences Ethics Committee to request their approval (Hanekom 2018), and ethics approval was granted in December 2020 (Addendum A). A letter that requested permission to conduct the study (Addendum B) and a copy of the research proposal were sent to eThekweni Human Settlements as per their request because they were the custodians of Glebelands CRU. On receiving the letter and proposal, the head of the eThekweni Human Settlements research unit arranged a meeting with the researcher and requested that the semi-structured interview schedule be amended to include two extra questions. During supervision the researcher deliberated on the proposed two questions in terms of their relevance to the study. The questions were adjusted slightly so that they remained pertinent to the research question outlined in section 1.4.1. The questions added were: "What were the living conditions of where you lived before you decided to move to Glebelands CRU like and how did they influence your decision to move to Glebelands CRU?" and "How have the living conditions changed since you arrived, when did they change, and how have you and other women been affected by such changes?" The amended interview schedule was resubmitted to the head of the eThekweni Human Settlements research unit, and the researcher was granted permission to proceed with the study (see Addendum I). She was referred to the municipal ward councillor and Glebelands CRU superintendent to orientate her and assist her with the recruitment of participants, which, as explained in section 4.3.3.1, was amended to improve the confidentiality and anonymity of research participants once the research was underway (Bouma et al 2012:166; Creswell & Creswell 2018:89). The researcher visited the ward councillor and superintendent twice to find out about Glebelands CRU and understand the spatial arrangements of the rooms and units, and the resources and social networks that were available to participants. After these initial orientation meetings, the researcher's only contact with the ward councillor and superintendent was to arrange access to Glebelands CRU when she needed to conduct interviews there. However, she never indicated who she was interviewing or in which block the interviews were scheduled to take place. The COVID-19 protocols for Glebelands CRU required that visitors had to arrange their visits through the ward councillor and/or superintendent.

Singh and Wassenaar (2016:42) emphasise that researchers have a duty to engage in open and transparent conversations with all gatekeepers when seeking access to a facility for research purposes. The next group of gatekeepers who were informed about the study were the self-appointed block committees (not recognised officially by the municipality as community gatekeepers). Failure to have their support would have jeopardised the outcome of the study. The block committees wield power over residents and therefore could have discouraged potential women participants from involvement in the study if they (the committees) had not adequately understood its purpose.

As noted by Creswell and Poth (2018:156), working through gatekeepers is important when working with marginalised groups because these liaisons increase the trust between the researcher and participants and address language and cultural issues that must be considered during research. It was necessary for the researcher to work with formal and informal gatekeepers of Glebelands CRU in this study given the politicised issues that became evident when she entered the research setting. The pointers for meetings with gatekeepers outlined in Creswell and Poth (2018:156) were used to structure the gatekeeper meetings: she explained that because Glebelands CRU was the biggest housing settlement that provided low-cost subsidised rentals for women earning less than R3 500 a month in eThekweni Municipality, it made sense to use Glebelands CRU to gather the experiences of the women living there. She explained that she would conduct one or two interviews with each woman, at times and places that suited the women best. Her activities in Glebelands CRU would be to interview the participants, observe the social milieu of women residents living there, and speak to members of formal and informal structures of Glebelands CRU who could give her insight into the spatial layout of the blocks and the resources and networks of support that the women living there could access. It was agreed that her research actions would not be disruptive in the CRU and that the study was important because no research had been conducted about the effects of the converted CRUs on the psychosocial well-being of women. The benefits of conducting the study outweighed the risks. The researcher made it clear that strict measures would be taken to conceal information about the names of people, groups, places or events that would identify any Glebelands CRU person or group (Creswell & Creswell 2018:185).

Next, the researcher consulted the community development worker to orientate him about the study and request his assistance in identifying potential participants. The selection criteria and research protocols that would be followed during the study were explained and the information sheets about the study (Addendum C) were shared with him, and he was asked to complete the confidentiality form (Addendum F). The CDW was an asset to the

study as he identified several potential participants through his involvement in Ward 76 (Davhana-Maselesele 2011:1).

The researcher was known to the OSS War Room and informed them about the study at the monthly meeting held in December 2020. The outline and purpose of the study were shared at that meeting, so that all stakeholders were alerted to the researcher's presence and purpose in Glebelands CRU. The value of conducting the study in Glebelands CRU was endorsed by the stakeholders who were present.

Finally, pre-group interviews were scheduled with each participant before the semi-structured interviews commenced. On receiving a referral from the CDW of a potential participant, the woman concerned was contacted to arrange a time and place for a pre-interview session. The pre-interview sessions followed the same protocol: the researcher formally introduced herself and explained why the participant had been invited to participate in the study. Once the participant appeared to be relatively relaxed and comfortable with the researcher and showed interest in the study, the researcher explained the nature of the study, its objectives, and the research process that would be followed. The role she would play as researcher and the role expected of participants were outlined. The researcher discussed the potential benefits and risks of the participant's involvement in the study, and the measures that were planned to protect their personal interests (Creswell & Poth 2018:156). The risks mentioned were about the possible discomfort the participant could experience from reliving certain situations when answering the research questions, and possible reprisals from other residents who felt threatened by the sharing of information about living conditions in Glebelands CRU. The benefits of the study were given as amplifying the voices of women living in Glebelands CRU about the living conditions they endured that undermined the well-being of women living there, so that Human Settlements officials would be more cognisant about the special housing needs of women when planning to improve the Glebelands CRU. It was mentioned to participants that previous investigations into the living conditions of residents in Glebelands CRU had never focused on women's experiences. Participants were informed about the confidentiality and anonymity measures planned (see section 1.10) and briefed about the arrangements that had been made with a social worker not linked to Glebelands CRU who had made himself available to offer debriefing services (Addendum G and Addendum H). Participants were reassured that written consent had been received from the eThekweni Municipality for the study to proceed and that the block committees and the OSS War Room were aware that the study was planned and had not raised any objections about it (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005:66). Each participant received the information sheet (Addendum C), which the researcher discussed with them to make sure that they understood every research

procedure and more especially their rights as research participants (Creswell & Poth 2018:152). Time was allocated for participants to ask questions and raise their concerns before they were asked to sign the written consent form confirming their consent to participate in the study (Addendum D) (Daymon & Holloway 2011:60-65). Once these activities had been concluded, arrangements were made to conduct the semi-structured interviews at a time and place convenient to each participant.

The next section addresses the data collection protocol that was followed.

4.4.2 Application of methods of data collection

The purpose of the study was to develop an exploratory, descriptive and contextual understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residents living in Glebelands CRU, and the systematic plan for doing so that was outlined in section 1.5.2.3 (Burns & Grove 2013:44; Jebreen 2012:163) was applied but with several changes. The changes were effected in response to feedback encountered once the researcher was properly orientated to the research site and participants. This section outlines how the raw data were gathered from the participants and organised and assembled so that she could connect with participants' experiences and shared descriptions of the protective and risk factors situated within each level of the ecological system and share these with interested others (Marshall & Rossman 2011:137). The findings are presented in Chapter Five. Multiple sources of data were used, as consistent with case studies: interviews with participants; the researcher's personal observations of Glebelands CRU during her interactions with research participants and other Glebelands CRU stakeholders during the orientation and interviewing phases; and a literature review (Creswell & Creswell 2018:185).

The primary source of information used was the one-on-one semi-structured interviews with ten participants (Creswell & Poth 2018:150), which were guided by an interview schedule comprising a number of open-ended questions (see Addendum E). The same interview schedule was used for all of the participants interviewed. This method of data collection resulted in spontaneous conversation-like interactions between the researcher and participants (Creswell & Poth 2018:163), and the researcher's probing helped to ensure that participants' answers were specific and detailed (Babbie & Mouton in Strydom 2013:152). The interviews commenced with a few biographical information questions before the open-ended questions from the interview schedule were asked. Miller (in Govender 2019:46) supports the inclusion of the biographical questions about the age, marital status, and number of children living with each participant in the CRU, the type of CRU accommodation each participant was renting, their classification as a registered or unregistered resident of Glebelands CRU, their employment status and sources of income, level of education,

ethnicity and religion. Answers to such questions helped to develop a clear profile of the study's participants, as presented in section 5.1.

The researcher tried to understand each participant's world from their personal perspectives and discover the personal meanings they attached to them (Creswell & Poth 2018:164). Her role was to talk and listen to the participants whilst they shared their accounts of living in Glebelands CRU (Mason 2018:115). She tracked participants' cues, verbal and non-verbal, in response to the research questions they were asked, and she amended the questions when necessary, without altering their meanings, to ensure that they were relevant to the participant (Chan et al 2013:5; Daymon & Holloway 2011:226). The sequence in which the questions were asked was determined according to the flow and topics of conversation between the researcher and participant. The researcher tried to stay in step with the participant's pace and direction during the interview, whilst being mindful of the information that she needed for the research topic (Daymon & Holloway 2011:226; Edwards & Holland 2013:29). When a participant's conversation went outside the parameters of the research topic, the researcher redirected her to the topic and repeated the open-ended question that she was meant to answer (Partigan in Govender 2019:72).

Each interview lasted between 50 and 90 minutes. The researcher made field notes of her observations about participants' non-verbal communication, the research setting, and incidental information that participants shared before the interview commenced or when it ended (Abma & Stake 2014:1156).

The interviews commenced in December 2020, but the interviewing phase was disrupted by two main challenges. There was an increase in COVID-19 infections at that time, which meant that interviews had to be postponed until the COVID-19 regulations were relaxed and face-to-face interviews were permissible once more. Several participants stated their concerns about the escalating murders and attempted murders in Glebelands that had occurred. In addition, there were several other practical issues that had to be managed in relation to these challenges. On entering the research field, it was evident to the researcher that participants could not be interviewed in the municipal offices at the CRU. This would have placed participants at risk of being recognised as research participants by municipal staff and other residents, which would have compromised their confidentiality and anonymity. Instead, each participant was asked to choose a place to be interviewed where they would feel safe and comfortable enough to open up to the researcher (Bouma et al 2012:229). Three participants chose to be interviewed in their rooms, two were interviewed in the park, and five chose the researcher's office after working hours. The interviews conducted in participants' rooms were more disruptive than those conducted outside because of their roommates coming in and out. The quality of the audio recordings was also

affected, because even though the participants were in a separate room behind closed doors, their voices were lowered. In addition, the confidentiality of the interviews was compromised. The second interviews with these participants were conducted outside of the CRU. These interviews were more private, and participants appeared to share their experiences more freely, without fear of repercussions through others discovering their involvement in the study. In most instances the researcher offered to give participants a lift in her car to the neutral venues they had chosen for their interviews. The light-hearted, general conversations that took place in the car further helped to ease barriers between the researcher and participants. As noted by Bouma et al (2012:229), in-depth interviews are only effective once the researcher has developed rapport with the participants.

Another set-back occurred when the researcher was transcribing the first interviews. The researcher recognised that she had missed several opportunities to probe more deeply around issues that participants had been reticent about. It was resolved that a second interview would be arranged with each participant to create an opportunity for them to share their experiences with the researcher more fully and enable the researcher to follow up on issues or participant cues she had missed that needed further exploration. Of the ten participants, eight agreed to participate in the second interviews. The ninth one was satisfied that she had shared what she needed to, and the tenth one indicated that she was not available for the second interview for personal reasons related to time, although she too felt she had shared enough already. The data shared in the second interviews were much richer, and clearly participants felt more at ease with the researcher, and mutual rapport was better.

When the interviews were completed, the researcher concluded that she had been flexible and given participants sufficient liberty and control within the interview (Mason 2018:115). The researcher was satisfied that participants had described their specific experiences of living in Glebelands CRU and how they had coped with the challenges of living there (Mason 2018:112). The researcher used the interview skills presented in section 1.7.3, such as building a relationship, attentive listening, empathising, probing, being open minded and demonstrating cultural sensitivity (McNabb 2010:99; Neuman 2014:332). However, the application of these skills without adequate time to establish rapport with participants was not sufficient on its own, and it was necessary to conduct a second interview with each participant in a more relaxed context. The semi-structured interview, guided by the interview schedule, enabled the researcher to gather rich and complex information needed to answer the research question (Khan 2014:306). Once the data had been analysed it was evident that the interviews and questions asked were successful in creating a holistic understanding of the participants' ideas about living in the Glebelands CRU (De Vos et al 2011:351).

The interviews took four months to finalise.

4.4.3 The interview protocol

The research protocol that was developed for the research proposal (see section 1.7.4) was applied in all the interviews without amendments. It was an adapted version of the loose-structure interview guidelines of Mason (2018:121).

4.4.3.1 Recording and storing data

Interviews in a research study are of little use unless they are properly recorded because they need to be thoroughly interrogated after the interview (Litchman 2014:253; Merriam & Tisdell 2016:131). The researcher made an audio recording of each interview, having first obtained the participants' permission to make the recordings (see Addendum D). The researcher transcribed the interviews personally after listening more than once to each audio recording. All participants gave a voluntary consent to participate in the study and allow the researcher to make digital recordings of their interviews as was detailed in Section 4.4.3.1 (see Addendum D). There were several advantages of using the verbatim transcriptions: the researcher was familiar with the data when it came to doing the coding and data analysis; she experienced what it would be like to be a woman living in the low-cost subsidised rental stock in Glebelands CRU; and the direct references to participants' words and descriptions when the study was compiled, as reflected in the verbatim transcriptions, have contributed to its trustworthiness. Excerpts from the transcriptions are used in Chapter Five to highlight and illustrate central features of the case (Creswell & Poth 2018:106).

In addition to the audio recordings of the interviews, the researcher made field notes of each interview so that she would have some reference to what transpired if the digital recorder were to fail (Creswell & Creswell 2018:190). Pertinent descriptions about the participants, the physical setting, incidental events that occurred during the interview and the researcher's subjective experiences were carefully recorded in the field notes (Creswell & Poth 2018:168). The field notes were also used when doing further probing or asking follow-up questions in the second interview (Nieuwenhuis 2016b:94).

The data collected were organised systematically to make sure that every bit of information collected could be accounted for. The interview transcriptions and field notes were kept safe to protect the privacy and identities of all participants (Creswell & Poth 2018:174; Flick 2014:372). Each participant was assigned a code before being interviewed that was known only to the researcher, as suggested by Flick (2014:389). The participants' identifying and contact details were protected by using those codes. The codes assigned to each participant were used to label their field note templates and audio digital recordings, which

were then password encrypted and saved on the researcher's external hard drive. A master list aligning the codes and names of participants was stored in a lockable safe in the researcher's residence. The printed transcriptions were stored in the same safe with the hard copies of the field notes of every interview, participants' letters of consent to participate in the study, and signed letters of confidentiality. Once the transcriptions had been edited and cleaned in preparation for data analysis, the codes allocated to each participant were changed to pseudonyms to make sure that no one's identity would be mistakenly revealed. The researcher has undertaken to protect and store this information for five years before it is destroyed, in accordance with the professional code of conduct of the South African Council for Social Services Professions (SACSSP 2015:11) and UNISA's research ethics policy (University of South Africa 2016:17).

4.4.3.2 Other forms of data used

Literature on housing, women's rights and housing, ecological systems theory and the feminist approach was valuable in helping to deepen the researcher's understanding of the research issue, particularly when analysing the data and answering the research questions (Bisson, Cosgrove, Lewis & Roberts 2015:351).

The researcher's field observations and field notes were recorded throughout the data collection phase, and the recordings were used during data analysis and in writing up the thesis.

Finally, the researcher kept a research journal that was used to capture her research experiences, observations, reflections and interpretations (Creswell & Creswell 2018:189). Entries in the research journal had several uses: they created the agendas for supervision sessions; they made sure the researcher allocated time and space to be reflexive during the research process; they captured her personal and professional values and perspectives about the research so that they could be bracketed out and she remained neutral when she interpreted the participants' meanings and the findings; they made sure that the research participants' needs were upheld over her own; they allowed the researcher to track her insights as they developed during the study; and, finally, they formed a record of valuable resources and useful contacts she encountered during the study. When not in use, the research journal was kept in the locked cabinet with the other research documents for safe-keeping.

In the next section, the researcher presents her reflections on the pilot testing of the interview schedule and protocol that were developed for the study.

4.4.4 Pilot testing

The pilot test was really a mini-version of the research study and was used to prepare the researcher for the full-scale study (Teijlingen & Hundley in Dikko 2016:521). The researcher first discussed the questions in the interview schedule with the community development worker, and if both of them felt sure that certain questions were inadequate for the purpose of the study, the CDW set out to recruit two suitable candidates to participate in the pilot test.

Two female residents who met the selection criteria and were willing to offer feedback about their experience of the interview process and tool were identified. One was a Zulu woman and the other a Xhosa woman who was fluent in isiZulu. The two women were told that feedback was needed about the interview schedule and research protocol to establish whether the questions and research process were culturally and contextually sensitive, whether they were clear enough for research participants to answer, and whether the format of the interview was conducive to answering the questions. The women understood that their role as pre-testers of the research instrument meant that they would be precluded from participating in the study as research participants.

Individual face-to-face interviews were conducted with both women, using the interview protocol developed for the study. When they had completed the interview questions, each question was reviewed to make sure it could be translated into their vernacular without losing the meanings of the questions or yielding incomplete answers (Dikko 2016:522; Sarma & Agrawal 2010:37). The women identified several terms that they could not translate directly into isiZulu, and others they described as ambiguous, which had to be modified (Yin 2011:37). For example, there was no direct translation for the term "living conditions" in isiZulu as phrased in question six. It was further noted that the difference between "living conditions" in question six and "challenges" in question seven were difficult for the women to differentiate because the living conditions they experienced were challenging. Similarly, the term "experiences" had to be clarified more carefully so that it could be translated into isiZulu and isiXhosa and make question four easier for participants to answer.

The general conclusion was that most of the questions were simply worded, and it was relatively easy for the participants to mix isiZulu and English when they answered the questions. The researcher found the two women's responses easy to translate because she spoke English, isiZulu and isiXhosa fluently. As mentioned, one of them spoke isiZulu and the other isiXhosa. The time of forty-five minutes that had been calculated for conducting the interviews had to be extended by another ten minutes because it took between fifty

minutes and an hour for the women to answer the research questions (Creswell & Creswell 2018:154; Dikko 2016:522; Yin 2011:37).

The researcher checked that the women's answers helped to answer the research question (Leedy & Ormrod in Mathibela 2017:28). The pilot test confirmed that the interview schedule questions provided sufficient depth of information for the researcher to develop a descriptive understanding of the experiences and perceptions of the two women and answer the research question (Maxwell in Mathibela 2017:52).

The interview schedule was amended again. The questions were reworded slightly, and the interview schedule was translated into isiZulu and isiXhosa. The translations were important for ensuring that the research process was culturally sensitive towards every participant. The translations meant that participants who so wished could respond in their own vernacular. It was noted that most people living in Glebelands CRU mixed the languages when speaking, but the interview schedules were made available to participants in the three languages of English, isiZulu and isiXhosa.

The modified interview guide and the translations in isiZulu and isiXhosa were discussed with the social worker employed at the Department of Social Development office in Umlazi who was designated to service the Glebelands CRU and whom the researcher knew from the OSS War Room meetings. The social worker confirmed that the residents in Glebelands CRU mixed their vernacular languages with English, and that many of the Xhosa residents who had lived in KwaZulu-Natal for a lengthy period spoke and understood isiZulu well. The social worker supported the questions that were asked and how they were worded and confirmed that the translations into isiZulu and isiXhosa were clear and accurate.

In conclusion, the final interview guide (Addendum E) consisted of eleven questions. An extra question was added to the biographical data section: "Date that you moved into Glebelands CRU". The interview schedule was amended three times before interviews were conducted with research participants. The final interview schedule appears in Addendum E in the three languages used.

4.4.5 Method of data analysis

The researcher's task, in accordance with the description by Kumar (2014:44) and Jebreen (2012:170), was to compress the voluminous data she had collected into a reasonable and manageable framework so that sense could be made of it (Creswell & Creswell 2018:178). Data gathered were inspected closely to find important themes or items of information repeated by multiple participants and the meanings in their descriptions or stories (Anfara, & Mertz 2015:30). The researcher broke the analysis phase down into several steps as mentioned by Creswell and Poth (2018:30): handling and organising the data; reading the

data and highlighting emergent ideas; categorising the data using codes to enable them to be established into themes; developing and assessing the emergent interpretations; and then representing the data to provide an accurate account of the findings. This was done by reading through the transcripts repeatedly and highlighting key words related to the themes that were pertinent to the research question (Castellan 2010:7).

The researcher followed the seven steps suggested by Colaizzi (1978:48-59) as discussed in Paré (2015:1).

1. The researcher transcribed all the subjects' descriptions. She read each transcription several times to get the gist of the participants' experiences of living in Glebelands CRU.
2. The researcher extracted what she considered to be significant statements that were directly linked to the research focus (experiences, challenges and coping strategies of the participants who lived in the Glebelands CRU). She looked out for common statements that participants had made about their experiences of living as women in the Glebelands CRU, the kinds of challenges they faced there and the coping strategies they used to get by.
3. The researcher looked for meanings behind the words participants used. The researcher relied on her observations in some instances when the participants' meanings had not been explicitly communicated. The researcher's field notes aided her in this regard.
4. The researcher combined the meanings participants had shared to create theme clusters, which she coded later. The researcher looked out for dominating themes, repetitive expressions and the behaviours that participants mentioned in their narratives, so that she could make sense of their situations by arranging them into theme clusters (Anfara & Mertz 2015:30).
5. The researcher created a comprehensive description of the research issue – the experiences of women living in Glebelands CRU, their challenges and coping strategies. Extracts from the transcriptions were identified to illustrate each theme and to use in the research report (see Chapter Five, presentation of the findings).
6. The researcher developed a fundamental structure of the problem. In this case she used the ecological systems theory and feminist approach to explain the participants' experiences. The theoretical framework enabled the researcher to structure the interpretations meaningfully, using literary sources to add depth of meaning to the findings.
7. The researcher finally returned to the participants to confirm that the interpretations of their descriptions and the findings were accurate. Once the researcher had finalised

the themes for this study with the independent coder, individual video call interviews were arranged with each participant at their convenient times to verify that they were satisfied with the interpretations of their descriptions and that the findings were accurate. All participants affirmed the findings as would be presented in Chapter Five.

The seven steps guided the researcher. The researcher moved back and forth between the data that were collected and their analysis, carefully interrogating them as she went along (Holloway & Wheeler in Mathibela 2017:30). Once the researcher had completed the seven steps, she engaged the services of the independent coder (Addendum J), who was a retired social worker with a deep interest in social work research, so that she as an independent, neutral person could confirm the themes and sub-themes. The independent coder worked through all the interview transcripts for the ten participants, and their anonymised biographical information. The independent coding commenced in April 2021 and was completed in June 2021. The analysis of data was done manually by the researcher and independent coder, rather than using available software. The manual option offered the advantage of allowing the researcher to immerse herself in the data (Creswell & Poth 2018:187). Once the independent coder had completed the coding, an online consultation meeting was arranged between the researcher and independent coder, and another between the independent coder and the supervisor, to establish the similarities and differences of the researcher's and independent coder's coding outcomes and to reach consensus about the codes that would be used when analysing the data. The independent coder finalised the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data and were presented as a report. The researcher wrote up the themes and sub-themes and used the theoretical framework and literature control presented in Chapter Two and Chapter Three to assist her to interpret the findings. This was a long process that took time.

The researcher concluded that the data analysis process she had followed enabled her to extract and arrange the narrative data she had gathered from the participants into themes and sub-themes that encapsulated their experiences and challenges as women living in Glebelands CRU and the coping strategies they used. The independent coder indicated that the experiences of the women living in Glebelands CRU were reported accurately and without researcher bias (Farina 2014:50). The researcher was satisfied that she had not diluted or skewed the meanings that participants ascribed to their experiences as women residents in Glebelands CRU.

Twelve themes emerged from the study, which were condensed into eight because when the findings were written up some themes overlapped and resulted in repetition (see Chapter Five). The initial twelve themes were as follows:

1. Participants' accounts of how they came to be a resident of Glebelands CRU
2. Participants' descriptions of their previous living conditions
3. Participants' accounts of the hardest challenges they faced after moving into Glebelands CRU
4. Participants' descriptions of the block chairmen/committees
5. Participants' accounts of the general living conditions in Glebelands CRU
6. Participants' descriptions of living in Glebelands CRU from a woman's perspective
7. Participants' explanations of what effects the CRU had had on the quality of women's lives
8. Participants' accounts of advantages for women living in Glebelands CRU
9. Participants' accounts of their access to outside resources
10. Participants' accounts of what had changed since they moved into Glebelands CRU
11. Participants' descriptions of the coping strategies they used to get by in Glebelands CRU
12. Participants' ideas on what should be done to improve the lives of women living in Glebelands CRU.

The final eight themes that were used to present the findings are tabulated next, with corresponding sub-themes.

Table 4.2: Eight condensed themes as per Chapter Five findings

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Participants' accounts of how they came to live at Glebelands CRU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisted by someone in Glebelands CRU to secure a space • Came to Glebelands CRU to join a partner/parent
2. Participants' descriptions of their previous living conditions before moving to Glebelands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of resources • Left to escape political violence • Relationship issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Left to escape or resolve intimate relationship issues - Chose to be with an intimate partner • Scarcity of affordable accommodation
3. Participants' accounts of the challenges they faced when they first moved into the Glebelands CRU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence and murders • Overcrowding and lack of privacy • Bad behaviour of other residents
4. Participants' accounts of current general living conditions in the Glebelands CRU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcrowding and lack of privacy • Unsatisfactory sleeping arrangements • Lack of security and ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU • Concerns about raising children in Glebelands CRU amidst ongoing violence • Setting of rules for residents by the block chairmen/committees • Poor maintenance of Glebelands CRU by the municipality
5. Descriptions of the living conditions in Glebelands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges living in a male-dominated environment • Side-lining of women residents in Glebelands CRU matters

Themes	Sub-themes
CRU from a woman's perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stigmatisation of Glebelands CRU women residents by the outside community • Disrespecting of female residents by the male residents • Lack of employment opportunities in and around Glebelands CRU for women
6. How the Glebelands CRU improves the quality of women's lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive contributions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offers women and their children shelter - Provides relatively spacious low-cost rental accommodation - Makes affordable rental accommodation available for women - Support received from other female residents - Improves women's access to resources in terms of proximity and Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room • Negative impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exclusion of single women with children from the family units - Suffering of pride loss by women living in Glebelands CRU - Overlooking needs of older women residents
7. Strategies women residents used to adapt to living in the Glebelands CRU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain submissive • Avoid getting involved in or discussing Glebelands politics • Abide by the rules
8. Recommendations for improving the lives of women living in the Glebelands CRU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide family unit accommodation for women-headed households • Resolve the issues of governance • Address the violence • Address unemployment of women • Increase the representation of women in CRU issues

The subsequent section of the research process, data verification, is outlined next.

4.5 METHODS OF DATA VERIFICATION

The researcher was mindful that the integrity or trustworthiness of the study had to be preserved from its outset through to its conclusion. The notion of trustworthiness that was used for the study was based on the concepts expressed by Lincoln and Guba as discussed in Creswell and Creswell (2018:200), Creswell and Poth (2018:255) and Flick (2014:487-488). The measures used to uphold the trustworthiness of the study are presented below in four different parts pertaining respectively to (1) its credibility, (2) its applicability or transferability, (3) its consistency or dependability, and (4) its neutrality or confirmability.

All the research actions that were applied in the study which related to the four elements of trustworthiness are presented next, commencing with a discussion about the actions taken to uphold the credibility of the study.

4.5.1 Ensuring credibility

A conscious effort was made to ensure that everything reported in the research report was honest and accurate so that the credibility of the study would be recognised (Shenton

2004:64). As per the theoretical guidelines presented in the research plan in section 1.9, several actions were executed in this regard:

- The researcher had a lengthy engagement with each research participant that took place at the research site and in the neighbourhood where Glebelands CRU was situated (Creswell & Poth 2018:262). In most instances every participant was interviewed four times. The contacts consisted of a pre-group interview, two data collection interviews, and a member check using a WhatsApp video interview that was prearranged telephonically. In addition, the researcher spent considerable time in Glebelands CRU to become properly orientated by observing residents of Glebelands CRU going about their daily business and by engaging in informal conversations with them to discover more about the resources available to residents there. The lengthy engagement on the ground enabled the researcher to develop an overall understanding of the women's lives in the Glebelands CRU (Creswell & Poth 2018:262).
- Multiple sources of information were used to arrive at the findings (Flick 2014:488). The findings presented in Chapter Five are based on: the verbatim transcriptions of the interviews conducted with the eight research participants; the researcher's observations recorded in the field notes of each of the interviews; the literature review concerning housing policies and legislation, the CRU Programme and its objectives, the housing status of poor black South African women who have migrated to the peripheries of cities, living conditions in Glebelands CRU and other CRUs and hostels, and existing documents about Glebelands CRU; informal dialogues with research participants and other stakeholders involved with Glebelands CRU, such as the community development worker, ward councillor, residents in Glebelands CRU who were not part of the study, members of the taxi association and other professionals who rendered services in Glebelands CRU, including social workers, police officials, nurses, teachers and Safer Cities officials from the eThekweni Municipality. The theoretical framework developed for the study, incorporating ecological systems theory and the feminist perspective, contributed to the researcher's interpretations of participants' descriptions of their experiences, adding to their relevance and credibility (Flick 2014:488). Collectively these sources contributed significantly to the credibility of the findings.
- Regular use of supervision and peer debriefing throughout the study strengthened the credibility of the findings (Flick 2014:259). Face-to-face and online supervision sessions were held regularly with the supervisor. The researcher's neutrality was carefully monitored during the research process, and she had to be very explicit about how she arrived at the findings (Creswell 2014:259). The peer debriefers, qualitative researchers

and colleagues of the researcher in the provincial research office were always available to discuss the researcher's ideas, provide a sounding board when she needed to talk about challenging research experiences during the study, and provide feedback about the research decisions she made. Their feedback helped to keep the researcher's focus on interests of the research participants. The peer debriefers verified the isiZulu and isiXhosa interview schedule translations to make sure that they were culturally sensitive and consistent with the English version.

- An independent coder was engaged to verify the coding of data for the study so that the themes and sub-themes were credible and free of the researcher's subjectivity (Shenton 2004:67).
- The researcher kept a research diary of her personal research experiences, observations, reflections and interpretations in connection with the study (Creswell & Creswell 2018:189). Her journalling enabled her to consciously bracket out her personal and professional experiences as a black, educated, middle-class woman employed as a safety practitioner for the provincial department. Many of the diary entries were shared with the supervisor and peer debriefers when potential or actual dilemmas had to be resolved so that they would not threaten research decisions and findings. It can therefore be concluded that reflexive practice formed an integral part of the research process (Creswell & Poth 2018:261) and further strengthened the credibility of the findings.
- Member checks were conducted with every research participant (Creswell & Poth 2018:261) once their interviews had been concluded and transcribed and the preliminary coding had been done. Because of COVID-19 and the resurgence of violence in Glibelands CRU, a decision was taken to do the member checks using WhatsApp video calls because they were the closest alternative to one-on-one, face-to-face interviews. The video calls were prearranged. The researcher went over the interviews and the transcribed interpretations of participants' shared experiences. The ten participants verified that they recognised themselves in the findings and confirmed that preliminary themes and sub-themes were accurate (Creswell & Poth 2018:260). The researcher concluded that the member checks contributed positively to the credibility of the findings (Creswell & Poth 2018:261).
- Rich descriptions of the research process, interview protocol and detailed findings, as discussed in section 1.7.3 and section 1.7.4, allow readers to arrive at their own conclusion about the credibility of the findings. The digital recordings of interviews were transcribed and then checked and rechecked against the audio recordings. The field notes made during every interview allowed the researcher to confirm the accuracy of the transcriptions, especially when the audio recordings of interviews were affected by

external noise or interruptions that occurred during the interviews. These actions contributed positively to the accuracy of findings.

Several actions as mentioned in sections 1.7.2, 1.7.3 and 1.7.4 were conducted as planned to increase the dependability of the study. These actions are presented next.

4.5.2 Ensuring dependability and consistency

Dependability and consistency in the execution of research actions help to convince others of the trustworthiness of a study. In accordance with the recommendation of Daymon and Holloway (2011:86), the researcher detailed all the research actions in this research report so that others would be able to scrutinise the consistency of her research actions throughout the study (Daymon & Holloway 2011:86). Several research plans were developed to ensure the dependability and consistency of this study (see section 1.5). The application of these planned actions during the study is presented here.

- This research report serves as an accurate account of the step-by-step application of the research methods as they were undertaken in the study (Daymon & Holloway 2011:86). The research report explains what the research plan or framework looked like at the outset of the study (see section 1.12), how it was applied, and what adaptations had to be made to manage unanticipated research situations or field-related events that were encountered along the way. (Chapter Four is dedicated to presenting in detail the application of the research approach, the integrated research design and the research methods.)
- Interview, recording and data storage protocols were established and used according to plan (Mason 2018:121). Section 4.4.1 explains the protocol that was used to inform the gatekeepers about the study. Section 4.3 outlines the methods and selection criteria used to select the sample. Addendum E outlines the open-ended questions that were asked in each interview. Section 4.4.3 outlines the recording procedures followed during interviews and field visits, the interview protocol used to manage the interviews, and the data storage protocols developed and applied during the study. Section 4.4.5 explains in detail the seven steps of coding that were followed when the data were analysed to arrive at the themes and sub-themes presented in Chapter Five on the findings. The researcher is satisfied that all of the research participants were exposed to similar interviewing experiences (Creswell 2014:259; Mason 2018:121). The information provided is detailed enough for others who are interested in replicating the study to do so if their context closely resembles this one.

- An independent coder confirmed that the codes, themes, and sub-themes presented by the researcher are genuine and accurate and were extracted from the raw data (Tobin & Begley 2004:392).
- The transcripts were read multiple times to check for mistakes during the transcribing process, and corrections were made when errors were detected (Creswell & Creswell 2018:202). The audio recordings of each interview were listened to multiple times and compared with the completed transcriptions. The researcher is satisfied that she had thoroughly immersed herself in the study and that the findings are an accurate reflection of participants' experiences, challenges and coping strategies (Anney 2014:277).

Transferability is the third element of trustworthiness, and some of the research actions that are discussed overlap with others that have been discussed, as becomes evident in the discussion in the next section.

4.5.3 Ensuring applicability and transferability

The findings of the study were never meant to be generalised to broader populations. However, the researcher has provided enough detail about the research process for others to determine which findings are applicable to their own research or practice situations or which research methods they would like to apply in their own contexts (Thomas & Magilvy 2011:153).

- Thick descriptions and depth of detail, particularly about the participants' realities (Anney 2014:277), were carefully portrayed without divulging their identities. The inclusion criteria (see section 1.6.3) and biographical details of participants (see section 5.1) present a clear profile of the participants in this study.
- The research methods executed during the research process are clearly explained in detail in this chapter (Shenton 2004:70). The interview protocol is explicitly stated in section 1.7.4 to enable others to assess whether the findings outlined in Chapter Five are applicable in other research or practice settings (Shenton 2004:70; Thomas & Magilvy 2011:153).

The research activities pertinent to confirmability are discussed next.

4.5.4 Ensuring objectivity and confirmability

Several measures were taken to remove research bias and corroborate the research findings (Shenton 2004:72; Tobin & Begley 2004:392). The researcher is satisfied that the findings are a true reflection of the participants' perspectives and were not influenced by the researcher's personal and professional biases (Lincoln & Guba in Nieuwenhuis 2016b:75).

- Reflexivity was practised consistently throughout the research process to ensure researcher neutrality during the study. The researcher heightened her self-awareness during the study through regular supervision sessions, frequent peer debriefing sessions, a research journal, and recordings of interesting observations, insights, experiences and ideas that were noted in the field notes made during research field visits. She could recognise instances when her personal and professional biases were intruding on the research findings and influencing the research participants and could stop her intrusive thoughts and actions.
- The research findings were verified and validated by an independent coder (Anney 2014:277).
- The findings were verified by conducting individual member checks with each participant once the data had been analysed (Creswell & Poth 2018:261; Flick 2014:488).
- Supervision was a useful tool for monitoring the researcher's accuracy when capturing the participants' responses and presenting the research findings. Supervision ensured that the research was conducted with integrity, as the researcher maintained neutrality throughout the study (Anney 2014:279; Chenail 2011:259).

This finalises the discussion of the steps taken throughout the study to uphold the four elements of trustworthiness of the study. The focus of the next section is on the ethical considerations that were upheld throughout the study.

4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations defend the rights of research participants and protect participants from being exposed to harm because of their involvement in a research study (David & Sutton 2011:30; Patton 2015:495). Six ethical principles are mentioned by Polit and Beck (2010:121-125) for upholding the ethics in a research study: social justice; respect for persons and their autonomy; beneficence and non-maleficence; trust; research fidelity; and scientific integrity (Polit & Beck 2010:121-125). The researcher used the recommendations of Edwards and Addae (2015:88-92) to stay focused on the needs and concerns of participants, and throughout the research process she consciously demonstrated respect towards participants and other stakeholders connected to the study. Time was spent gaining the trust of participants and eliminating any of the researcher's biases that could potentially harm either the participants, the research site, the university, or the social work profession.

The research proposal was scrutinised by the institutional review board before the study commenced (Carey 2012:102; Creswell & Creswell 2018:89; Creswell & Poth 2018). After the research proposal was approved by the Department of Social Work Research

Committee in November 2020, it received ethics clearance by the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee in December 2020 (Addendum A). The researcher then sought permission from the eThekweni Municipality's Human Settlements department, custodian of the Glebelands CRU, to conduct the study there (Addendum B). A letter of request, the research proposal and an interview with the Human Settlements department's research unit were required before the researcher obtained permission (Addendum I) to commence with the study in Glebelands CRU. At the request of the Human Settlements department's research unit, she made a few modifications to the interview schedule (Addendum E), as discussed in section 4.4.4. The researcher revisited the standards of ethical conduct for social workers conducting research, developed by the social workers' professional body, the South African Council for Social Services Professions (SACSSP 2015:11) (Creswell & Poth 2018:54).

The researcher's actions relevant to upholding ethical principles during this study are presented next. The discussion commences with the researcher's actions related to upholding five of the six ethical principles of research: social justice; respect for persons and their autonomy; beneficence and non-maleficence; trust; and scientific integrity. Fidelity will not be discussed because this was a qualitative study and not a quantitative one. As cited by Feely, Seay, Lanier, Auslander and Kohl (2018:139), fidelity refers to the degree to which people who are conducting research about the implementation of the programme make sure that they implement the intervention programme in a standardised way, as intended by the programme developer, so that findings generated from their study can be fairly compared to the findings of other studies pertaining to the intervention programme. This principle was not appropriate for this study.

4.6.1 Ensuring social justice for participants

Social justice is the overarching ethical principle for all social science studies and embodies the other five principles mentioned by Polit and Beck (2010:121-125): respect for persons and their autonomy; beneficence and non-maleficence; trust; fidelity; and scientific integrity.

Close attention was paid to Butler's recommendations for socially just research as presented by Bouma et al (2012:103-104):

- The research was designed in such a way that the women participants were empowered to share their experiences and given a safe platform where their concerns and recommendations about how the Glebelands CRU should be improved for the benefit of women could be amplified.
- The researcher continues to advocate for social justice for all the women living in Glebelands CRU in her professional associations with the human settlements

departments in the provincial and local government. The empirical findings will be used to enlighten them about the specific needs of the vulnerable women living in Glebelands CRU.

- The findings of the study are intended to be used to inform interventions that will address the oppression and discrimination suffered by women living in the Glebelands CRU. The eThekweni Human Settlements department will receive an abbreviated report of the findings of the study once it has been examined.
- The researcher resolves to contribute to the promotion of the well-being of all women and protect them from discriminatory housing practices through disseminating the findings of this study more broadly by making the research report available to others via the UNISA library, publishing articles in accredited professional journals on the subject matter, and delivering presentations about the findings at conferences.

Attention now shifts to the actions that were undertaken to uphold the dignity of the research participants and their autonomy.

4.6.2 Ensuring respect for persons and their autonomy

All the participants were given information about the study in the face-to-face pre-interview sessions and information sheets issued at the interviews (Bouma et al 2012:167; Carey 2012:101; Mathibela 2017:34). The researcher was satisfied that all participants were fully informed about the study, understood what was expected of them, and were properly informed about their rights as participants and any foreseeable risks and benefits of their participation, and had made fully informed decisions to participate in the study, which they confirmed in writing (Anderson & Morrow 2011:101; Creswell & Poth 2018:55).

At the individual pre-interview meetings each participant received a standard letter of information about the study, which the researcher discussed with them point by point to make sure that all participants understood what the study was all about, why it was being conducted, and why their participation would help. The researcher spent more time with participants who were illiterate to make doubly sure that they understood the contents of the information letter (Addendum C) and that their consent was voluntary. Participants were encouraged to ask questions about the study and raise their concerns about participating (Polit & Beck 2010). They were informed about the questions they would be asked during the research interviews. The researcher alerted them to the debriefing service that was available to those who needed it. Participants mostly indicated that it was unlikely that they would need the debriefer because the interviews did not seem to be threatening. An anticipated risk was that participants could be identified by troublemakers in Glebelands CRU who might object to their participating in the study. Luckily no participants reported

being victimised by others who resented their involvement in the study, because preventative measures were taken to safeguard their confidentiality and privacy. Several discussions had taken place about what measures had to be taken, and the participants' considerations that were taken seriously were the careful choosing of interview venues, and the necessity for the researcher and participants alike to be discreet about their contacts with one another and about when and where the interviews would happen. Most participants resolved that they would keep secret their decision to participate in the study. Most participants opted to be interviewed in their units or in the units of friends or relatives who were out working or away from the CRU during the scheduled times for the first interviews. Once it was confirmed that each participant understood all the matters covered in the standard information letters, including their right to withdraw from the study at any time, and that their questions about the study had been answered, participants signed the voluntary consent to participate form (Addendum D). The data collection interviews were arranged once the written consents had been signed. Because informed consent must be an ongoing process throughout the research process, participants were frequently reminded during their contacts with the researcher of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage (Carey 2012:167).

Of the sixteen potential participants invited to participate, only thirteen women agreed. Three women withdrew before the pre-interviews, two having reported their departure to rural areas and one woman that she was waiting to be granted permission to participate by the ANC Women's League chairperson. Another three women withdrew after the pre-interviews, two having reported that they had found employment and one that her block chairman was not aware about the study and she had decided to withdraw. One woman expressed reluctance about participating and was assured that she had a right not to participate, but she continued with the research process. It took time to gain the trust of participants because of their past experiences and perceptions of violence in Glebelands CRU. The resurgence of violence in Glebelands CRU during the data collection phase was a threat for the study, because it made most of the participants anxious about being discovered to be informants in the study. This was in January 2021. The month before the process of pilot testing commenced (December 2020), several attempted murders and murders were reported in the CRU. The resurgence of violence occurred after a relatively peaceful period of two to three years. The police intensified their operations, and residents were tense and did not know whom to trust in their CRU. The second threat to the study was the second wave of COVID-19 because there was an increased death rate in the eThekweni municipal district, which at the time was declared the epicentre of the South African pandemic. The two combined factors meant the researcher had to be patient and

respectful of participants' concerns about matters of their safety. This patience ultimately won their trust, and together the researcher and participants stayed with the planned measures to safeguard their safety.

Participants chose when they were ready to be interviewed, where they wanted to be interviewed, and what questions they were comfortable about answering. They indicated what language they wanted their interviews to be conducted in: English, isiZulu or isiXhosa. None of the participants were pressurised to participate in the follow-up interviews or member checks. Two participants reported that they were comfortable with having only one interview because they believed they had provided all their information in the first interviews and so wished to decline the invitation to participate in the second interviews. During the member checks, participants were reminded that they could have any sections of their interviews edited out of the research report before it was published. No one wanted any sections of their transcribed interviews omitted from the final report.

The researcher was suitably satisfied that she had upheld the ethical principle of respecting the research participants and their autonomy. The measures taken to ensure that the participants' interests were protected and that they came no harm are discussed next.

4.6.3 Ensuring beneficence and non-maleficence towards participants

The researcher's professional training had prepared her to be respectful and appreciative about diversity in matters related to social, religious, physical, familial, community, linguistic, political and cultural issues amongst participants (Bouma et al 2012:165; Carey 2012:101; Creswell & Creswell 2018:89; Creswell & Poth 2018:56; Flick 2014:59). Each participant was respected by the researcher, who was non-judgemental when interacting with them and presenting the findings of the study. She was mindful of her position as the Community Safety and Liaison Officer in the KwaZulu-Natal provincial government and made sure that her position did not influence or threaten participants. She set aside time in each of the pre-interview sessions to explain her role as the researcher and how it differed from her position as safety practitioner from the provincial department, and she produced the university ethical clearance letter confirming that she had been granted permission to conduct the study. Participants were consistently reminded about her role as researcher during the different stages of the research process, particularly when the climate in Glebelands CRU became volatile. She took seriously participants' concerns about the random police operations and the Glebelands CRU criminal cases of the "Glebelands Eight" group members who were on trial whilst the study was in progress. When the climate in Glebelands CRU became volatile once more, the participants and researcher agreed that all second interviews would be conducted off-site. The participants were reminded that the

researcher's interest was to explore and experience what it was like to be in the shoes of women surviving the daily living conditions in Glebelands CRU. Questions were worded sensitively, and care was taken to confirm that the researcher had understood their responses accurately. She applied empathy appropriately when the questions were answered (Bouma et al 2012:165). The interview questions were carefully worded to avoid leading participants on in any way, while still enabling participants to feel free to share their authentic personal perspectives (Creswell & Poth 2018:57).

A professional social worker was prepared as the debriefer for the study to counsel any of the participants who were distressed because of their participation in the study (Daymon & Holloway 2011:72; Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005:132) (see Addendum G and Addendum H). None of the participants made use of the debriefer's services, since they did not experience undue anxiety because of their involvement in the study.

The second risk factor that could have affected the research process and placed participants at risk was COVID-19. Strict protocols related to social distancing, sanitising, and wearing masks were followed, as stipulated by UNISA and the eThekweni Municipality COVID-19 regulations. Face-to-face interviews were conducted only when lockdown measures permitted close contact with people outside households, so that participants' well-being was protected during the research process. The eThekweni Municipality COVID-19 screening test was used by the researcher and participants before each interview. Hand sanitisers and disposable masks were issued to participants to wear during the interviews, and the 1.5-metre social distance was maintained between the researcher and interviewees. The data collection period was extended to accommodate the COVID-19 face-to-face restrictions and the unrest within Glebelands CRU. The researcher was satisfied that these measures protected the participants from being harmed because of their involvement in the study.

How trust was established and maintained between the researcher and the participants is detailed next.

4.6.4 Ensuring the trust of the participants

Participants were assured that their protection, anonymity and confidentiality were of the utmost importance to the researcher during the study (Bouma et al 2012:168; Creswell & Creswell 2018:89). The researcher sought their ideas about what venues they wished to use for the interviews and what times were appropriate for them to meet, because these were some of the factors that could potentially affect the participants' confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher encouraged participants to identify venues that would offer them privacy and few interruptions. She offered to arrange transport for those who wished to meet

her outside of Glebelands CRU. Two participants chose to be interviewed in their Glebelands CRU rooms at times when they knew that others would not be around to see them with the researcher or interrupt the data collection session. One chose to meet the researcher at the unit of a friend or relative when that resident was not there. Seven arranged to meet the researcher outside Glebelands CRU at her office or in a park. The participants chose the days and times of the interviews and agreed not to share with others any information about the arrangements pertaining to the interviews. The researcher agreed to uphold the secrecy of these arrangements. The measures to protect the confidentiality and privacy of participants were outlined in the confidentiality form and jointly signed by the participants and the researcher (see Addendum F).

The personal information shared by participants for the purpose of biographical profiling was protected, as were all the audio recordings, transcriptions and field notes made during their interviews (Bouma et al 2012:166). A coding system was used to protect the names of participants, but once the data had been analysed each participant's code was changed to an appropriate pseudonym so that they would remain anonymous. The researcher removed any identifying information about specific people in the transcripts that could have revealed the identities of the persons mentioned during their interviews. The master list aligning the codes and names of participants was stored in the lockable safe in the researcher's residence (see section 4.4.3.1) (Carey 2012:102; Daymon & Holloway 2011:72; Flick 2014:57; Kumar 2014:221).

The researcher never made false promises to the participants and stayed true to her words throughout. She remained authentic, which won the respect and trust of the participants and strengthened the researcher/participant relationships.

The last ethical principle to be discussed is scientific integrity.

4.6.5 Scientific integrity

The plan to uphold the scientific integrity of the study (see section 1.9) was conducted as planned:

- The declaration made by the researcher (see Declaration) confirms that the researcher has submitted an accurate account of the study in this report, and that the work presented is her own, except where she has acknowledged the sources she used to compile the research report. She has given credit to the sources she consulted by citing them in the body of her report and presenting a detailed list of references for those consulted and cited in the report (see Bibliography) (Creswell & Creswell 2018:95-97; Creswell & Poth 2018:57).

- The details of the findings will be made available to relevant stakeholders, particularly the participants and the Human Settlements research unit, which will be consulted after the study has been examined about how they would like to receive this information (Creswell & Creswell 2018:95-97; Creswell & Poth 2018:57).
- The limitations and weaknesses of the study are discussed in Chapter Six. This chapter has presented the challenges the researcher experienced when operationalising the study and has been honest about the things that went wrong and how she attempted to correct them (Tracy 2010:841).
- The researcher made extensive use of supervision and peer review, as stated in many places in her discussion about data verification (Tracy 2010:841).

The researcher is satisfied that she has acted ethically and that the scientific integrity of this study has been maintained throughout the study. This concludes the discussion of ethical considerations that featured in the research.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explained how the research plan outlined in Chapter One was applied once the study was underway. The chapter has described how the qualitative approach was applied in a case study that integrated a phenomenological approach with exploratory, descriptive and contextual research designs. Information is provided about the population sample and the inclusion and exclusion selection criteria used to select the research participants. The purposive sample, which entailed criterion and snowball sampling, was successful in ensuring that the researcher identified participants who could provide her with detailed, descriptive and contextual information about what it was like to be a woman living in Glebelands CRU in 2021. Detail has been shared about the steps the researcher followed to identify gatekeepers and gain their permission and support for this study.

The data collection tools used were effective, as they enabled the researcher to gather detailed information about the women's experiences of living in Glebelands CRU, the challenges they faced and the coping strategies they used to overcome the challenges. The literature review and the use of field notes and a research journal augmented the information that the researcher gathered from research participants in the one-on-one semi-structured research interviews using an interview schedule. Information has been shared about what measures the researcher took to protect and store the information that she had gathered. Each of Colaizzi's seven steps of the coding process has been explained in relation to the study and used to provide insight about how the themes and sub-themes discussed in Chapter Five were arrived at. The actions that were undertaken during the study to uphold the four elements of trustworthiness, namely credibility, transferability;

dependability and neutrality (Lincoln & Guba in Creswell & Creswell 2018:200; Creswell & Poth 2018:255; Flick 2014:487-488) have been detailed. The chapter ends with a review of the actions the researcher took to uphold the ethical principles of research throughout the study.

The researcher is satisfied with having used a qualitative research design, because it was flexible enough to accommodate the external issues that affected the study, such as the volatile climate associated with the resurgence of violent crime in Glebelands CRU and the COVID-19 pandemic. She was able to make modifications to the research plan, based on feedback received after the pilot test about the research protocol, and to the semi-structured interview schedule. The researcher is satisfied that the findings and research report are trustworthy because of the multiple actions she implemented. Finally, the actions that the researcher took to uphold the five principles of ethical research, namely social justice, respect for persons and their autonomy, beneficence and non-maleficence, trust, and scientific integrity, as presented by Polit and Beck (2010:121-125), were given adequate consideration.

In Chapter Five, the researcher sets out to table the findings of the study. The chapter presents the themes and sub-themes that emerged when the data were coded and analysed.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter elaborated on research methodology and methods and how they were applied when the study was operationalised. This chapter presents the findings reached once the raw data collected had been analysed. Before the findings are presented, it must be noted that a lot of attempted murder and murder incidents occurred in Glebelands CRU during the period when the study was conducted (specifically just before and during data collection), and this resulted in some reluctance by potential participants to involve themselves with the study. This is illustrated by Figure 3.3 of Chapter Three (in section 3.4.4.6, "Safety and security issues").

The main purpose of this research study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residing in the male-dominated Glebelands CRU. The objectives were to explore, describe and contextualise those experiences, challenges, and coping strategies so as to develop recommendations that could be used to empower other women in their situation. In this chapter the data gathered from the semi-structured interviews with the ten participants are analysed, and the findings are presented, discussed and compared with existing literature relevant to the topic.

The chapter is arranged in two parts. The first part offers biographical information about the participants. The second part presents and reflects on eight themes identified when the data were analysed, together with their sub-themes, and the findings are compared with those of relevant literature. Each of the themes is presented individually, and excerpts from the interview transcriptions are used to illustrate the themes, so that the reader develops a vivid impression of what it would have been like to walk in the participants' shoes. A pseudonym has been allocated for each participant to protect their identity and preserve their anonymity (Bouma et al 2012:166).

The discussion commences with biographical information of the women residents who participated in the study.

5.1 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The findings section of a thesis usually commences with a biographical outline of the research participants (Mabuza, Govender, Ogunbanjo & Mash 2014:4). Skobba (2016:45) advises that biographical information provides clues for the reader about the participants so that they can form an expectation of the participants' world and what they value. Criteria for selection to participate in the study stipulated that all participants had to be women older

than eighteen years of age who had lived in the Glebelands CRU for longer than three years.

The demographic particulars of the research participants are presented in Table 5.1, reflecting their age, marital status, highest level of education, type of accommodation rented, number of children residing with them in the Glebelands CRU, occupation, sources of income (including social grants), ethnic group, religion, classification of residential status in the Glebelands CRU, and number of years of residency there (Daymon & Holloway 2011:60-65; Mabuza et al 2014:4).

Table 5.1: Summary of biographical information of women resident participants

Participant's pseudonym	Age and marital status	Place of origin	Ethnic group and religion	Highest level of education	Type of accommodation you rent	Number of children living with you	Employment status/sources of income	Classified as registered or unregistered	Number of years residing in Glebelands
Ayanda	40, single	Umzimkhulu	Zulu, Christian	Grade12	Single room with shared kitchen and ablution facilities	2	Owns a tuck shop, CSG (child support grant) x 2, inconsistent maintenance from children's father	Unregistered	20
Duduzile	39, single	Umzimkhulu	Bhaca, Christian	Grade 11	Single room with shared kitchen and ablution facilities	3	Unemployed, CSG x 2, inconsistent maintenance from children's father	Registered	12
Lindelwa	38, single	Matatiele	Xhosa, Christian	Grade 12	Shared four-bed room, common kitchen and ablution facility for the floor	6	Unemployed, CSG x 2, inconsistent maintenance from children's father	Registered	16
Mthobeli	52, single	Lusikisiki	Xhosa, Christian	Grade 4	Single room with shared kitchen and ablution facilities	4	Unemployed, one child employed, CSG x 2, grandchildren	Registered	30
Nandipha	51, single	Lusikisiki	Xhosa, Christian	Grade 11	Single room with shared kitchen and ablution facilities	4	Unemployed, one child employed, CSG x 2, grandchildren	Registered	22
Sindisiwe	44,	Umzinto	Zulu, Christian	Grade 11	Shared four-bed room, common	3	Unemployed, one child employed,	Registered	21

Participant's pseudonym	Age and marital status	Place of origin	Ethnic group and religion	Highest level of education	Type of accommodation you rent	Number of children living with you	Employment status/sources of income	Classified as registered or unregistered	Number of years residing in Glebelands
	single				kitchen and ablution facility for the floor		CSG x 1, grandchildren		
Olwethu	63, single	Mount Frere	Xhosa, Christian	Grade 11	Single room with shared kitchen and ablution facilities	3	EPWP volunteer, children in part-time jobs, older person's grant	Registered	37
Qaqamba	63, single	Mount Frere	Xhosa, Christian	Grade 4	Single room with shared kitchen and ablution facilities	0	EPWP volunteer, older person's grant	Registered	41
Ulwazi	28, single	Mthatha	Xhosa, Christian	Grade 11	Shared four-bed room, common kitchen and ablution facility for the floor	1	Unemployed, partner employed, CSG x 1	Unregistered	7
Zanele	29, single	Empangeni	Zulu, Christian	Grade 11	Shared four-bed room, common kitchen and ablution facility for the floor	6	EPWP volunteer, CSG x 3, siblings do buy groceries	Registered	18

5.1.1 Ages of participants

The participants' ages ranged from 28 to 63 years. Two participants were 28 and 29 years old, four participants were between 38 and 44 years old, two participants were 51 and 52 years old, and two participants were 63 years. This indicates that eight participants were in middle adulthood and two participants were in later adulthood. Bastable, Gramet, Jacobs and Sopczyk (2010:175) note that middle adulthood is the longest period of a human's life. In general people in this stage of life are interested in improving themselves by securing jobs, housing, and life partners, raising children, establishing friendships, and building networks with other people. Those in later adulthood, as the vulnerable group, are commonly preoccupied with being less financially secure than prior generations, having lower incomes, less wealth and poorer health levels (Gonyea & Melekis 2018:50). Single older women are the most neglected group in the provision of services (Darab & Hartman 2013:354).

5.1.2 Marital status

All the participants described themselves as single women. Black single women are known to suffer many challenges (Mathibela 2017:66) and generally experience a lower standard of living than men, and when they are senior citizens, they have considerably less wealth than men (Bradbury & Gubhaju cited in Darab & Hartman 2013:351). Additionally, single women with children and no life partners report feeling stigmatised and find it harder to secure paid work, and many depend on public housing, and these factors combine to undermine their status (Saugeres 2009:201). Many South African fathers play a minimal role in their children's lives for different reasons, mostly because they are unemployed or because the children were born out of wedlock (Budlender & Lund 2011:937). They shy away from their parental responsibilities and lose contact with their offspring (Mabusela 2014:18). Women are therefore left with the responsibility of caring for their children, and they struggle to find safe and secure housing (Tanga & Gutura 2013:135); in addition, poverty is more prevalent in families who are headed by unemployed single mothers (Tanga & Gutura 2013:134).

5.1.3 Places of origin

Of the ten participants, two were from Umzimkhulu, one from Matatiele, two from Lusikisiki, one from Umzinto, two from Mount Frere, one from Mthatha and one from Empangeni. In summary, nine of them were from the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast and Eastern Cape, and only one was from the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast. Most people from Eastern Cape move to KwaZulu-Natal with the hope of securing a better life. Umzimkhulu is on the border of what was Transkei before it was rezoned to be included in KwaZulu-Natal. Umzimkhulu has a combination of Zulus,

Bhacas and Xhosas, being on the border of KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape. Harding is in the far south of KwaZulu-Natal, and most people in the area speak isiXhosa. According to a report in *The Daily News* of 11 January 2016, most of the residents murdered in the Glebelands hostel unrest were Xhosas from Eastern Cape or the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast town of Harding, who had moved to Durban to find employment so that they could provide for their families (Ndaliso 2016). This is endorsed by Burger (2019c:14), who states that the funeral costs of the victims of violence in the Glebelands hostels were high as they were buried in their place of origin, Eastern Cape.

5.1.4 Ethnic group

Three participants were Zulus, six participants were Xhosas, and one participant was a Bhaca. The participants spoke different languages and were part of different ethnic groups, but all described themselves as being fluent in isiZulu. This diversity was indicative of the mixed cultures that the participants represented (Sewpaul & Pillay 2011:287). The dominance of Xhosa people suggests that those living in the Glebelands CRU migrated to eThekweni to uplift their standard of living; fewer residents were Zulus from the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast.

5.1.5 Religion

All the participants were Christians. As much as there are different religious denominations in South Africa, it is acknowledged that most of the South African population, close to 80 per cent, are Christians (Hope & Van der Merwe 2013:322).

5.1.6 Level of education

The level of education amongst the participants varied. One participant had passed grade 4, seven had passed grade 11, and two had passed grade 12. As most had not obtained the official school-leaving certificate, one can conclude that their access to tertiary education was reduced, but they had enough education to take care of their families. Many factors undermine women's chances of earning a good income, but the most common are the limited education and training opportunities available to them and their struggle to secure well-paying jobs on the open labour market, so they are more likely to be employed in low-level positions that restrict their job progression (Picklesimer 2015). It is therefore not uncommon for black South African single mothers to struggle to access finance to provide for themselves and their children (Kotwal & Prabhakar 2017).

5.1.7 Number of children living with participants

It was noted that nine of the ten participants had their children staying with them. The children varied in age between one and four years. Some of the children were adults, and four of the participants had their grandchildren staying with them in addition to their own adult children. Women are the children's caregivers, attending to their day-to-day needs in the household. This characteristic is in line with the observation of Holborn and Eddy (2011) that many women take care of their children on their own or with the assistance of their extended family members in some instances (Department of Social Development 2021:7; Holborn & Eddy 2011:4, 6).

5.1.8 Employment status and sources of income

Six of the participants described themselves as unemployed; three received a stipend of R3 500 for cleaning the roads as part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) of eThekweni Municipality; and one owned a tuck shop that she operated from her room, which generated an inconsistent income from which she could not deduce an average monthly estimate. Eight of the participants were recipients of social grants. Two received older person's grants, and eight received child support grants. Of the eight who received child support grants, five did so for two children each, two for one child each, and one for three children.

A social grant is a means of income support awarded to an eligible beneficiary in terms of the South African Social Security Agency Act 9 of 2004 (South Africa 2004b), as per the Social Assistance Bill B57-2003. In South Africa the social grants are the older person's grant, disability grant, care-dependency grant, foster care grant, war veteran's grant, grant-in-aid, and child support grant, in terms of the Social Assistance Act 13 of 2004 (South Africa 2004a) and Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa (Department of Social Development 2021). Social grants assist a lot in households that include unemployed people or those who earn little, as the applications are processed through a comprehensive social security system using a means test as a tool to screen the applicants who are caregivers (Jordan & Huitema 2014:394; Tanga & Gutura 2013:128). Tanga and Gutura (2013:132) found in their study that 80% of women who received child support grants were unemployed, as affirmed in this study and by Clark (2018). Three participants mentioned that they received some financial support from the children's fathers but the support was inconsistent (Saugeres 2009:203). The participants were poor and vulnerable to poverty (Chikadzi & Pretorius 2011:255). Low-income households use a variety of strategies to secure housing when they lack financial resources, and they tolerate housing that is seriously inadequate or unsafe for them (Fitchen cited in Skobba 2016:42). The mothers may wish the best for their children, but affordability determines what they get.

5.1.9 Type of accommodation rented and resident classification at Glebelands CRU

Six participants occupied single rooms with a common kitchen and shared ablution facilities. Of these six participants, five were classified as registered and one as unregistered. The other four participants shared four-bed rooms with a common kitchen and ablution facilities for the floor. Of these four participants, three were classified as registered and one as unregistered. Khumalo (2013:19) states that the Constitution of South Africa emphasises that every person should have a house that offers privacy and upholds their dignity. In contrast, most of the participants mentioned that overcrowding and lack of privacy in the units and rooms they occupied at Glebelands was a serious challenge.

The target markets for CRUs, according to the government's alleviating strategy, are meant to comprise the existing residents, displaced persons (i.e., the upgrading of informal settlements and providing for evicted individuals), new applicants and qualifying groups (Xulu 2012:111). Participants mentioned that the requirements to qualify for accommodation were unclear, and none of the participants were considered eligible for family units because they did not meet the requirements. This suggests that the Glebelands CRU had set its own criteria for women applying for the family units that were not aligned with the CRU Programme.

5.1.10 Number of years residing in Glebelands

Participants had been resident in the Glebelands CRU for between 7 and 41 years. Nine participants had lived in Glebelands longer than twelve years. For most participants Glebelands was a home because of the number of years they had spent there. The proposal to convert and upgrade hostels into family units originated in the mid-1980s (Ramphela cited in Xulu 2012:112), but since that time most hostel dwellers around the country had been unhappy with the proposal, including the white local authorities, and this made it difficult to implement the proposed policy (Minnaar cited in Xulu 2012:112). According to Rubenstein (in Xulu 2012:115), advantages of the CRU Programme for residents include enhancing their opportunities for a healthy family life and enabling them to focus on establishing and supporting one home instead of having one home in the city and another in one of the villages. This also helped a lot towards saving the little income that was received for the family. The money could be redirected to other things of benefit to the family, as they were all together.

Overall, the participants' biographical data indicated that they were uneducated, single vulnerable women who were poor because they were unemployed and received little support from their children's fathers, and their status in society was low (Chikadzi & Pretorius 2011:255; Tanga & Gutura 2013:134). Their inability as heads of their families to access adequate

incomes prevented them from meeting their families' basic needs (Hope & Van der Merwe 2013:312). The extended family configurations contributed to the overcrowding in the Glebelands CRU. The participants regarded the converted CRU as their home because most had lived there for many years. The most regular source of income for them was social assistance in the form of a CSG. Most of the participants were isiXhosa-speaking but had learnt to speak isiZulu fluently because of the number of years they had spent living in the Glebelands CRU.

This concludes the biographical profile of the participants. The researcher deliberates next on the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews.

5.2 PRESENTATION OF AND REFLECTIONS ON THEMES AND SUB-THEMES IN RELATION TO RELEVANT LITERATURE

This section presents the research findings on the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU.

At the outset of this research project, the research goal developed for the study was to achieve an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community residential units (CRUs).

The research objectives that emanated from the research goal were as follows:

- To acquire a sample of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal district of Umlazi.
- To explore and describe the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi.
- To describe the findings regarding the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi.
- To draw conclusions about the findings regarding the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi and make recommendations about how the living conditions for women in the Glebelands CRU could be improved.

To achieve these objectives, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews using an interview guide with ten women who lived in the Glebelands CRU in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

The interview questions that the women were asked are outlined in Chapter Four, section 4.4.3, and appear in Addendum E, so they are not repeated here.

The focus in this section is to present the findings achieved once the researcher and independent coder had analysed the raw data and reached consensus in specifying the final themes that emerged in the study. The independent coder was used to avoid researcher bias or prejudicial findings (Shenton 2004:67). This overview encapsulates the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the interviews with the women living in Glebelands CRU. Eight themes were identified, as presented in Table 5.2 with their sub-themes.

Table 5.2: Overview of themes and sub-themes

THEMES AND SUB-THEMES	
Theme 1: Participants' accounts of how they came to live at Glebelands CRU	
Sub-themes:	1.1 Assistance by someone in Glebelands CRU to secure a space 1.2 Coming to Glebelands CRU to join a partner/parent
Theme 2: Participants' descriptions of their previous living conditions before moving to Glebelands CRU	
Sub-themes:	2.1 Lack of resources 2.2 Political violence in hometown area 2.3 Relationship issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaving to escape or resolve relationship issues - Choosing to be with an intimate partner 2.4 Scarcity of affordable accommodation
Theme 3: Participants' accounts of the challenges they faced when they first moved into Glebelands CRU	
Sub-themes:	3.1 Violence and murders 3.2 Overcrowding and lack of privacy 3.3 Bad behaviour of other residents
Theme 4: Participants' accounts of the general living conditions in Glebelands CRU	
Sub-themes:	4.1 Overcrowding and lack of privacy 4.2 Unsatisfactory sleeping arrangements 4.3 Lack of security and ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU 4.4 Concerns about raising children in Glebelands CRU amidst ongoing violence 4.5 Rules set for residents by the block chairmen/committees 4.6 Poor maintenance of Glebelands CRU by the municipality
Theme 5: Descriptions of the living conditions in Glebelands CRU from a woman's perspective	
Sub-themes:	5.1 Challenges of living in a male-dominated environment 5.2 Sidelining of women residents in Glebelands CRU matters 5.3 Stigmatising of Glebelands CRU women by the outside community 5.4 Disrespecting of female residents by the male residents 5.5 Lack of employment opportunities for women in and around Glebelands CRU
Theme 6: How the Glebelands CRU improves the quality of women's lives	
Sub-themes:	6.1 Positive contributions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of shelter for women and their children - Family units as spacious and conducive to family living - Access of women to affordable rental accommodation - Support received by women from other female residents

THEMES AND SUB-THEMES	
6.2 Negative impacts:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accessibility of resources and the Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) War Room - Exclusion of single women with children from the family units - Loss of pride suffered by women living in Glebelands CRU - Overlooking of the needs of older women residents
Theme 7: Strategies women residents used to adapt to living in Glebelands CRU	
Sub-themes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1 Remaining submissive 7.2 Avoiding getting involved in or discussing Glebelands CRU issues 7.3 Abiding by the rules
Theme 8: Recommendations for improving the lives of women living in Glebelands CRU	
Sub-themes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.1 Providing family unit accommodation for female-headed households 8.2 Resolving the issues of governance 8.3 Addressing the violence 8.4 Addressing unemployment of women 8.5 Increasing the representation of women in Glebelands CRU issues

In the following sub-sections, the main themes and their accompanying sub-themes are presented individually and illustrated with direct quotes taken from the interview transcripts. The participants' storylines are compared with the literature reviewed in Chapter Three. A literature control is integrated into the discussions throughout.

It is important to note that some of the women had moved to Glebelands CRU before it was converted into a CRU. This is evident from their number of years of residency, the range being seven to forty-one, as indicated in the summary of biographical information of resident participants.

The first theme that emerged is the participants' accounts of how they came to live at Glebelands CRU.

5.2.1 Theme 1: Participants' accounts of how they came to live at Glebelands CRU

Sub-themes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Assistance by someone in Glebelands CRU to secure a space 1.2 Coming to Glebelands CRU to join a partner/parent
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Participants were asked to share their accounts of how they became residents of Glebelands. This theme emerged when analysing participants' responses to the first question they were asked, namely how they had become residents of Glebelands CRU. Their responses to this question are sub-divided into two sub-themes distinguishing between, on the one hand, those participants who were assisted by someone to secure their accommodation and, on the other,

those who had come to join a partner or parent who lived in Glebelands hostel or CRU. None of the women had secured accommodation by making application for accommodation through eThekweni Human Settlements in accordance with the stipulated CRU Programme guidelines (Thani et al 2018:670; Xulu 2012:8). The main objectives and the five principles of the CRU Programme are indicated in the CRU policy framework (Department of Human Settlements 2006). Xulu (2012:8) has ascertained that the hostels' conversion was a government strategy to cater for people who had been unsuccessful in qualifying for the social housing market.

The discussion starts with how some participants were assisted by someone already in Glebelands CRU to secure a space.

5.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Assistance by someone in Glebelands CRU to secure a space

The storylines of several participants told how the women used personal contacts to secure their accommodation in the Glebelands CRU. The excerpts support the identification by Loliwe (Unrevised Hansard 2017) of several forms of discrimination that women suffer, including patriarchy, sexism and violence, which challenge their efforts to develop themselves and improve their lives. Being discriminated against meant that the participants could not secure low-cost rented accommodation on their own but relied on the favours of others. In some instances they were disadvantaged by not being known as potential beneficiaries by those responsible for granting the favours. Zulu (cited in McKinley 2020:39) notes that many residents in the hostels secure their spaces through making use of personal contacts.

After the end of Olwethu's relationship with her boyfriend, who was a resident in Glebelands CRU, she had to wait patiently for a room until one of her friends there helped her get one in the CRU. Olwethu said: *"I just loved the place as I used to come and visit my boyfriend then and I ended up staying."* She then explained:

"I broke up with my boyfriend and I ended up sleeping with different friends [referring to short stays with friends in the absence of permanent accommodation] as I was not prepared to move out of Glebelands CRU. Finally getting my own accommodation in Glebelands CRU was a relief as the rent was very high in the township ... I got [my own room] through a friend ... the friend told me that there was a room available, and I jumped at the opportunity."

Ayanda was assisted by her father, who approached one of the figureheads in the Glebelands CRU, where she wanted to stay:

"I had a container outside the gate of Glebelands CRU and selling from it. The residents of block ___ needed a tuckshop close to them. My father and Mr ___ were very close so it was easy

for me to talk to my father, who then spoke to Mr ___ about the room. Mr ___ got a room for me and I continued to sell my vetkoek and chips from the room and my business expanded. I am now selling groceries as well. Block ___ is strictly for men, but because the residents needed the tuckshop I was accommodated. Women are not allowed to own rooms or beds in this block ... I was informed by my father that the room was available ... I didn't have any discussions with Mr ___. Everything was done through my father. My father showed me the vacant room and gave me the keys for the room."

Later, Ayanda added: *"Both my father and Mr ___ were block chairpersons at the time."* This resulted in the establishment of homeboy factions within the hostels (Zulu cited in McKinley 2020:39).

Dudzile shared that political unrest in her home community was one of the reasons she needed accommodation at Glebelands CRU. Her attendance of ANC meetings in the Glebelands CRU supported her application to stay there. Her motivation for moving to Glebelands CRU was to escape political victimisation in her informal settlement. She used the Glebelands ANC political leader's assistance to secure accommodation on her behalf.

"I was staying in Pelgrim before, even though I'm originally from Umzimkhulu [Pelgrim is an informal settlement in the neighbourhood of Isipingo, south of Durban]. We used to attend a lot of ANC meetings in Glebelands CRU. The lady that I used to attend meetings with was from Pelgrim and she was murdered, and it was not clear how she died. A lot of residents in Pelgrim were Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) supporters and ANC supporters were very few. In fear of my life, I ended up talking to Mr ___ of Glebelands CRU to assist me with a room and he did ... I am not sure if [Mr ___] was an acting ward councillor or what, but he was a prominent ward leader at the time."

In Duduzile's case, her affiliation to the ANC party appeared to strengthen her application. One of the drawbacks of using personal contacts to secure accommodation, as mentioned by Zulu (cited in McKinley 2020:39), is that it has created factional divisions in low-cost housing developments, suggesting that the application process for accommodation is not free and fair.

For participant Mthobeli, the assistance she received from a married male resident who lived with his wife and family in Glebelands CRU was based on her agreeing to be his mistress.

"I knew about Glebelands CRU from a cousin who was staying there, and she encouraged me to come and look for a job here in eThekweni. I came and stayed with her. ... I later found a partner who was already married and was staying with his wife, there in Glebelands CRU, but

I agreed to be his mistress. My cousin later went to stay in Lamontville and left me in Glebelands CRU ... I was given the bed by my partner as he was moving to the family units. I moved from the room I was sharing with my cousin and others. When my partner got the family unit with his wife and children, he then gave me his bed."

It is not uncommon for women who move to the city to support their children to rely on relationships with men as a means of securing accommodation in the CRUs (Xulu 2012:192).

In the above storylines, the women shared that they had known about Glebelands before they were allocated accommodation in the CRU. Their contacts assisted them directly or indirectly to secure a space in Glebelands CRU, and the formal application process overseen by eThekweni Human Settlements was not mentioned. As suggested by Zulu (cited in McKinley 2020:39), the participants' stories offer examples of the discrimination they suffered, such as patriarchy, sexism and violence. They were unable to secure a space at Glebelands CRU without receiving assistance from informal male figureheads living within the CRU. In one case, the participant had to commit to being a male resident's mistress.

The next discussion is on how the participants joined a partner or parent who was already a resident of the CRU.

5.2.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Coming to Glebelands CRU to join a partner/parent

It was noted that some participants had come to join their partner or parent who was already a resident in Glebelands CRU, despite not having the necessary permits to do so as regulated by the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 (South Africa 1950). Consistent with the assertion of Thurman (1997:45), they ignored this enforcement despite the potential penalties they could suffer.

Even when the relationships ended with the male partners whom they had followed to the CRU, the participants stayed on and tried to arrange permanent accommodation. The participants' reasons for coming to join a partner or parent varied, being either to save their relationship with the parent of their children or to gain access to better opportunities and services such as schooling and healthcare.

Sindisiwe joined her partner at Glebelands CRU at his request:

"I used to come to visit my children's father, and my children's father asked me to stay with him and I accepted. As I was visiting, I saw that I could stay so it was not a problem when my boyfriend asked me to join him. If you follow the person that you love, you follow him to anywhere."

Sindisiwe was prepared to join her partner no matter what the conditions were.

In Qaqamba's case her boyfriend asked her to live with him to escape the violence happening in the community where she stayed. Her explanation suggested that the arrangement of living with him illegally failed to provide her with the security she needed:

"There was violence where I was living, and my boyfriend then invited me to come and stay with him ... But I used to be arrested a lot as women were not allowed in Glebelands at the time. It was very rough for women, as they had to hide all the time to avoid being arrested."

Qaqamba's storyline refers to the stress of having to suffer the regular raids that were carried out by the authorities to find women living illegally in the hostels before the conversions to CRUs. Those who were in contravention of the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 because they had not been granted permits to stay there were either chased away or arrested and sent back to their homeland (Thurman 1997:45).

Ulwazi's partner asked her to join him in Glebelands CRU so that she could access better healthcare during her pregnancy:

"When I was pregnant, my partner asked me to join him here at Glebelands CRU because I was always sickly, and I used to worry him a lot with calls complaining about my pregnancy complications. So, he felt that it would be better if I was close to him. He wanted to help easily if I needed to go the clinic or to see a doctor ..."

Ulwazi added:

"He told me that he paid the block chairmen for them to accept our living arrangement, but I didn't get the details of how much he paid, and when I finally arrived I saw the block chairmen coming to our unit to talk to the 'isibonda', caretaker of the unit. The caretaker of the unit then conveyed the message to everyone that they had been joined by a new person."

Not all the partners invited the women to stay with them at Glebelands CRU, as Nandipha's storyline illustrates. Nandipha came to join her partner once she suspected him of having an affair.

"I had just given birth to our second child, so I decided to come to Glebelands CRU to join him. When I came here, I took my children along with me ... I also thought coming to Durban was going to save my relationship as my children's father was no longer coming to me as he used to before ..."

She added:

"You know men with their girlfriends, they end up forgetting about their responsibilities ... I told myself that there was another woman because when I was phoning he didn't answer my calls. My focus was more on me and my children. It was difficult as he was no longer supporting us financially ... I did not want to lose the father of my children because of other women."

Nandipha explained further:

"... I had not told him that I was coming as much as I had hinted more than once that I would end up coming. It was a surprise for him, and he had to go and report to the block chairpersons. There were other women though in the hostel who were staying with their partners, I was not the only one."

Before 1998 the block committees had administrative duties to fulfil, such as overseeing the room allocations. From about 1994 corruption crept in and the block committees were reported to be selling spaces but were never apprehended for doing so (McKinley 2020:45). The influx of illegal residents has exacerbated the congestion problems associated with CRUs (Fenyane 2016:11) and contributed to overcrowding, which is responsible for the substandard living conditions residents must contend with (Xulu 2012:8).

Some of the women came to join their parents as minors even though they did not have official permission to do so, as illustrated by Zanele. In Zanele's case she continued to stay in Glebelands CRU once she had reached majority status and secured her own space. Zanele had joined her mother as a young girl when her father passed on:

"I was staying at Empangeni with my grandparents and my parents were staying in Glebelands CRU. When my father passed on, my mother continued to stay, but I was still very young at that time. I had to join my mother after the death of my father ... Three of us, as siblings, moved to stay with my mother in Glebelands CRU ... I am no longer staying in the initial room where I was staying with my mother. My mother still stays in her room in block ___ and I moved to block ___ on my own ... There was a resident who was staying with her daughter in block ___ and he later moved to his homestead, and I moved to stay with his daughter in Glebelands CRU. His daughter later moved to Gauteng, and I was left with the room. I stayed as an unregistered tenant until 2014. When there was registration of residents that year, I also registered. Before that, I stayed in the room as an unregistered tenant and the bill was coming under the previous owner's name even though it was occupied by me."

The above storylines explain how women joined the significant others who were permanent residents in Glebelands CRU. Joining other people who were already in the hostels has always

been a common occurrence (Xulu 2012:192). After 1994, after the first democratic elections in South Africa, there was a substantial increase in the number of women who joined partners, husbands and fathers to stay in the hostels (Silekwa 2019).

In conclusion

All the participants of this study avoided following the CRU guidelines when moving into Glebelands CRU as residents. Their explanations of how they became residents were different, but what is worth noting is that they were all contrary to the objectives and principles of the CRU policy framework (Department of Human Settlements 2006). This leaves one wondering how many of the residents have complied with legislation that relates to residents of CRUs and how this could be addressed. The conclusion is that this tendency has contributed very much to the homeboy cliques and factions within the CRU where the participants resided (Zulu cited in McKinley 2020:39). Understanding the correct procedure or application guidelines for new potential residents is important for all residents, with the municipality leading the campaign for improved marketing of the process.

After the participants' accounts of how they came to live at Glebelands CRU, their descriptions of their previous living conditions are tabled next.

5.2.2 Theme 2: Participants' descriptions of their previous living conditions before moving to Glebelands CRU

Sub-themes:	2.1	Lack of resources
	2.2	Political violence in hometown area
	2.3	Relationship issues:
		- Leaving to escape or resolve relationship issues
		- Choosing to be with an intimate partner
	2.4	Scarcity of affordable accommodation

To ascertain what possible advantages participants foresaw by moving to the Glebelands CRU, they were asked what their circumstances were where they had lived before moving there. As stated by Ubisi (2013:29), when individuals migrate to the city it is usually because they wish to access housing that offers a healthy living atmosphere. As specified above, participants in this study mentioned six factors, grouped into four sub-themes, as having led to their seeking accommodation in the Glebelands CRU: lack of resources; political violence in their hometown; an unsatisfactory relationship with a partner, with two sub-thematic categories, namely having left to escape or resolve intimate relationships issues, and choosing not to be separated from a partner who lived in Durban; and the scarcity of affordable accommodation. Each of these is

presented separately below with excerpts from the transcribed interviews to illustrate the participants' motivations.

Discussion of the sub-themes of theme 2 commences by considering the lack of resources experienced by participants at their previous places of residence.

5.2.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Lack of resources

Two participants mentioned that they had chosen to move to Glebelands to increase their access to resources because the communities where they came from were sorely lacking. The resources the participants wanted were basic services such as electricity, water and sanitation. Adequate housing connects beneficiaries to basic services that permit them to appreciate peaceful and relaxed lives (Sobantu et al 2019:6). It also empowers them and increases their children's well-being as access to education and healthcare improves (Sobantu et al 2019:4).

Ayanda mentioned that as a self-employed vendor she needed to be able to access retailers and electricity:

"I was staying at Umlazi Township, but it was not right as there was no electricity where I was staying, and it was a distance from the wholesalers. I survived on buying and selling food from big supermarkets or wholesalers in order to make profit."

Dudzile described what it was like to live in an informal settlement where one was exploited when trying to access services that the government projected as everyone's human right to have:

"The shacks are close to each other. It's a serious challenge when there is fire in one shack as the other shacks get affected. Even now there's a lot of illegal dumping. The area is dirty. It was not at all right to stay there. We even used to buy water as there was no water ... We were buying [water] from the neighbouring houses of Isipingo Rail ... The prices were not the same from the neighbours we were using, and it depended upon the litres as well."

The marginalised, as in Dudzile's case, end up in cheap and thickly populated urban areas (Hoek-Smit 2011:51; Slater 2011:8) that expose residents to unhealthy living conditions (Cheserek & Opata 2011:320). Kleinhans et al (2010:382) are of the view that those living in such neighbourhoods struggle to access basic services and resources that every citizen should have access to.

The government of South Africa has a constitutional obligation (Constitution of South Africa, 1996: section 26(2)) to deliver basic services such as sanitation, water and electricity to all citizens, which it has clearly not succeeded in doing (Makube & Zuzile cited in Manomano 2018:2; Pithouse 2014:i43). The participants' storylines indicate that they had chosen to move to Glebelands CRU to have their basic needs met.

Violence was another factor that drove participants to choose a safer place to live.

5.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Political violence in hometown area

The areas where some participants lived were affected by ongoing violence. Poor neighbourhoods often expose participants to dangers such as crime, substance abuse and other social ills (Kleinhans et al 2010:382; Ntuli 2017). Additionally, politically motivated acts of violence are reported in black townships (Smit 2014:65). Participants Qaqamba and Duduzile shared their experiences of living in a community where violence undermined their safety and feeling of well-being.

Qaqamba moved from two different settlements to escape living with ongoing violence around her: *"There was violence at Malukazi so I moved to Bhambayi, and at Bhambayi again there was violence and my boyfriend then invited me and said I should come and stay with him ..."*

Duduzile referred to her unease at living amongst other residents who were supporters of one of the opposition parties to the ANC, the party that she supported:

"A lot of residents in Pelgrim were Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) supporters and ANC supporters were very few. In fear of my life, I ended up talking to Mr ___ [a ward councillor] ..."

Duduzile added:

"... the area was dominated by IFP as I have indicated earlier on. Very few residents were ANC supporters, and I didn't feel good to stay in an area that was dominated by IFP, as I didn't know what might happen to me if they become angry with me one day."

Burger (2019c:3) posits that during the final years of apartheid, the country was at war with its own people. Those living in the province that was to become KwaZulu-Natal after the 1994 democratic elections found themselves in the midst of a bitter fight between the freedom movements, ANC, United Democratic Front (UDF) and IFP, and the Zulu nationalist cultural movement that deferred to the IFP. Many of the murders were associated with political loyalties (Cameron 2018; Clark 2018).

The above storylines demonstrate the importance that living in a safe area played in the participants' lives. This accords with the perspectives of other researchers affirming that women living in vulnerable areas prioritise safety (Kleinhans et al 2010:382; Olufeni & Reeves cited in Sobantu et al 2019:5; Xulu 2014:150).

The next sub-theme reflects the role played by a close relationship in the person's life as a motivating factor in their move to Glebelands.

5.2.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3: Relationship issues

This sub-theme distinguishes between the motivation of either escaping/resolving a relationship or being with a partner in Glebelands.

- Leaving to escape or resolve relationship issues

Some women explained that the intimate relationships they were in played a role in their decision to move to Glebelands. Skobba (2016:50) asserts that housing pathways are in many instances influenced by the formation or dissolution of relationships with intimate partners. Examples of both these scenarios were provided by participants.

One participant, Mthobeli, spoke of deciding to dissolve her relationship with her intimate partner and having to find an alternative place to stay where she could be self-supporting.

Mthobeli explained:

"I had a fiancé at Lusikisiki and we were having a lot of problems, so I shared my problems with my cousin and that is why she encouraged me to come and look for employment here in Durban. She even offered me to stay with her as I was looking for the job."

Nandipha, in contrast, sought to resolve the relationship with her intimate partner and move into the Glebelands CRU, where she expected to have a greater chance of getting support for herself and her two children than if she stayed in the rural village of Lusikisiki.

"My children's father was no longer supporting me at home in Lusikisiki. I could not stand the situation anymore as we were starving. I had just given birth to our second child, so I decided to come to Glebelands CRU to join him. [Nandipha wanted to be closer to her partner so that their relationship could be saved and her children could also be maintained.] When I came here, I took my children along with me."

The above storylines illustrate how unsatisfactory intimate relationships led the women to move to Glebelands CRU. They moved to escape stressful situations caused by their significant others (Congress 2013:129).

In the absence of affordable accommodation, Pillay et al (2002:7) note that the hostels originally designed to accommodate migrant male labourers have ended up accommodating vulnerable women seeking to improve their own and their children's well-being and lift them out of poverty. As outlined in Chapter Three, section 3.5.4, this arrangement has led to their being unreasonably blamed for most of the social ills in CRUs (Xulu 2014:142). The expansion of reasonable housing for destitute low-income earners, especially those who settle in and on the peripheries of cities, needs to be prioritised (Sobantu & Nel 2019:284). The marginalisation of women in housing impacts on their identity, personal development and emotional well-being as their inferior status is strengthened (Watson 1986:1). In many cases women don't have buying power to house themselves independently without men (Watson 1986:2).

The second, contrary reason given for moving to Glebelands CRU was to be closer to an intimate partner.

- Choosing to be with an intimate partner

Women are described by the interactions they have with the significant others that they share their homes with (Congress 2013:129; Payne 2014:189). These significant others in their immediate environment have the biggest role in promoting their well-being (Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5). When women struggle to secure accommodation, they end up settling for any available housing opportunity at the time in order to be near a loved partner (Watson 1986:2).

In this study some participants, similarly, were unhappy about being apart from their intimate partner, who was living in Glebelands CRU and whom the participant wanted to be with.

Sindisiwe was one of the women in this situation:

"I used to come to visit my children's father, and my children's father asked me to stay with him and I accepted. As I was visiting, I saw that I could stay so it was not a problem when my boyfriend asked me to join him. If you follow the person that you love you follow him to anywhere ... There was nothing wrong with my hometown, KwaDumisa in Umzinto but I wanted to be with my man."

This confirms the observation by Payne (2014:189) that an individual's interaction with their intimate partner is of vital importance.

Ulwazi also came to Glebelands CRU to join her partner:

"I am from the Eastern Cape in Umtata. There was nothing wrong with my home and my family situation. I was staying with my mother and siblings at home. My dad died when I was very young. I only came to Glebelands as I agreed to my partner's request to move in with him, so that he could better take care of me and provide the necessary support closer to me as my partner as I was carrying his child."

After the abolition of influx control in 1986, men-only hostels (single-sex hostels) began accommodating women and children as more women from the rural areas began to join their partners (Vosloo 2020:27). The examples given illustrate how participants similarly used the abolition of influx control in 1986 to move in with their partners (Xulu 2014:151). The above storylines confirm that the relationships the women had with their partners were significant to them because their partners provided them with support and resources. It is noted that relationships at a micro level, when good, had a positive outcome on the participants' lives, as suggested by Bronfenbrenner (cited in Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5).

For some participants, living in Glebelands CRU was an affordable proposition, given their circumstances.

5.2.2.4 Sub-theme 2.4: Scarcity of affordable accommodation

Some of the participants found securing accommodation in Durban expensive, even though the areas they relocated to offered them poor and unsafe living conditions (Costello 2009:229). Urban housing is costly (Costello 2009:221) and it is unfortunate that the expectations of those in the low-income groups are seldom met (Hoek-Smit 2011:51; Slater 2011:8). Participants regarded the communities where they had lived prior to moving to Glebelands as too expensive and dominated by poverty.

Lindelwa suggested that the accommodation at Glebelands CRU was cheaper and more accessible than where she had stayed before moving there:

"I was staying at Umlazi Township and the rent was very high. It was R600; it was a back room at D section. I couldn't afford it. The transport was also not very much accessible, and it was a bit expensive compared to the transport from Glebelands to other places."

Lindelwa's storyline confirms that for housing to be considered by beneficiaries as adequate, it must link them to services that enable them to have peaceful and stress-free lives (Paglione cited in Sobantu et al 2019:7).

Moving to the city for Qaqamba was motivated by her need to uplift herself from poverty. She wanted to move to a place where she could find employment.

“Things were not right in my village, Mount Frere. It’s a deep rural area ... I felt the need to come to Durban to look for a job ... Mount Frere was dominated by poverty, so I thought coming to Durban was going to help me get out of that situation.”

Qaqamba thus sought accommodation that could facilitate her search for employment (Thurman 1997:43).

Appropriate housing advances the well-being of women’s children and improves their access to education and healthcare (Sobantu et al 2019:4). Feminist theory emphasises that the empowerment of women should be pursued by focusing on resources, agency and achievement (Ndinda 2009:320). Their neighbourhood should offer women resources and networks of support through those they live with to improve their well-being and status (Paat 2013:960).

The storylines presented reflect participants’ need to find affordable housing that would link them to necessary resources to create a better life than they had experienced before moving into Glebelands CRU.

In conclusion

This section illustrates that women need to feel secure in their housing. It is important for women to also have affordable accommodation because of their limited buying power (Watson 1986:4-5). The significant others in their lives influence their decision on where to settle. How those insignificant others have treated them or the major experiences they have had with them also influence their decisions in the future (Paat 2013:960). Women who want to move out of unhappy relationships and keep custody of their children must convince the courts that they have secure housing, and sometimes this is not easy (Pillay et al 2002:8). Govender (2019:153-154) asserts that women end up remaining in dysfunctional relationships so as to retain shelter for themselves and their children. Some women move in with their partners because of insecurities caused by dependency.

Having considered the participants’ descriptions of their previous living conditions before moving to Glebelands CRU, attention turns next to their accounts of the challenges they faced at their new place of residence.

5.2.3 Theme 3: Participants’ accounts of the challenges they faced when they first moved into Glebelands CRU

Sub-themes:	3.1 Violence and murders
	3.2 Overcrowding and lack of privacy

3.3 Bad behaviour of other residents

Germain and Gitterman (1995) refer to challenges as stressors, as outlined in Chapter Two, section 2.2.1. When challenges are related to life-threatening issues, it is expected that people will not think they have the personal and environmental resources they need to manage them and will therefore feel they are at risk (Littlefield 2003:5; Teater 2010:24).

Participants were asked to describe some of the challenges they had experienced once they had moved into Glebelands CRU. Their responses are arranged in terms of three sub-themes, namely violence and murders; overcrowding and lack of privacy; and the bad behaviour of other residents, particularly men.

The first sub-theme for discussion is violence and murders in the CRU.

5.2.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Violence and murders

Women, as the vulnerable group, are more comfortable in housing where they feel safe and need not to worry about losing their belongings (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:232). Ubisi (2013:11-12) says the CRU killings are viewed by some women as emanating from limited resources, whilst other women attribute them to political intolerance within the CRU. This has a direct impact on them; they witness these deaths and could end up being murdered themselves, whilst others lose their significant others who are family breadwinners (Ntuli 2017).

In contrast, several women mentioned how difficult it was for them to adjust to the high level of violence they had witnessed in Glebelands CRU.

Participant Ulwazi explained that the violence was a problem for her when she first moved into Glebelands, and it had remained a problem:

“It was difficult to adjust to the shootings that are happening in Glebelands CRU. Even now I can’t say I have adapted to it. It is not easy to stay in a place where people are killed like this. I can’t say that I know all the people that have been killed but I hear of it quite often now.”

Similarly, Mthobeli mentioned that getting used to living in a place where people were murdered was a real challenge: *“There is violence and murder incidents although it has gone down now ... Other residents talk when there has been an incident, even if it is not murder.”*

The high rate of violence and killings in hostels is known to make residents feel unsafe (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:232).

Qaqamba recalled how unpredictable the violence was and how difficult it was to understand what caused the shootings: *“One minute you tell yourself it is ok; the next minute there are shootings, and one doesn’t know how these fights start.”*

One of the participants, Ayanda, spoke of the violence related to corruption around the allocation of spaces in Glebelands, which clearly was a stressor for her when she moved to Glebelands CRU:

“Violence had just started and there were groups of different people who had been evicted in the other side of Glebelands CRU, Madala Stezi. People were murdered a lot between 2012 and 2015. There were people in Madala Stezi who were collecting money for Mr ___ from the residents who resided in the blocks on the other side. So those money collectors were later evicted as the residents started to be rebellious and said those money collectors should follow their father, Mr ___, to block ___. All those who were perceived to be ringleaders and selling the beds were murdered and others were also revenging, so it was on-going.”

Xulu (2012:8) and Ubisi (2013:11-12) indicate that the eThekweni municipalities are notorious for violence. Their views are that the reasons behind the violence are political or associated with the shortage of resources. They do not mention corruption related to the allocation of spaces, as mentioned by Ayanda. On the other hand, Burger (2019c:10) observes that the ANC attributes the violence to the warring factions within Glebelands who wish to gain control over the sale of beds. Residents, including women, become submissive and live in fear as these warring groups fight over who should dominate and be in control and thus be able to collect money from residents for the needs of the dominant group, with non-conforming residents being murdered in the process (Zungu 2021). Ntuli (2017), Thani et al (2018:674) and Thurman (1997:44) indicate that the conflict about the allocation of bed spaces in hostels has led to women being killed in the revenge attacks.

Participants such as Duduzile and Nandipha explained that the violence was very difficult for women like they who had children.

Duduzile shared:

“The only challenge for me was the experience of hearing fire shots. I have children who are boys. One is never sure if the shots were for your child until you are told who has been killed. It has been quiet for some time, and it started again in November [2020] ... We always hear that someone has been shot but it is not easy to know the real reason for that particular killing.”

Dudzile's storyline reflects the stress of the shootings because she had her adolescent and young adult children living with her and she realised she could not protect them (Germain & Gitterman 1995:818).

Nandipha shared her concern about the psychological consequences of her children being exposed to the violence:

"The death of people. Children get disturbed by the fire shots. When the twins were still at school, they used to tell me that other children were asking them as to how they dealt with the violence in the Glebelands, and they would not have an answer to that. I think the violence traumatises them because this is the place they call home, just as I call Glebelands CRU my home as well. My children have developed anger. I think it's because they see dead bodies more often. They don't fear fire shots anymore as it is always in front of them."

Onwuegbuzie et al (2013:6) view neighbourhood violence that occurs over people's lifetime as having an impact on their major life transitions and development. Dudzile shared the impact of violence in their daily lives and on the opportunities available:

"We may not be getting things as women because of the situation we are living under and the violence that nobody can explain. The violence is cutting across, and we as women suffer the worst as our partners die a lot during these killings and we as the women are left with children without their fathers."

Mathoho (cited in Fenyane 2016:44) posits that a resident interviewed at the City of Deep Hostel confirmed the hostels' violence by declaring that "Hostels are known as places of violence". Women as well have been murder victims in these reported Glebelands CRU killing incidents (Ntuli 2017).

An oppressive form of violence that women suffered in the early years was described by Olwethu. Olwethu was one of the longest standing illegal residents in Glebelands who moved in before the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 was renounced. She described experiencing police harassment and arrests because she did not have a permit to stay in Glebelands:

"The Black Jacks [the police of the apartheid era] used to arrest us a lot as women as we were not allowed in Glebelands Hostel. The van used to take us to Montclair Police Station, and we would get R20 bail ... It's because Glebelands for men only."

Ndinda (2001:62) indicates that women's access to housing in urban areas was unreasonably affected by legal and policy limitations that were introduced in the early 1930s and improved only when apartheid was demolished. The women's movements strengthened only during the

1960s (Corey 2014:352), and research on gender bias increased in the 1970s and 1980s (Teater 2010:88). Olwethu did not have resources to keep her family united, and the laws at that time were discriminatory, which in all probability would have undermined her personal agency or “the power within” (Ndinda 2001:62). As highlighted in Chapter Two, section 2.3.3, when women experience discrimination in housing, it puts at risk their identity, personal development, self-concept, goals and aspirations, and emotional well-being (Watson 1986:1).

As outlined in Chapter Two, section 2.2.1, the meso system is expected to be supportive and offer resources to women that help to satisfy their needs, such as information, resources and opportunities, and practical help such as child-minding, short-term micro loans, cooking or shopping – things that make their lives easier. The reverse was mentioned by the participants. The participants shared how their encounters with the violence and murders in Glebelands were major challenges, even before 1994, as confirmed by Xulu (2014:150). Cultural and ethnic conflict, prejudice, social exclusion, or factionalism, as mentioned by the participants, were challenges, and they were ill prepared for these circumstances when they took up residence in Glebelands CRU (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017:240).

The challenge of overcrowded living spaces faced by the participants is discussed next.

5.2.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Overcrowding and lack of privacy

As mentioned in Chapter Three, section 3.1, the Constitution of South Africa recognises that every person is entitled to housing that offers privacy and upholds their dignity (Khumalo 2013:19). Unfortunately, many of the participants mentioned that the overcrowding in the units and rooms and lack of privacy they experienced were a real challenge.

The storylines of the participants referred to the rooms being shared by men, women and children who in many instances were unrelated to one another.

Lindelwa found it difficult to adjust to sharing a room with her family and a unit with unrelated men in the adjacent rooms that shared one entrance:

“The room was and it’s still too small for all of us. I am sharing the room with another person, as much as I have my own family members and on top of that the main door with kitchen, as it is common, is shared with other males that I am not related to.”

This unease was echoed by Zanele who said: *“The rooms are close to each other and if something happens in the other room, you can hear as if it is happening in the room that you are in.”*

Poor housing conditions and overcrowding experienced by residents in eThekweni and Gauteng CRUs (Thani et al 2018:673) have created substandard living conditions for them (Xulu 2012:8). These CRUs' living conditions are perceived as non-conducive for human habitation (Thani et al 2018:673).

It was worse for other participants, such as Sindisiwe and Qaqamba, who shared the room with their partners and other men and therefore had no privacy to enjoy being intimate with their partners.

Sindisiwe explained how she and her partner tried to create some privacy by using a sheet:

"It was difficult as there were a lot of people in the unit. We had to use the sheet at night when we were making love so that the other ones did not see what we were doing. At times we could hear the noise from them as well, as they were doing their things as well. I was not really used to that kind of life ... of not having my privacy when I am having sex with my partner when we didn't have a choice ... [My children] were there as well. They were sleeping on the floor."

As stated by Macozoma (2019:95-96), acts such as kissing or any other forms of sexual expression are perceived by African societies as private acts that the young should not be exposed to or have knowledge of because they are regarded as taboo from both cultural and religious perspectives. The non-private living conditions are defined as unfavourable for human residence (Thani et al 2018:673).

The sheet barrier was used by Qaqamba too:

"It was difficult to stay with men as my boyfriend was sharing the room with other men as his roommates. At night we would use a sheet for privacy as we wanted to enjoy ourselves as adults ... The sheet was used with a string so that the other roommates would not see us ... [and they] had girlfriends and wives."

These storylines demonstrate how lack of privacy affected the participants' dignity and their intimate relationships with their partners. This is in accordance with the findings of Macozoma (2019:99-100), conducted in an informal settlement in Durban, which showed that overcrowding in the home affected the conjugal rights of couples and impinged upon the quietness of others in the home.

It can be concluded that people who are disadvantaged suffer as a result of poor housing and overcrowding (Pillay 2017:2).

The overcrowding exposed participants to the bad behaviour of other residents, which was another challenge for them when they first moved into Glebelands.

5.2.3.3 Sub-theme 3.3: Bad behaviour of other residents

Chapter Two, section 2.2.1, explains that the micro system of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems approach is the immediate environment that individuals find themselves in, which has the biggest impact on their lives (Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5). It consists of all the relationships that the individual experiences, directly, face to face, within their household. When the relationships are positive and supportive the individual thrives, but when the relationships are stressful the individual suffers (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017:239). The descriptions provided by participants suggested that they found the behaviour of some of the residents who shared their living spaces distressing. Living so closely to others whose values were in stark contrast to theirs was stressful, in particular the behaviour of some male residents.

The unit Lindelwa occupied was shared with other men who were not related to her:

"... the main door ... is shared with other males that I am not related to. Men drink a lot and when they are drunk, they urinate on the floor. They even urinate on the bathroom floor and at times we end up using the room to bath. It is such an inconvenience for us. Toilets are not locked ... Men don't clean the unit. They leave it for the females to do ... yet they are the ones who always make the shared spaces within the unit to be dirty ... When men are visited by their friends, it becomes so noisy and you cannot tell them to lower their voices even when the children are studying ... Children end up visiting their friends in the family units in order for them to study in a better environment."

Neighbour noise, dampness and condensation have a negative effect on both the frequency of happiness and life satisfaction (Clapham, Foye & Christian 2017:270). Living in overcrowded spaces is not conducive for children as they cannot complete their homework or learn in a noisy environment (Pillay 2017:2).

One participant, Nandipha, pointed out that she feared she was at risk of being sexually exploited because the doors in the ablution facilities that the men and women shared could not be locked:

"My worry is that we are all using one toilet and bathroom and there are no locks. So, there is huge potential of rape in such an environment. Males drink a lot and urinate on the floor and expect the females to clean for them ... Men are not responsible for cleaning. If the women don't take the initiative to clean, the shared places remain dirty. They are not cleaned ... Very

few men clean their own rooms so suggesting a cleaning roster was the start of another unnecessary tension.”

The inadequate sanitation and hygiene in the housing projects, particularly the limited access of residents to clean water and toilets, make living conditions extremely hazardous in many ways for them (Makube & Zuzile cited in Manomano 2018:2).

For Sindisiwe, it was pointless as a woman to challenge the male residents about their bad behaviour as they would remind her that she was a woman who did not own her living space:

“Others in the unit we occupy drink, and talk anyhow as they are drunk. As a woman, you can’t tell them that you don’t like it and if it happens that you do, you tell them in a very light note. They sometimes urinate on the toilet floor and don’t clean afterwards. If you talk, they are quick to remind you that the unit belongs to the municipality and not you. In fact, they tell you straight that it is not your house.”

Even the eThekweni Municipality is described as having been unresponsive to the concerns and challenges of women and children in Glebelands CRU and was reported by the Commission of Gender Equality to the Public Protector (Burger 2019a).

There is evidence that women feel unsafe in male-dominated hostel environments (Murphy 2014). Murphy (2014) asserts that housing solutions for vulnerable populations are services developed by and for men, with little consideration of the problems that women experience.

In conclusion

The practice of having a shared living area affects and defines the lifestyle and social relationships of the inhabitants (Watson 1986:2). Often residents lack control over their accommodation as lack of privacy is rife in high-density dwellings with non-responsive management practices from owners (Watson 1986:7). Men need to realise that it is destructive of them to lord it over women (Thobejane cited in Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). Any form of psychological oppression, social injustice or failure to uphold culture needs to be seriously looked at to assist women to redefine themselves independently (Corey 2014:331).

After the participants’ accounts of the challenges they faced when they first moved into Glebelands CRU, the next theme to be considered is the participants’ description of the living conditions in Glebelands CRU.

5.2.4 Theme 4: Participants' accounts of the general living conditions in Glebelands CRU

- | | | |
|-------------|-----|---|
| Sub-themes: | 4.1 | Overcrowding and lack of privacy |
| | 4.2 | Unsatisfactory sleeping arrangements |
| | 4.3 | Lack of security and ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU |
| | 4.4 | Concerns about raising children in Glebelands CRU amidst ongoing violence |
| | 4.5 | Rules set for residents by the block chairmen/committees |
| | 4.6 | Poor maintenance of Glebelands CRU by the municipality |

As pointed out by Pillay et al (2002:12), the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) identifies various core factors in the provision of adequate housing, which is a basic human right and deserves considerable attention. These core factors are: legal security of tenure; availability of services, material, and infrastructure; affordable housing; habitable housing; accessible housing; appropriate location of housing; and culturally adequate housing (Pillay et al 2002:12-13). It is thus a human right of women to have access to affordable accommodation that caters for their special housing needs and includes clean drinking water, electricity for cooking, heating, and lighting, properly sanitised washing facilities, suitable food storage facilities, waste disposal, site drainage and emergency services (Pillay et al 2002:13). Many women use their home as a place where they conduct not only their household and childcare responsibilities but also their income generation activities (Pillay et al 2002:13). The location of housing for women is also important and should be in a safe, well-lit and established area that offers protection from gender-based violence against women (Pillay et al 2002:13). The housing needs of women fail to receive the necessary attention, according to Pillay et al (2002:13), because in most instances men determine the housing standards according to male standards without establishing the needs of women.

The Housing Act 107 of 1997 does not define what determines adequate housing, although section 2(1) stipulates that housing developments should establish and maintain habitable, stable and sustainable public and private residential environments. The assumption is that habitable housing helps to create sustainable households and communities that will have adequate access to economic opportunities and health and to educational and social services to advance their well-being. Section 1(vi) of the Act states that all South African citizens and permanent residents should be able to access permanent residential structures with secure contracts that offer them internal and external privacy and protect them from the elements. Some of the minimum requirements of housing, according to the Act, are drinkable water, hygienic facilities, and sufficient energy to satisfy domestic needs. Because the responsibility for promoting the well-being, safety, security and stability of children and families rests squarely

on the shoulders of women, it is of primary importance that their views about what determines the adequacy of housing require attention (Sobantu 2020:63).

The participants in this study were asked about their experiences of the general living conditions in Glebelands CRU to ascertain whether their housing was adequate or not. Their accounts of the living conditions are discussed under six sub-themes: overcrowding and lack of privacy; unsatisfactory sleeping arrangements; lack of security and ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU; concerns about raising children in Glebelands CRU amidst ongoing violence; rules set for residents by the block chairmen/committees; and poor maintenance of Glebelands CRU by the municipality.

The first concern raised about the living conditions in the Glebelands CRU was overcrowding and lack of privacy. This sub-theme also emerged in sub-theme 3.2 as the participants were sharing their experiences when they first moved in to Glebelands CRU.

5.2.4.1 Sub-theme 4.1: Overcrowding and lack of privacy

Overcrowding is defined as an unpleasant living condition experienced when too many people or things occupy the same place and when the number of people in a household room exceeds the number of beds and space available (Stohr & Walsh cited in Thani et al 2018:674). An overriding danger of overcrowding is that it undermines the fundamental human right of privacy. Privacy is central to human dignity, safety, and self-determination. Privacy enables individuals to develop their own personality spontaneously. From the storylines participants shared about the overcrowding and lack of privacy they experienced in the Glebelands CRU, it was clear that this was an overriding shared concern.

More people were living in the allocated spaces than were meant to be there. Mthobeli, for example, shared her room for one with four others, all children, and mentioned how ordinary daily routines, such as bathing, were affected by the overcrowded shared living spaces:

"In my case, the room is too small as we are many ... I stay with four children. The bathrooms don't lock. I don't have my own space as the unit is shared with other people [people unrelated to her herself and her children]. I would have preferred to have my own space ... it is a serious problem for those who work because they all must bath when they go to work. Some end up bathing from their rooms to avoid being late at work."

Whilst elaborating on the bathroom issues, Mthobeli raised her concern about the uncomfortable realities of women who had to share the allocated bathrooms with male residents:

"If a girl is in the bathroom and one of the other residents who is drunk ... and just enter the bathroom without knocking, even though the rule is that you knock each time you want to enter to establish if there is someone inside or not. There should be something to lock it from inside even if it's not a key. The landlord should know that. Anything is possible. I am thinking of the worst thing, which is rape ... But for another person, a male for that matter, to even look at your body, without your permission, is not right. It degrades you as a woman and you feel ashamed."

Mthobeli's storyline indicates how she felt that her dignity as a woman was lost when others were able to see her naked, and she intimated that the behaviour of men under the influence of alcohol was unsettling.

Another resident who shared Mthobeli's sentiments about the risk of sharing bathrooms with men was Zanele. Zanele's storyline repeats her concerns about how the lack of privacy placed women at risk:

"Here in Madala Stezi, some of the bathrooms don't have doors. We use sheets, which is not the case in the family units. It is just not safe in our bathrooms. Anything is possible. Our safety is not guaranteed."

The lack of space was an issue for Nandipha too: *"In my case, the room is too small as we are a big family now ... I stay with six children, including my grandchildren ... Some of the children sleep on the floor."* Nandipha went on to complain that the bathrooms did not lock, which made it unsafe for women: *"Bathrooms are not locked, so one's safety is not guaranteed ... I would have preferred to have my own space with my children."*

Furthermore, she noted that she was robbed of the privacy people should enjoy in their homes:

"I can't just cover myself in a towel when I come from the bathroom. The bathrooms are small, but I must go the bathroom with my clothes on, and take a bath, and again put my clothes back on, in case I might meet men in the corridor on my way back to my room."

The problem of not having separate bathroom facilities for men and women was mentioned by Sindiswe too. Sindiswe raised the point that women were at risk of unwanted advances not only from residents but also from strangers who could access their bathrooms whilst they were bathing. Her experience was that many male residents and their visitors were often under the influence of alcohol, which made her fearful:

"We are not from the same family. It is not safe, as the bathrooms are not locked. Anything is possible. We are treated as if we are one family, yet we are not. We do have rules of knocking but we stay with men in the unit, who drink alcohol and have visitors that drink alcohol."

National statistics show that black women are among the groups that experience rape more than any other group and are also the least likely to report these crimes due to cultural beliefs, stigma, or fears of re-victimisation by the criminal justice system (Phillips 2015:326).

It was difficult for the women to share their rooms or units with other families. Participant Mthobeli noted that family norms and practices differed among those with whom she shared her space, especially in terms of standards of cleanliness:

“Sharing a unit is not good. Each family deserves to have its own space and visit the other family as and when they want to. In a unit, you are forced to interact with other people, whether you like it or no. There are shared areas like the bathroom, toilet, and the kitchen ... Other people don't want to clean the shared spaces and it becomes a problem for all of you. In my case, my room is just opposite the bathroom so there is no way I can avoid cleaning it as the smell goes straight to my room.”

The Council on Foundations (2022) asserts that norms of behaviour, as the unspoken and spoken rules of cultures, are reinforced over time, operating invisibly on family members' behaviour and their set standards for how to dress, talk and act under different conditions. All families have traditions that are passed down from one generation to govern their respective practices, wherever they are (Council on Foundations 2022).

Lack of privacy manifested in the bedroom spaces too. Sindisiwe described what it was like to raise her daughters when sharing living space with her roommate's grown-up sons:

“I am not ok, because I have girls and my roommate has grown up boys. So, we must be mindful with how we do things. We can't just walk naked in our room, even if it's very hot and we feel like not having clothes on, but we must accommodate them as a sign of respect.”

Sindisiwe also confessed that she did not feel free to parent her children as she saw fit. She had to take the presence of the “others” into consideration:

“It is very challenging that I am sharing a room with someone who has boys. The other lady has her own rules for her children, and I also have my own rules for my children, but we are under the same shelter. I do understand that her children are boys, but the bottom line is that two families share a space daily and that somehow influences the thinking of the other. At times even when I want to shout and correct my children, I must do it in a certain way and try not to do it in front of the boys, but it not always possible.”

In conclusion, the storylines demonstrate that there were insufficient bathrooms for the number of people who occupied the units and that the bathrooms were unisex and had doors that did

not lock, which left participants feeling vulnerable. Participants traded family privacy for a roof over their and their children's heads. The overcrowded living spaces and lack of privacy left the women feeling exposed, particularly when other roommates had adult children of the opposite sex living with them. They were also uncomfortable about having to tolerate the drunken behaviour of other residents or their outside visitors. Xulu (2014:151-152) indicates that overcrowded hostels are the norm, and the occupancy of rooms exceeds the number of people they are meant to accommodate. Whilst Xulu (2014:151-152) contends that the lack of space and privacy in the hostels affects both men and women equally, the storylines of the participants reveal that these women experienced the additional threat of being sexually molested or harassed by male residents. Sexual harassment includes several different behavioural acts ranging from verbal abuse, vulgar comments and threats to unsolicited physical contact and even rape (Pricer 2020:554). Sexual harassment in housing has not been given adequate attention and according to Pricer (2020:554) receives less attention than sexual harassment in the workplace. When South African women are inadequately housed, they are at risk because the incidence of gender-based violence is high, particularly in overcrowded spaces (Chenwi & McLean 2009:518; Sobantu 2020:63).

The necessity of upholding residents' right to privacy in housing and human settlements is underscored by many scholars (Sobantu 2020:64). However, the overcrowded living conditions as described by the Glebelands CRU participants confirm that their right to privacy was completely overlooked. Overcrowded living conditions and lack of privacy created a hostile living environment for the women (Thani et al 2018:673; Xulu 2012:8). Given the housing that was made available to them, the inherent "structural vulnerability" that places low-income women at risk is evident (Oliveri cited in Pricer 2020:569).

The next sub-theme that emerged was the complicated sleeping arrangements that the participants had to adapt to because of overcrowding.

5.2.4.2 Sub-theme 4.2: Unsatisfactory sleeping arrangements

Many factors determine the layout of housing, for example financial status, cultural values and beliefs, lifestyle preferences and family structure dynamics (Tomah, Ismail & Abed 2016:2). The layout of housing should provide families with privacy at certain times. Ideally residential units should have three different zones: a private zone for parents and children, namely the primary territory; semi-private zones or secondary territory, which are those areas used by all occupants, individuals and the group, such as a kitchen and/or a seated area where they can eat; and, thirdly, a public zone, a place where guests can be entertained and both family and

outsiders can congregate (Tomah et al 2016:2). The storylines of the participants reflect that their living spaces were not divided into different zones, and the privacy of residents and their children was seriously compromised. Overcrowding posed a serious challenge for participants and their families at bedtime. In many instances the children had no fixed sleeping spaces, and areas that were meant to be zoned as functional spaces doubled up as sleeping areas.

The following excerpt from Ayanda's interview reflects the lack of delegated sleeping spaces that her sons experienced and their need to adapt:

"They sleep in the kitchen together, as they are both boys ... But that is done without the block chairman's knowledge. They sleep with me if their father is in his room in block __ or in my bed if I go to their father's room."

In order to create space for her sons to sleep, Ayanda's family thus contravened the Glebelands CRU block rules.

Dudzile explained that the space she was allocated was intended for four people but actually housed fifteen, so creating spaces for everyone to sleep was problematic:

"I sleep with the girl and the other two sleep on the floor. You can laugh when you come here in the evening ... We are 15 in total in our unit. Some use sponges [referring to foam mattresses] and sleep on the floor."

In similar vein, Lindelwa shared:

"Other children sleep on the sponges [foam mattresses] on the floor because the beds can't accommodate all of us. We can't use the kitchen floor as they do in the other units as our kitchen is too small."

The storylines shared by Mthobeli and Nandipha illustrate that the spaces they were allocated failed to allow for the expansion of families and the extended family system as commonly experienced in South Africa (Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa 2021:7) after the decline in the nuclear family structure in South Africa, especially in KwaZulu-Natal (Holborn & Eddy 2011:3). Glebelands CRU women, as members of female-headed households, accommodated their adult children and their adult's children's offspring. The existence of extended family members assists with child minding for working mothers (Holborn and Eddy 2011:4) and this is more prevalent in South Africa as grandparents take care of their grandchildren (Revised White paper on Families in South Africa 2021:7).

Mthobeli shared:

"I stay with my two children, girls 27 and 20 years, and grandchildren, boys 5 and 2 years old. I stay in a single room in Block__." "We all sleep in my room. The bed ... cannot accommodate all of us, so the others sleep on the floor."

The number of family members sharing Nandipha's allocated space was even greater than Mthobeli's: *"In my case, the room is too small as we are a big family now. Remember, I said I stay with six children, including my grandchildren ... Some of the children sleep on the floor."*

In conclusion

The Glebelands CRU accommodation for women was not designed to accommodate typical South African family structures as per the generational types of South African families, namely unclear, skip generation, triple generation, double generation, single generation, and single person. According to the Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa (2021:13), typical South African families on average consist of six members in a household in rural areas and four in urban areas. In 2018, 41.8% of households in South Africa were headed by females. The Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa (2021:14) reveals that single household headship is observed to be linked to marriage patterns, as remarriage among females is less common when their partners pass on or they are divorced. In 2018, accordingly, 82.5% of women aged 75 years or older remained single compared to only 34.9% of males in this age group who did so. In 2018, furthermore, 41.4% of children lived with their mothers only, while just 3.3% stayed only with their fathers (Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa 2021:14). In 2015, KwaZulu-Natal was the province with the highest percentage of children who were staying with their mothers only, namely 47.1% (Stats SA cited in Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa 2021:14). As outlined in Chapter Three, one of the principles of the CRU Programme is to offer residents a choice of rental housing accommodation options to meet their needs, which clearly was not the case for the participants in this study. As extended families, they would have benefited from being accommodated in family units, which they did not qualify for. Housing that overlooks the cultural identity of its beneficiaries must be considered as inadequate (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:4).

No effort was made by the housing authorities to demarcate private spaces using partitioning or screens so that families could have some privacy (Tomah et al 2016:2). The extent of overcrowding as described by participants placed them at risk. As shared by Thani et al (2018:674), close contact commonly breeds infectious diseases, social problems and abuse of resources.

The concern of participants to be discussed next is the lack of security and ongoing violence they witnessed or experienced in the Glebelands CRU.

5.2.4.3 Sub-theme 4.3: Lack of security and ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU

Humans need privacy, safety and security to realise their full potential (Sobantu 2020:58). Adequate housing is acknowledged to be an effective way of enhancing the security and quality of life of women, which then has a positive spin-off for their families (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:9; Sobantu 2020:59). Sobantu (2020:62) states that gender-aware housing delivery ought to curb crime and violence, as many South African women are victims of different forms of abuse (Sobantu 2020:62). Excerpts from the transcribed interviews indicate that participants had difficulty in adapting to the lack of safety and security available in Glebelands CRU. Their storylines describe how the ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU affected them.

Qaqamba reported that sometimes residents would be lulled into a false sense of security, only to learn of another killing in Glebelands CRU that would take them by surprise: *“One minute you tell yourself it is okay, the next minute there are shootings, and one doesn’t know how these fights start.”* Qaqamba, like others, struggled to understand what contributed to the violence.

According to Lindelwa, peace talks and police patrols were measures taken in Glebelands CRU to quell the violence, but they achieved poor outcomes:

“There are people who used to come for peace talks, even though I have never met them. The police are seen patrolling, but still you are told ‘there has been a murder in a certain block’.”

Lindelwa added:

“I can’t say they [the police] are effective as most of the murder incidents happen in the blocks and around the blocks and not on the main road where the police vehicles are patrolling. I always see them a lot as well, but I don’t know how they are assisting as the shootings are still happening.”

There were reports that peace talks conducted in and around Glebelands CRU in 1999 reduced violence in the complex, but the violence resurged in 2008 (McKinley 2020:44). Authors such as Burger (2019a) have questioned whether the police have done enough to curtail violence in Glebelands CRU and protect citizens’ constitutional rights. Newspaper articles refer to police corruption, police playing a role in fuelling the violence, and an ex-policeman being at the head

of the infamous eight-men gang, a criminal enterprise that provided hitmen at a price (African News Agency 2019; Govender 2021; Thathiah 2015). According to De Haas (2016:47) and African News Agency (2020), some members of the police services were involved in the killings, and twelve people were tortured by the law enforcement agencies in Glebelands CRU between 2014 and 2015. In addition, several residents were maliciously arrested, only for charges to be subsequently withdrawn (De Haas 2016:47). This resulted in a request for the investigation to be done by detectives elsewhere in the province, which was not honoured by the higher authorities (De Haas 2016:48).

The extent and nature of the violence that Sindisiwe witnessed led her to conclude that the violence in the Glebelands CRU community was pathological:

“There is no healthy community that can kill one another as it is happening in Glebelands CRU. Glebelands CRU is a sick community, but we are all not aware of who or what is to blame. I don’t know the reasons for the killings, but guess they are serious because it is difficult to stop them. Before there was even a prayer that was organised by government ... but still the killings are continuing.”

Sindisiwe then reflected on the pain it caused her when she thought about the damage being done to her children, who lived with her and were witnesses to the violence.

Amidst the ongoing violence participants found it difficult to determine whom they could trust. Duduzile explained:

“Those that I am friends with share the same sentiments when we talk ... But these killings are not openly discussed. We also can’t gossip as friends about these incidents because you don’t know who is close to who, and what has happened to who, as much as we all stay together. You can never trust your friend completely ...”

Family relationship strengthening, which focuses on the meso and micro levels (as noted in Chapter 2, section 2.2.1), becomes important as significant others provide comfort and support to those in their space in times of need (Revised White Paper in South Africa 2021:28).

In conclusion, for the Glebelands CRU participants, violence was an ongoing social reality. While some reported that they were aware of some measures taken to quell the violence, such as peace talks, police patrols around the peripheries of the Glebelands CRU, and prayers the government had called for, the outcomes of these measures were meagre. Residents were left feeling that their safety and security were not taken seriously by the authorities. Participants were either unclear about or reluctant to share the causative factors of the violence and who

was responsible. Several potential causative factors of the violence in Glebelands CRU have been mentioned in news sources: police corruption, selling of hostel beds, gangsterism, factional fighting, police provocation and governmental indifference (African News Agency 2019; Govender 2021; Thathiah 2015). The women did not know whom to trust, not even within their social circles.

The graph which appears as Figure 3.3 in Chapter Three shows the increased murderousness in 2014 and 2015, the decline in 2016, the increase in 2017 and the decline in 2018 and 2019. The violent incidents increased again in 2020 and 2021. This fluctuation is why the participants said that the situation seemed to be all right one minute but then violent again without their knowing what had provoked the change. Hence Glebelands CRU has been regarded as a war zone and is infamous for its ongoing violence and murders of residents (Cameron 2018; Clark 2018; Mfeka 2020; Silekwa 2019). The campaign of encouraging residents to speak out on violence issues and ongoing murders was also discouraged by the killing of those who were in the forefront, as hitmen were allegedly fighting for control of their territory (Motha 2021).

Participants described the Glebelands CRU environment as a hostile place in which to raise their children, as presented next.

5.2.4.4 Sub-theme 4.4: Concerns about raising children in Glebelands CRU amidst ongoing violence

Most of the socialisation, skills development and identity formation of children occurs in the home, and if housing is inadequate each of these processes can be affected (Sobantu 2020:63; Solari & Mare 2012:465-466). When housing is inadequate, it is more difficult for parents to ensure that their children are adequately protected and cared for and remain safe and healthy (Chenwi & McLean 2009:539). The participants' storylines focus on their concerns about their children's being exposed to violence regularly in Glebelands CRU.

Ayanda mentioned the negative effects of raising children amidst the violence in Glebelands when she discussed the living conditions that prevailed there:

"It is not good to raise children in a hostel that is hostile as they are subjected to a lot of things, like I explained earlier ... It is not a normal life for children ... but at least they are with both their parents here, as much as some of the rules become unbearable ..."

This last statement suggests that even though Ayanda thought the violence was detrimental to children, it was better for children to live with both parents than to be separated so that the children would not be affected so much by the violence. For that reason Ayanda and her

children resolved to abide by the harsh rules of the block they lived in. It is acknowledged that positive parenting provides a buffer for children against harmful environmental risk factors, such as violent neighbourhoods (where they are exposed to violence), especially when their parents are knowledgeable about caregiving (Richter & Naicker 2013: vii).

For Duduzile, because of having to protect her children from being harmed, the most challenging living condition in Glebelands CRU was the violence:

"I don't know what causes the fights within Glebelands CRU, but the fights are ongoing. So, having a boy child here is always a worry for the mother. I cannot pretend that it does not worry me when I am told that there has been a person that has been murdered. It's a bit quiet now, although there were killings again in November 2020. My children think that I'm overprotective, especially my 17-year-old ... it is normal for a mother to be worried about her children, especially as I'm a single parent. I am not always comfortable with the shootings. What if my children happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time and they become victims, young as they are ..."

Sindiswe expressed her concern that children living in Glebelands CRU had begun to normalise violence:

"These murders have a very bad effect on our children. We used to be troubled when someone died, but now it is so usual to them, as if it is just one of those things. The children do get frightened when someone has been murdered, but before long they learn that someone else has been killed."

Sindisiwe went on to share the experience of her children witnessing a murder:

"A few years back when the children were going to school in winter, very early in the morning, they witnessed someone being murdered in front of them. They say that these two people came and the next thing, the adult, who was a security guard, was shot and passed away, at the scene. The two adults told them to disappear, and they didn't know where to go. They ran towards the opposite direction, not knowing where they were going. They came and reported to me. I chose not to expose my children to becoming witnesses and sharing their experience with the police."

Lindelwa said:

"... My children and I have a good relationship and I cannot take chances with their lives ... although you may never know if the measures you take to protect them are good enough. I always tell them to be back in the unit by 18h00. It is better if I know that they are

in the unit. Even though I realise that I cannot prevent them from being harmed, because one never knows where and how it [referring to the killings] might happen. It does not stop me as a mother from trying to take preventative measures.”

In conclusion, raising children in Glebelands CRU was difficult because of the ongoing violence. To safeguard the children’s safety, participants adapted their parenting styles, became more vigilant about monitoring their whereabouts, and imposed curfews. The parents whose children witnessed killings had an additional burden to contend with, the fear that their children would suffer reprisals because they had been privy to the violent crimes. Assassinations of witnesses had been commonly reported in Glebelands CRU (De Haas 2016:48). Additionally, Thathiah (2015) reminds us that the Glebelands killings had left children orphaned and families without their breadwinners.

Neighbourhoods with high levels of crime and violence affect families negatively, because social disorder thrives in their presence and residents live in fear daily and feel insecure as they manage their daily routines (Paat 2013:960). It is noted that parental exposure to community violence often leads to harsher discipline methods (Cuartas 2018:429). When housing fails to secure the safety of families, the neighbourhood violence has a deleterious effect on a child’s health, development and well-being (Jackson, Posick & Vaughn 2019:748). They are affected both physically and mentally, and the effects are often long term, well into adulthood (Gilbert, Breiding, Merrick, Thompson, Ford, Dhingra & Parks 2015:345). Children in violent neighbourhoods suffer psychological distress (Mathews & Benvenuti 2014:32). For many residents, including women and children, Glebelands CRU is their home (Xolo 2019), and they were therefore dismayed that the municipality, as their landlord, remained unresponsive to their concerns about the violence (Burger 2019c:1).

The South African Public Protector was tasked to investigate the unprecedented levels of violence and forced evictions of women from Glebelands CRU in December 2015. Several questionable recommendations were made following the Public Protector’s investigation (Burger 2019a). These included stepping up “access control” measures, regularising the allocation of accommodation, and reintroducing outdated, discriminatory and unconstitutional aspects of the 1998 eThekweni Hostel, such as that pregnant women would not be permitted to raise their babies in Glebelands CRU, illegal trading and informal businesses would have to stop operating from within the Glebelands CRU premises, and residents would have to comply with strict access control checks similar to the degrading “dompas” system as practised during the years of the apartheid regime. Additionally, the eThekweni Municipality

was instructed to upgrade the Glebelands CRU security system and was allocated R17 million to do so. Burger (2019a) reports that the money was spent on installing 60 CCTV cameras and a perimeter fence, which led residents to ask whether the money was appropriately spent on upgrading the security system for the protection of Glebelands CRU residents or misappropriated by corrupt housing officials, and why the authorities would choose to try to ward off external threats from the community when the killers were actually residents in Glebelands CRU. In the article, Burger (2019a) goes on to say that the cameras were ineffective because CCTV camera footage had not led to any convictions. She further points out in the article that eThekweni Municipality's failure to repair streetlights has contributed to ongoing crime, because large sections of Glebelands CRU had been in darkness for months at a time, making it easy for illicit gangs to engage in illicit activities without being detected. Burger (2019c:7) recommends that the regularisation of residents may assist in stopping the protection of suspects in rooms after murders have been committed.

The rules set by block chairmen/committees were another stressor the participants mentioned when discussing their current living conditions in Glebelands CRU. These are discussed next.

5.2.4.5 Sub-theme 4.5: The rules set for residents by the block chairmen/committees

As discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.4.4.7, before 1998 hostel committees were elected for each block to fulfil administrative duties, which included allocating rooms and resolving internal conflicts amongst residents (Burger 2019c:8). The block committees worked in conjunction with the hostel administrators to ensure that the hostel blocks were properly administered. This system was changed by the eThekweni Municipality in 1998, and ward councillors elected in the Glebelands CRU area were officially delegated the responsibility of room or unit allocations, in alignment with the 1998 eThekweni Hostels Policy. The intention was to disband block structures to prevent them from setting rules and fighting over municipal property (Asmal 2014).

The participants mentioned that the block structures continued and the block chairmen/committees in the older blocks made living conditions for women in the Glebelands CRU challenging.

Ayanda provided an example of the block chairmen evicting a child in the event of the child's parent dying:

"I don't even know as to what the law says about that if it's wrong or right, but I know as a woman and mother that I don't feel right about the position of the block chairmen. It is not right for the children not to have a shelter when a parent has passed on."

According to Lindelwa, the block chairmen's rules obstructed the freedom of women who lived in Glebelands CRU:

"There is no freedom for women. Men are monitoring the moves of women all the time. If you have a visitor, cousin or friend, you must report to the block chairmen, but the municipal office is not aware about all these rules."

The women described how many of the rules that a block chairman/committee imposed on the women were not imposed on the male residents in the same block. Furthermore, rules were block specific and were not enforced in all the Glebelands blocks. The following storylines paint a picture of block chairmen/committees in the older sections of Glebelands CRU setting standards that served the needs of male residents and not women's needs.

In the block that Duduzile lived in, women were not allowed to host their partners in their rooms if their partners were not themselves a Glebelands CRU resident, and their children were not allowed to stay with them either:

"... we are told not to bring boyfriends from outside of Glebelands CRU to visit us, yet men do bring their women from outside. Children are not allowed in some blocks. It is mixed (both men and females) in some of the units ... the rules are not the same in all blocks as much as we all live in one hostel ... They don't allow children here ... It is one of their rules."

Duduzile went on to explain that the rules were different in another block, where rooms were allocated differently:

"So, if you are given a room ... in block ___, there are two rooms for males and two rooms for females. So those two males and females do bring other people to stay with them, hence I say rules are not the same in the blocks. The superintendent's office does not have a say as the rules are posed by the block chairmen."

The implementation of rules in Glebelands CRU is in many instances inconsistent, unlawful and biased and prevents women from raising their children (Burger 2019c:3) and regulates whom they may or may not have intimate relationships with.

Another storyline, that of Lindelwa, reflects the same experience:

"When you first come to Glebelands CRU, it's the block chairmen that tell you about the rules of the block, not the hostel. Women with beds/rooms in Glebelands CRU are not allowed to invite their boyfriends who are not resident of Glebelands to visit them or even sleep over. It is difficult to have an intimate relationship with someone from outside Glebelands CRU."

In conclusion, the rules set in the blocks where Lindelwa, Duduzile, and Ayanda lived favoured male residents. Inconsistency in Glebelands CRU rules for women and their children and those for male residents was a perpetuation of patriarchal structures of power that the block chairmen/committees used to dominate and control the women (Saugeres 2009:194). The rules and informal authority structures were worked out and put in place over time by hostel residents, and according to participants' descriptions these rules and structures continued to regulate the freedoms of women residents in Glebelands CRU. The block chairmen and committees, as described by the participants, still retained power and control over the residents in the Glebelands blocks 24 years after the eThekweni Hostels Policy had been introduced in 1998 (Burger 2019c:8). It was clear that the block chairmen/committees had usurped the administrative powers of the administrators appointed by the eThekweni Municipality. The patterned behaviour of women acquiescing to rules imposed by men, as revealed in the study of women living in male-dominated hostels conducted by Ramphele (1989:393), demonstrates that 33 years later the housing needs of women still have not received the consideration they deserve. Women who live in low-cost rental accommodation such as Glebelands CRU live there on male terms. The lack of space and privacy characteristic of such accommodation minimises possibilities of male–female negotiation and highlights the negative impact of the intersectionality of race, gender and socio-economic status on the women's relationships with men (Ramphele 1989:394), particularly in the Glebelands CRU. According to Burger (2017a), informants allege that block committees are involved in the selling of bed spaces and the forced evictions of women and children to make way for residents more likely to suit the block chairmen's needs (McKinley 2020:46). Of concern is that the municipality, in its role as the landlord, has failed to intervene in the violence and forced evictions (Burger 2017a; 2019a), which is a serious contravention of human rights and social justice. As mentioned by Burger (2019c:14), children do not know what could happen to their parents under the hostile situations in Glebelands CRU that they witness.

The last matter that participants raised when describing their current living conditions in Glebelands CRU was the poor maintenance of the Glebelands CRU, which is discussed next.

5.2.4.6 Sub-theme 4.6: Poor maintenance of Glebelands CRU by the municipality

Neglected maintenance of Glebelands CRU was a living condition that left participants frustrated and struggling to resign themselves to. The Rental Housing Act 50 of 1999 was enacted to ensure that landlords of rental accommodation see to it that residents receive municipal services, that any conversions that take place are well managed, that their residents

are protected against overcrowding and health problems, that improper activities of problematic tenants are properly addressed, and that routine maintenance and renovations are conducted. The fulfilment of these responsibilities uplifts and upholds the standards of adequate housing. The descriptions offered by participants indicated that their eThekweni landlord had failed them. Residents were frustrated by the municipality's slow turnaround time in attending to service requests.

Sindiswe explained the frustration:

"The residents only go to the eThekweni Human Settlements office if there is a repair that needs to be done. Others don't even go because the municipality takes its own time to repair it ... if they ever decide to repair it at all. They only respond fast if it's a burst water pipe that is on the road."

For Lindelwa, the concern was that one could not rely on one's landlord to see to it that one's needs were addressed:

"... if there is a repair to be done, you should know that the superintendent's office will prioritise your repair and advise you immediately ... instead you end up waiting forever ... At times they do investigate but nothing is being done after that. You wait and wait but nothing happens."

Mpehle and Dlamini (cited separately in Ubisi 2013:11) point out that the CRU maintenance issues that have been mentioned most frequently include burst pipes, sewage running into residents' units, dripping water taps, and residents using undeveloped areas as ablution facilities, all of which are health risks.

The storyline presented by Duduzile explains that the unattended service requests logged by residents with the municipality had eventually led to rental boycotts: *"The residents were complaining about services, like repairs to broken items, e.g. doors, windows, and other things. Hence the decision was taken for residents to stop paying rent."*

This is supported by Burger (2019c:12), who adds that inexperienced managers and unreliable, inconsistent and corrupted readings helped to fuel the rent boycotts further.

The above storylines reflect the residents' frustration about the lack of maintenance carried out in Glebelands CRU. They perceived the municipality to be unresponsive in addressing the infrastructure maintenance and repair issues of Glebelands CRU (Burger 2019c:1). Some of the chaos reported in low-cost housing rentals is linked to the collapse of maintenance and poor upkeep of the CRUs (Fenyane 2016:11).

The failure of the municipality to maintain the general living conditions in Glebelands CRU was a cause for further complaint. The participants described the living conditions in Glebelands CRU as untidy and unclean, and the poor hygiene of other residents led to disagreements amongst the tenants, which the municipality did not try to resolve.

Zanele voiced the frustration that she and other residents had about the fact that they, together with their children, were exposed to the health hazard of unhygienic conditions:

"We must clean the blocks, even though there are municipal cleaners ... because they [referring to the municipal cleaners] do as they please and nobody is supervising them. I don't mind cleaning my room inside, but the corridors are always dirty if we don't take an initiative to clean them as well. Glebelands CRU is just dirty in overall as a hostel and we have young children here who are exposed to this filthiness. It is easy for children to have diseases as they are exposed to so much dirtiness."

Thani et al (2018:671) caution that untidiness and cleanliness in shared living spaces contribute grossly to unhealthy conditions like skin rashes, diarrhoea, influenza and other respiratory diseases.

Ulwazi agreed with Zanele but explained that some customary practices in the shared functional spaces aggravated issues of hygiene and cleanliness:

"The units are very untidy. The residents don't prioritise cleanliness in Glebelands CRU. Others like to practise African cultural activities. They steam and vomit [ukugquma and ukuphalaza]. When they vomit after drinking the medication, they use the toilet to take it out."

The participants complained about the male tendency to adopt a gender approach to cleaning in shared living spaces, expecting the female residents to do it, without any sign of the municipality intervening. Nandipha shared: "... men do not take responsibility for cleaning. If the women don't take the initiative to clean, the shared places remain dirty. They are not cleaned!"

As is often the case in housing, the women's roles of caring for their families and cleaning were perceived by male administrators and residents of Glebelands CRU to be consistent with the traditional gender role assigned to women, and they assumed the women would maintain the cleanliness of the functional spaces in the blocks without expecting any payment or recognition in return (Matthews cited in Darab & Hartman 2013:357). Such traditional expectations lead to women being overlooked in housing issues and create uncertainty about their prospects for housing as they get older (Darab & Hartman 2013:356).

The socially inappropriate behaviour of other residents, particularly males, undermined the quality of the living conditions in Glebelands CRU for the female participants too. The unruly behaviour of drunken residents made Ulwazi worry about her children's well-being. She shared:

"Then there are others that drink! When they are drunk, they use vulgar language, even in front of children. They even joke using vulgar [language], as if it is a normal thing. How does one raise a child in such an environment?"

As noted by Xulu (2012:9), the male-dominated hostel environment fails to consider the needs of women who have been allocated sleeping spaces.

Conflicts between residents sharing living spaces in Glebelands CRU were mentioned as another factor that affected the living conditions of the female participants. Ulwazi offered a typical example of clashes that residents had with others they shared their units with:

"The relations are not always good in the units as well. There is a personality clash amongst the tenants ... and great intolerances, inconsideration ... And some residents are very undermining towards those they share their living spaces with, as well. If you say, maybe a person should wash her dirty dishes in the sink to keep the kitchen clean, they keep on reminding you that you are not the landlord ... Some of the residents are not prepared to clean the shared spaces. You will find the bathroom very sticky as well ... as if it is not used by reasonable people. Some of the residents are just untidy and they make sure that they make everything around them dirty as well."

As noted by Skobba (2016:50), when residents must share overcrowded living spaces with others who are not related, clashes over issues are inevitable.

Unfortunately, the socially improper behaviour of problematic residents was not addressed by housing authorities, which made matters worse for the women, who felt powerless to change their circumstances. It was as if their voices fell on deaf ears. This indicates that the presence of women and children in hostels was not fully accepted by all, and the living circumstances of women residents in CRUs remained far from what the democratic government intended for them (Xulu 2012:2).

In conclusion

The women were mostly single women, with children, who had migrated to the city from other communities and who were allocated inadequate housing (Chenwi & McLean 2009:535). The storylines about the poor living conditions they endured in Glebelands CRU reflected the many challenges they had adapted to. They had little or no privacy, and the rooms they occupied

were crammed with others who were often not related to them. The sleeping arrangements for them and their families were unsatisfactory. The accommodation offered limited functional spaces for them, such as bathrooms and kitchens which they shared with others and were unhygienic and over-utilised and made them feel unsafe. The ongoing violence and the shared living areas, which had not been designed for women and children, left them feeling insecure and unsafe. It was a challenge for them to prevent their children's exposure to violence and crimes committed by criminal enterprises and political hitmen (Burger 2017b). The self-appointed control that the block chairmen and committees exercised over women, and the eThekweni Municipality's failure to intervene on their behalf, left the women immensely frustrated. These living conditions reported by the women mirror the experiences of women living in male-dominated hostels in the Cape that were recorded 33 years ago (Ramphela 1989:398). One can infer from this that the position of women in low-cost rental accommodation has not received nearly the attention it deserves.

The women's experiences of the poor living conditions were compounded by the housing authorities' failure to address the unique housing needs of women (Chenwi & McLean 2009:535). Phillips (2015:323) notes that women at the intersection of poverty, race, disability, sexual preference, gender and undocumented immigration status have few options for affordable housing and suffer housing discrimination. In the absence of sufficient financial resources, the participants resigned themselves to living in housing that was seriously inadequate and unsafe. The women had to tolerate the situation they found themselves in as residents of Glebelands CRU by fitting in, despite the stress that was associated with it, to avoid disruption of their daily functioning and psychosocial security (Germain & Gitterman 1995:819; Littlefield 2003:3). For housing to satisfy the safety and security requirements of women and their families, a different approach to housing is needed. Such an approach should be one that relies on bottom-up, gender-aware and gender-inclusive housing processes, steered by women (Sobantu 2020:63).

After these accounts of the participants' general living conditions in Glebelands CRU, the next theme to be discussed is the participants' description of living there from a woman's perspective.

5.2.5 Theme 5: Descriptions of the living conditions in Glebelands CRU from a woman's perspective

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Sub-themes: | 5.1 Challenges of living in a male-dominated environment |
| | 5.2 Sidelineing of women residents in Glebelands CRU matters |

- 5.3 Stigmatising of Glebelands CRU women by the outside community
- 5.4 Disrespecting of female residents by the male residents
- 5.5 Lack of employment opportunities for women in and around Glebelands CRU

Non-discrimination and equality are fundamental human rights and should be evident especially in a person's ability to access adequate housing (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:16). Race, colour, gender, language, religion, and political and social origin are some of the most common grounds of discrimination (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:10), and in the present study the intersectionality of these factors significantly reduced the participants' right of access to adequate housing for themselves and their children. Discrimination against women in housing is usually created by the following: statutory laws and policies that fail to increase women's access to adequate housing; failure to address the special needs of women; customary laws and practices that discriminate against women; poor commitment to finding solutions for increasing women's access to adequate housing; exclusion of women in decision-making processes around housing; and women's lack of knowledge about their rights (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:17). These discriminatory factors are shaped by structural and historical forces that need to be addressed (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:17). The hostels, originally intended for black male migrants from rural areas, were converted into CRUs to overcome the discrimination against women and children in housing by increasing their access to subsidised rental housing that was both affordable and adequate, thereby improving women's socio-economic status (Xulu 2014:141).

The participants in the study were asked to describe what it was like living in Glebelands CRU from a woman's perspective. The five sub-themes that emerged from their responses related respectively to the challenges of living in a male-dominated environment, being sidelined in Glebelands CRU matters, being stigmatised by others outside the Glebelands CRU community, being disrespected by the male residents, and there being a lack of employment opportunities for women in and around the Glebelands CRU. All of these are indicators of discrimination against women.

The first sub-theme for discussion is the challenges that women faced living in a male-dominated environment.

5.2.5.1 Sub-theme 5.1: Challenges of living in a male-dominated environment

Whilst the participants' motivation for living in Glebelands CRU was to secure affordable subsidised rental housing (Xulu 2014:141), the accommodation they were provided failed to satisfy their needs as women. As found by Xulu (2012:9), their accommodation failed to meet

many of their needs because they were living in a male-dominated environment where it was a struggle to support themselves and their children. For years the hostels had been acknowledged as a male domain which women entered on male terms (Ramphela 1989:395).

The composition of the block committees in Glebelands CRU excluded women, and the women participants indicated that the block committees failed to represent the interests of the male and female residents equally.

One of the examples raised by participants was about what would happen after the death of a woman's male partner who was the formal "bed holder" in the Glebelands CRU, the person in whose name the bed or unit was rented (Ramphela & Heal 1991:698). The deceased man's partner and/or children who lived with him were then likely to find themselves homeless or be moved to a smaller room or unit that they had to share with others. The women did not have a right of succession to the bed, room, or unit.

Ayanda's storyline demonstrates this: *"It is bad for women because if your partner dies you are also told to vacate the room after three months ... The other thing is that the committee comprises of men and not women."*

Ayanda's statement confirmed that women's access to housing at Glebelands CRU depended on their connection to a male resident rather than on their personal rights as women. Ayanda suggested that women evicted after the passing of their partner or relative were not given support or assistance in finding alternative accommodation. The eviction of marginalised people without post-eviction consultations is an uncivilised violation of their human rights because it exposes them to insecurity in unsafe environments (Hohmann cited in Sobantu et al 2019:7). Marginalised people are supposed to be protected by The Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act 19 of 1998 (South Africa 1998) because landlords are not permitted to evict them if they do not have other accommodation to go to.

A second resident, Nandipha, explained what it was like when her father, with whom she lived, died. The excerpt notes that the block committee in that block arranged alternative accommodation but the space that she and her children were offered undermined their well-being. The offer of alternative accommodation was made on a "take it or leave it" basis:

"As a woman, I don't get to take decisions at Glebelands CRU, but men do. Especially the block chairmen, who makes decisions on behalf of everyone, whether you like it or not. I would have loved to remain in the room with four beds with my children and not have to share the room with another woman without children. ... But I was moved back to a single room where I had to

stay with my children and the space was not enough to accommodate all of us. ... But I had to listen to what I was told, as the men were not interested in my opinion and my needs as a woman, at the time."

Although Nandipha was unhappy about having to share a room with another woman, she recognised that there was little point in raising her objections with the block chairman, because he was not concerned about her needs. She had to be satisfied with the accommodation that he had allocated her. If she had not accepted it, she would have been homeless.

Participant Duduzile was insulted by the way the block committees treated women in Glebelands CRU. She described the women as being invisible to the block committees or at best as being their "partner's messengers":

"Here in Glebelands CRU, if your man has a room, you are treated as if you are not here. If they want to talk to him and he is not available, you are told to give him the message, but nothing is discussed with you."

Duduzile's storyline portrays the fact that women were never involved in Glebelands issues. At best the women were conduits of messages that were intended only for the consumption and action of the men they stayed with. Because they were women they were not invited to contribute to conversations, even if the subject matter affected them directly.

Discrimination against women by the men in the Glebelands CRU was explained further by Duduzile, who noted that efforts by women residents to have an influence there could have more serious implications for them. The storyline taken from one of Duduzile's interviews highlights the serious consequences a woman suffered when she exercised her political right, namely assassination. Duduzile shared the following story of a woman political activist:

"Men from Glebelands CRU are from rural areas, as much as they now stay here. So, a woman is still a woman to them. Men still believe that men are superior to women. There was a woman who was active within the ANC, Ms ___ ... She was shot. Women love ANC but they are not as active as men are ... The women were devastated, especially those who were supporters of the ANC."

Duduzile intimated that the woman's popularity as a political figure threatened some of the males in the CRU, and women's participation and success in the political arena was not tolerated within the conservative Glebelands CRU context.

Lindelwa confirmed that being raised in a patriarchal culture that supported women's subordination by men meant the oppression of women living in Glebelands CRU would

continue. Her perspective was that the women had resigned themselves to their powerlessness and had accepted the domestic role that society had assigned them (Strong & Cohen 2017:67): *"I think it is really how we were socialised. Maybe our culture tells us that a woman's place is in the house, especially to do domestic chores."*

Physical, social and cultural environments are responsible for shaping a person's identity, competence and autonomy (Gitterman 2009:232) This being said, it is obvious that the oppression of women is linked to cultural practices (Corey 2014:353).

The participants' experiences suggested that male figureheads, such as the block committees in Glebelands CRU, had rules that discriminated against the women and children who lived there. When a woman's male partner or relative died, the woman and her children were expected to move out to make way for someone else. They were given three months to do so, unless they were willing to accept an alternative space allocated at the discretion of the block committee that was smaller and had to be shared with another family. One can conclude that whilst the block committees did not put the needs of the bereaved women and children first, they also did not act outside of the law. They offered the woman who had lost a partner or relative alternative accommodation. Unfortunately, the alternative arrangements contributed to the overcrowding in Glebelands CRU. However, it appears as though the arrangements contravened the fourth principle of the CRU Programme, because the application procedures, execution and operations of the CRU Programme (Human Settlement Department 2006) were not fairly administered. The promotion of gender equity and the rights of women in spaces like Glebelands CRU, which had been created to manage the influx of rural migrants, had historically been a major challenge (Thurman 1997:61).

As noted by Xulu (2012:12), the introduction of women into the converted KwaMashu Hostel was an invasion of what used to be a space intended for men. Similarly, it was evident that the men in the Glebelands CRU, particularly the old guard in the block committees, were resistant about accommodating women in Glebelands CRU. This challenge has been reported in other converted male hostels too (Thani et al 2018:674; Xulu 2012:7). As explained by Thani et al (2018:674), the men had wanted to maintain their privacy and freedom and did not want to be responsible for addressing the needs of women and children who lived in their space.

It was noted that women who wished to participate actively in matters affecting their rights were silenced. It was also noted that the women were made to feel less important than the male residents, because they were excluded from participating in decision making about Glebelands CRU issues. These observations suggest that gender stereotyping limited women's

participation in community programmes and activities. As posited by the feminist perspective, the only way that the women in Glebelands CRU would succeed in advancing themselves and improving their access to resources at personal, interpersonal and societal levels was to challenge these discriminatory boundaries (Teater 2010:97). This was difficult for the women in Glebelands CRU because as long as the patriarchal system prevailed there, women who challenged the boundaries would be at risk. The prospects for women living in Glebelands CRU were therefore bleak.

The next sub-theme is also related to the frustrations that the women experienced through not having a say in Glebelands CRU matters.

5.2.5.2 Sub-theme 5.2: Sidelining of women residents in terms of Glebelands CRU matters

Linked to the previous sub-theme, the participants raised their discontent about being excluded from discussions and decision making on matters related to Glebelands CRU. As noted in section 1.3, South African housing policies and guidelines advocate for women's participation in the development of housing, but there is little or no evidence of the inclusion of women in matters relating to the development and maintenance of the Glebelands CRU programme. It has been acknowledged that women are excluded from the planning processes in housing, both as individuals and as a group (Manomano & Tanga 2018:33; Ndinda 2009:318). This is unacceptable because the first principle on which the CRU Programme rests is that communication and engagement with residents had to be consistent in practice throughout the development and maintenance of the CRU Programme (Department of Human Settlements 2006).

The participants were dissatisfied that women were not represented on the block committees that were responsible for addressing the needs of residents in the Glebelands CRU. The male-driven block committees took decisions about most matters related to Glebelands CRU.

Dudzile was one who voiced her concern about women's exclusion from this process.

"... women don't have a say in the issues of Glebelands CRU as there are no women in the block committees. If the room belongs to a man, as much as you stay together with that man, but you don't have a say about anything. You are told that you are not the owner of the room. Your man decides on your behalf. Everything is communicated with the man only."

Dudzile confirmed that women's complaints were silenced by their being reminded that they were not entitled to complain because they were not the owners of their accommodation.

Yesufu and Nkomo (2018:3) note that despite the post-apartheid legislation introduced in South Africa to uphold the rights of all South African people equally, men and women had continued to be treated differently, irrespective of their race and culture. Women had been dependent upon male “bed-holders” in the old hostels for years, which meant that the men living there had enormous power over them (Ramphele 1989:404). It was a challenge for women to voice their concerns because the converted male hostels remained a patriarchal social system (Burger 2019c:14). Their opinions regarding matters in Glebelands CRU that affected them were ignored. The dependence of women on male bed-holders for accommodation had indeed given men enormous power over women, making the hostels truly a man’s world.

Ulwazi described the role women were expected to play in Glebelands CRU as that of spectator. The women were invited to attend residents’ meetings but expected to remain silent throughout:

“When there are meetings in the block, we are told that the meeting is for everyone but when decisions are taken, they are only taken by men. Women are not allowed to have inputs, but that is not communicated directly. The men are the ones that talk, and women only listen to the discussions. Nobody even tells you, as a woman, that you can’t talk but you can just see the vibe of the meeting that you can’t have a say in this meeting.”

The unspoken code of conduct for women in Glebelands CRU was for them to add numbers to the general meetings but not contribute to the deliberations. Within traditional African cultures it is considered culturally inappropriate for black women who attend public meetings to influence decisions (Todes et al 2010:73). As a result, the participation of black women in open conversations is very minimal (Khumalo 2013:3).

Ayanda agreed that women had little status in Glebelands CRU. She pointed out that in the event of the death of a male resident, the official bed-holder, the law of succession did not prevail. The adult child who had lived with the deceased would have to leave Glebelands CRU.

“Women in Glebelands CRU don’t have a say. I am not free as a person here. When a resident was staying with his children, the children are not given the room that they were occupying with the deceased parent or parents. You are told that a room can’t be transferred to children. The children don’t have a say as well. The block committee say the room is not for inheritance. The room or bed is sold to another person when the main occupant dies.”

In summary, the women were not free to raise their concerns about matters that affected them in Glebelands CRU or to make recommendations about improving Glebelands CRU. They were

expected to demonstrate their presence and witness the deliberations at resident's meetings and remain silent. The outcome of their silence was two-fold: the concerns that affected the women living there, such as insufficient space and inadequate housing, would persist; and their self-esteem, sense of identity and belonging, involvement and enablement would dissipate further (Manomano 2018:33). The reality, according to Sobantu (2020:64), is that unless women's voices and their understanding of housing are heard, gender-responsive housing will never be achieved.

The stigma that the outside community attached to being a resident in Glebelands CRU is the aspect discussed next.

5.2.5.3 Sub-theme 5.3: Stigmatising of Glebelands CRU women by the outside community

Non-discrimination, non-stigmatisation and equality are fundamental human rights principles that should be applied in housing (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:9). When a person is discriminated against on the basis of their place of residence, their well-being is likely to be compromised by their lack of access to the opportunities they need (Keene & Padilla 2010:1217). Such discrimination associated with a specific place where people live can leave them passive, helpless, disconnected and held to ransom by violent criminals (Blokland 2008:32).

Urban neighbourhoods are more than physically bounded spaces. They acquire symbolic connotations that are used to judge the residents who live in those spaces. Those who live in denigrated spaces can suffer stigmas of race, class and the "blemish of place" that "reduces them from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one" (Goffman cited in Keene & Padilla 2010:1216). The participants described what it felt like to suffer the "blemish of place" through living in Glebelands CRU.

Dudzile shared how the stigma of residing in Glebelands CRU had impacted on her personally:

"I can say it is okay, here in Glebelands CRU, but there is always a stigma that is somehow attached to staying here ... Other people always think that you are cohabiting, if you stay in Glebelands CRU, and they don't believe that you can stay without a man here. Glebelands CRU is also known for violence, so people always associate you with the violence that they hear about on the news."

The storyline highlights two assumptions that outsiders make about the women who live in Glebelands CRU: that they are dependent upon men to survive (Blokland 2008:33) and are associated with the criminal activities that Glebelands CRU is notorious for (Blokland 2008:32).

Lindelwa's storyline supports Duduzile's perspective about being stigmatised because of the violence associated with Glebelands CRU:

"There is a stigma of violence that affects woman residents of Glebelands CRU and you have to put up with that all the time ... I have nothing to do with the reported deaths, yet I am associated with it because I stay in Glebelands CRU. It is not easy to be a woman in Glebelands CRU. When you apply for a job, potential employers always ask you about the violence of Glebelands CRU ... I always tell them that I have nothing to do with the killings in Glebelands CRU but one can tell that being associated with violence of Glebelands CRU contributes to us losing out on job opportunities."

Lindelwa further explained that her boyfriend was most dissatisfied about her living in Glebelands CRU because of the stories he had heard about the place:

"My partner is always worried about me, and he tries to check on me quite often. We never fight about it though, as he understands the situation. Although at times he prefers to meet with me at Mega City Mall instead of coming inside. If we want to spend the evening together, I go to his place. When he talks of Glebelands CRU, you can tell that he doesn't like the place one bit ... I think his fear is that he might be caught in the crossfire as a stranger."

Nandipha also believed that because she lived in Glebelands CRU it was more difficult for her to secure employment.

"There is a stigma that is attached to me as a woman who stays in Glebelands CRU. People from outside are always saying there is too much violence in Glebelands CRU and when they see you, they associate you with that violence and this has a bad effect in women getting jobs when they go outside to look for jobs. We are called all sorts of names."

Nandipha's storyline refers to the judgements and negative labelling she experienced from outsiders, which negatively affected her.

These types of experiences are also mentioned by Burger (2019c:15), who confirms that many residents of Glebelands CRU had complained that they were stigmatised, discriminated against, and judged on the basis of where they lived. The labels the women mentioned that had been used to refer to female residents of Glebelands CRU included *"imidlwembe"* (uncontrollable women), *"ziziqhwaga"* (violent women) and *"zizigebengu"* (criminals). In this

regard, Yesufu and Nkomo (2018:3) assert that negative labelling and judgement can influence the self-worth and growth of people very badly.

As highlighted by Keene and Padilla (2010:1217), the way people view a neighbourhood influences the degree to which they invest or disinvest in those who live there. This impacts significantly on the opportunities that the residents there can access. The participants described how the social perceptions of Glebelands CRU impacted negatively on their status. The labelling reduced their access to opportunities they needed to uplift themselves, and it impacted on their psychological well-being (Keene & Padilla 2010:1217). In many ways the participants' descriptions about being stigmatised were consistent with the descriptions by Blokland (2008:35) of how women who lived in the hostels in 2008 were treated: they were judged, socially rejected and considered to be dangerous and visually unattractive. In other words, the conversions of the hostels into CRUs had failed to restore the dignity of the women who lived in Glebelands CRU.

The next sub-theme highlights the participants' frustrations at being disrespected by the men who lived in Glebelands CRU.

5.2.5.4 Sub-theme 5.4: Disrespecting of female residents by the male residents

For years scholarly sources have noted that women in low-income rental housing were expected to be subordinate to men (Ramphela 1989:394; Saugeres 2009:205). Their subordination has kept them trapped in their positions of social disadvantage (Saugeres 2009:205). The participants' experiences show that little had changed since the observation by Ramphela (1989:394) that the men who lived in the hostels in Cape Town at that time were chauvinistic towards the black women who had moved into their male-only living spaces and that any suggestion of equality between the sexes was a real threat to their egos. The participants in this study described being unfairly treated by the male residents in Glebelands CRU. Some of the disrespectful perspectives of men towards women living in Glebelands CRU are mentioned in section 3.4.4.4 and will not be repeated here.

Nandipha shared her frustration when house rules made by the block committees were disregarded by male residents:

"Women are controlled by block committees who themselves are not recognised by the municipal office. If there is a rule, you should comply. If you have a child that is studying and the neighbours are playing loud music, you can't say anything."

Nandipha's storyline indicates the powerlessness she had felt as a mother whenever her child's studies were interrupted by noisy male residents, who were never reprimanded for breaking the no noise rule. The irony of her storyline is her statement that the rules were created by the block committees, who officially should not have had power and control in the Glebelands CRU because the power and control was meant to rest with the eThekweni Municipality, the official landlord. Noise is one of the factors that impacts negatively on a person's happiness and life satisfaction (Clapham et al 2018:270) and on children's educational advancement and overall well-being (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:18).

Mthobeli was frustrated by the lack of respect that the male residents demonstrated towards the women who lived in Glebelands. She highlighted women's inability to stand together as women, which resulted in the men's further disrespecting of the women residents:

"Men think that they are superior to women ... But then again we women don't seem to stand up for each other. Sometimes women even fight with one another in front of men, which gives them an excuse to abuse us."

Mthobeli used a personal example to illustrate this:

"How do you explain that a woman who was staying a few units away from my unit could be involved with my partner as well? She created the opportunity for a man to play us both as women."

When women support men in disrespecting other women, they contribute further to the lack of respect women have in society and to their marginalisation (Clapham et al 2018:263).

Participants' comments about single women in Glebelands CRU indicate that they bore the worst of the disrespectful behaviour of male residents because they had no one to cushion the blows directed at them.

Nandipha's second storyline concerning this sub-theme reveals that as a single woman in Glebelands CRU she suffered greater disrespect than those women who lived with their partners there: *"It is not at all easy for women here, in Glebelands CRU."* She went on to explain:

"I wish one day I could be respected as a woman. I am accepted by some, but to others I am not fully accepted. The fact that I don't have a partner may contribute to the problem as I am single."

Mthobeli, too, noted that the women who lived with their intimate partners experienced less disrespect from men than the single women: *“A woman is not respected in Glebelands CRU. It’s better when you stay with your partner or husband as he protects you.”*

Yesufu and Nkomo (2018:3) posit that in most situations men have more power and privileges than women, as noted in the storylines of the participants. The men treated the women disrespectfully. They abused their power and privileges in a way that reduced the women’s dignity. The women’s needs were overlooked in favour of the men’s (Burger 2019c:18). Those women who lived permanently with their partners were to some extent protected by their partners from some of the unfair treatment from male residents and the block committees, whilst single women were further ostracised.

The social status that a person gains from housing impacts on their subjective well-being and exacerbates the impact on them of poor housing conditions, such as damp, poor lighting and an unsatisfactory neighbourhood. For this reason, it is important for men to realise that it is harmful for them to lord it over women (Thobejane cited in Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3).

The next sub-theme relates to how the participants were affected by the high rate of unemployment amongst women living in Glebelands CRU.

5.2.5.5 Sub-theme 5.5: Lack of employment opportunities for women in and around Glebelands CRU

There are several interdependencies between housing and unemployment. Skobba (2016:53) notes the coexistence of unsteady employment and housing instability. Khosla 2014:8-9, 15) mentions the negative outcomes of the combination of rapid, high urbanisation, poor housing and low-income women. As outlined in section 1.1.2, one of the motivations of the participants for moving to Glebelands CRU was to access employment opportunities so that they could support themselves and their children. A key factor enabling women to secure and remain in paid employment is access to secure, affordable housing in well-located areas situated near to labour opportunities. This offers women a stable emotional base from where they can seek paid employment (Saugeres 2009:198). However, as discussed in section 1.1.2, most of the participants were unemployed and relied solely upon social grants. Hence, unemployment was one of the negative living conditions that the women in Glebelands CRU had to endure.

Olwethu explained: *“The biggest thing that worries us here is the fact that we are unemployed. Level of unemployment is very high. Even our children are unemployed.”* Olwethu clarified: *“I don’t have a problem with the living conditions per se but it’s the unemployment that I am concerned about. If people could just get jobs, that will be enough.”*

Ulwazi also mentioned unemployment as a troubling factor: *"I am unemployed. Nothing is going forward. It is as if I am stuck in one place. I have tried to re-write my grade 12 but I was not successful again."*

Clark (2018) confirms that many South African women are unemployed, with limited prospects of getting a job. Women living in the CRUs who are fortunate enough to work must settle for employment such as being government volunteers, receiving stipends or being domestic workers in the surrounding areas (Khoza 2014:69). Such employment seldom provides them with an opportunity to secure a permanent job in the open labour market so that they can uplift themselves out of poverty.

According to Ulwazi, it was usually the male residents who benefited from recruitment drives for the development projects in the ward where Glebelands CRU was situated.

"If there are development projects with job opportunities, it is men that benefit the most. Women are the last ones to be employed and the number is always little."

Participants were interested in public works projects being expanded to include women within and outside Glebelands CRU as a means of creating employment opportunities. Without such opportunities, many South African single mothers struggle to access finance to support themselves and their children, which exposes them to inadequate housing (Kotwal & Prabhakar 2017:197; Skobba 2016:45). Given the dire financial circumstances of many of the women, Glebelands CRU was the best housing option available to them. However, in the absence of suitable employment opportunities, many of the women were trapped into living there indefinitely.

In conclusion

The women experienced numerous challenges by being housed in a male-dominated environment. The culture was cited as contributing to the discrimination and oppression that women experienced, as men always felt superior to them. Women were also discouraged from participating in issues of concern as capable citizens with human rights, which hampered the fulfilment of their potential. Women were forcefully evicted without adherence to the steps prescribed by the Prevention of Illegal Eviction Act. They were discriminated against and undermined by the resident management structure, which was not recognised by the landlord, and yet nothing was being done about the situation. The stigmatisation associated with being a resident of Glebelands CRU also hindered women from securing jobs, as their low social status posed a threat to some potential employers. Their level of unemployment was high, and women survived mainly on social grants.

The living conditions in Glebelands CRU from a woman's perspective having been described, attention turns now to participants' perceptions of how life in the Glebelands CRU had contributed positively to the quality of their lives, which is the sixth theme.

5.2.6 Theme 6: How the Glebelands CRU improves the quality of women's lives

- Sub-themes:
- 6.1 Positive contributions:
 - Provision of shelter for women and their children
 - Family units as spacious and conducive to family living
 - Access of women to affordable rental accommodation
 - Support received by women from other female residents
 - Accessibility of resources and the Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) War Room
 - 6.2 Negative impacts:
 - Single women with children are excluded from the family units
 - Women living in Glebelands CRU suffer loss of pride
 - The needs of older women residents are overlooked

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa preserves the right of every South African citizen to appropriate housing and advocates equality, non-racialism and non-sexism as basic values (South Africa 1996a: section 26). Khumalo (2013:10) posits that housing should offer people privacy, uphold their dignity and be equally accessible for men and women. The CRU Programme was introduced in 2004 to replace the National Hostel Redevelopment Programme and the Affordable Rental Housing Programme (Thani et al 2018:670; Xulu 2012:8), and the policy framework and implementation guidelines for the CRU Programme were endorsed in 2006 (Xulu 2012:8). One of the purposes of the CRU Programme as outlined in 3.4.2 (Principles of the CRU Programme) was to create adequate low-cost housing rental options for the growing number of disadvantaged women and children who needed accommodation in urban and peri-urban areas (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216). The development of the CRU Programme was meant to address the identified housing needs of women (Thani et al 2018:670).

This agenda is important because, as stated in the National Gender Policy Framework of 2005, adequate housing provides women with a sense of security, comfort and adequate space to raise and care for their families (Chenwi & McLean 2009:539). The question the participants were asked was "How has the Glebelands CRU improved the quality of the lives of the women who lived there?" The inclusion of this question was recommended by the eThekweni Municipality Human Settlements research department when permission was sought for the study to be conducted.

Two sub-themes emerged in relation to this theme: the positive factors that improved the quality of the women's lives in Glebelands CRU; and, in contrast, the factors that had a negative impact

on their lives. Most participants expressed the view that living in the Glebelands CRU had offered them some benefits. The discussion commences with five positive contributions made by Glebelands CRU to the lives of women who lived there: (1) women and their children had shelter; (2) the family units were spacious and conducive to family living; (3) women had access to affordable low-rental accommodation; (4) women received support from other women residents living in Glebelands CRU; and (5) the Glebelands CRU was convenient in being closely situated to resources and services that women residents needed, including the Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) War Room . The discussion commences with the participants' storylines of these positive benefits for the women living in Glebelands CRU, sub-theme 6.1. The second sub-theme, 6.2, concerns the ways in which living in Glebelands CRU impacted negatively on women there, as recounted by the participants.

5.2.6.1 Sub-theme 6.1: Positive contributions

- Provision of shelter for women and their children

Scholars assert that housing is one of the most basic human needs (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19; Sobantu & Nel 2019:284). People who cannot access adequate housing are robbed of human dignity, freedom and equality, the foundational values of our society (Chenwi & McLean 2009:520; Manomano & Tanga 2018:19; Pillay et al 2002:7). Several participants described their appreciation of the shelter that Glebelands CRU provided for them and their children.

Olwethu, one of the older participants, stated that when she first moved into the Glebelands Hostel, women were not legally allowed to be there. She was grateful that women could now access the low-cost housing rental stock available at Glebelands. She recalled that when she first moved into the hostel, people were not allowed to have their children stay with them. The conversion of the old hostel into a CRU had made this possible:

"I am happy that women now have their own shelters here, as they were deprived before. The shelter is important for every human being, and it is the basic need for everyone. Having rooms for women is very important."

Olwethu's storyline confirms that women's lives, especially women with children, had benefited from the change in housing policy that allowed women to be included in the converted hostels (Human Settlements 2020).

Dudzile's storyline endorses Olwethu's perspective. She refers to the freedom women could enjoy by having their children live with them: *"Family units allow women to stay with their children freely."*

The storylines converge with the view of Ndinda (2009:330) that the subordinate position of women in society made women's access to housing more difficult. Offering women access to low-cost rental housing stock in Glebelands CRU had provided the disadvantaged women with a lifeline by which they could stay there legally, with their children, regardless of their employment and marital status (Ndinda 2009:328).

The next sub-category of sub-theme 6.1 that emerged from the interviews with participants was the suitability of the family units owing to their being spacious and conducive to family living, which was a positive factor for women.

- Family units as spacious and conducive to family living

Ubisi (2013:29) suggests that the developments in housing policy introduced by the South African government reflect the government's vision to lessen poverty and improve the living conditions of previously disadvantaged groups, particularly women and children. As noted by SJ Newman (2008:895), decent housing does offer more than shelter, namely social benefits such as improved health, fewer behaviour problems, greater educational outcomes for children, and increased employment opportunities for housing beneficiaries.

The participants mentioned the benefits that the CRU Programme offered families. The introduction of family units had benefited the lives of some women but not the lives of the research participants. The decision to remodel selected hostels into CRU's was ratified in 2006. According to several storylines, single women, living with their children did not qualify to live in these new units. They were under the impression that the new family units were reserved for male headed households and that they would not qualify given the means test that was used in the screening of applicants. Whilst guidelines for the allocation of CRU units were developed in 2020 by the Department of Human Settlements Province of KwaZulu-Natal (2020:4-5), the women interviewed were not familiar with the qualifying criteria. The allocation guidelines developed for Community Residential Units (2020:4-5) define the criteria for the allocation of the family units as: the applicant must be legally competent to contract (i.e. 18 years of age or older, legally married or divorced and of sound mind); the household income must be between R800 to R3500 per month; the applicant must produce a current utility bill; the applicant must be married or cohabiting or single with financial dependents who reside permanently with the applicant (Human Settlements

2020). The women participants needed to produce a utility bill and have a fixed income of R800 or more to qualify. As two research participants were unregistered and five boycotted paying rentals, this explains which six of the ten participants would not qualify to live in the family units. Also, two of the participants had a fixed income of less than R800 per month. At the time of the study 12 new family unit blocks were completed which provided 96 family units in total (Ntaka 2021). The remodelling of the old Glebelands hostel blocks into family units had not yet begun.

The participants mentioned the experiences of other women who lived there with their partners and families and who had found the family units spacious and better suited than the old blocks for the needs of families who lived in Glebelands.

Mthobeli shared that her partner and his wife had moved to a family unit, but she had to stay in a single room. She based her answer on the experience of the family unit of her partner and his wife:

“I don’t know much about the programme of the family units. I know that my partner applied and got it, but don’t know how he qualified for it. I am aware that the requirement was a payslip but am not aware about the salary that was being considered as a minimum and again as a maximum. I do think though that his wife was happy to move to a bigger place because it was a two-bedroom flat. It gave them enough space as a family.”

Whilst reflecting on the difference between living in a family unit or in a single unit, Mthobeli reflected that those who could not afford the family units and remained in the single units enjoyed another benefit:

“But on the other hand, electricity and water are for free for us in the rooms, so even those who don’t have a source of income are able to benefit from these resources. I don’t think that is the case with the family units.”

The family units were regarded as better for families, although Mthobeli intimated that many women could not afford the family units on their own. Rentals for the family units ranged between R250 and R450 per month and tenants living in the old hostel blocks paid R50 per bed.

Sindisiwe pointed out that the family units offered the space and privacy that women and children needed, but the means test precluded many women from enjoying these benefits:

“The CRU Programme is good because women can ... have their own space with their children ... They are not forced to share a space with a stranger, as is presently

Commented [KP37]: How many new family blocks.

Commented [KM38R37]: Twelve family blocks with 96 family units in total

happening ... Although, not a lot of women have benefited from the family units, because those who applied were asked to bring their payslips ... They had to bring their payslips as proof of income. I was further told that it is close to R500, and they also pay for water and electricity, separately. They use prepaid for electricity.”

Whilst the family units offered space and privacy, Sindisiwe, like Mthobeli, acknowledged that they came at a price that many women could not afford.

Olwethu was impressed that the family units offered family members separate rooms:

“I can’t remember when the programme was launched, but all I can say is those who were allocated family units are staying well with their families. They have their own bedrooms in the family units, unlike here in the rooms where one family shares that one room ... Children sleep in their own bedrooms in the family units and not with the parents ... Yes, those people live very well there.”

For Olwethu, the family unit design provided families with privacy for parents and for children, which was a great advantage for families and had changed their lives for the better.

Ulwazi also recognised that the family units had impacted positively on the women who were fortunate enough to have met the application requirements:

“CRU Programme has a very good impact on the well-being of women, as there is no sharing of spaces. A woman can stay with her family freely without other people. The challenge might be the rent they have to pay, although I am not sure of the amount. I think it’s about R500. They also pay for water and electricity ... I was not yet in Glebelands CRU when the applications were done, but I was informed by one lady who stays in our unit that she applied, and she was not approved. Only Glebelands residents could apply. No outsiders were allowed to apply. The details of what was needed are not clear, other than one of the main requirements was that one had to produce a Glebelands bill as proof that you were a Glebelands CRU resident. The lady claimed to have submitted everything that was required but was not taken, so I don’t know if the municipal office had preferences or not ...”

Women’s quality of life was described as having improved because of the CRU Programme in the sense that they had more freedom.

According to Sindisiwe, the CRU Programme had brought freedom to women who lived in the family units:

“The establishment of family units has brought a lot of freedom ... have no experience of how they do things, but I know that women in the family units have more freedom than us, who stay in the rooms ... Sharing a room with people with different characters is difficult. It is difficult to have your opinion about certain things that you are not happy about. Others in the unit, we occupy, drink, and talk anyhow as they are drunk. As a woman, you can't tell them that you don't like it. And if it happens often, you make a very light comment.”

Sindisiwe's storyline highlights the stress of living in overcrowded housing where single mothers share accommodation with non-family members whose values and behaviours are inconsistent with their own. As noted by SJ Newman (2008:903), living in such circumstances creates excessive social demands, restricts the family's privacy, and exposes them to external challenges they would not experience if they lived in their own homes.

One of the freedoms that the family units offered the women who lived there was what Qaqamba referred to as freedom of movement:

“It has a very good impact as the owners of the family units can lock and open their doors as when they choose. Women in the family units have more freedom than the women in the rooms. In the family units the level of shooting is very low ... if it happens at all ... All I know is that in the rooms there are a lot of shootings ...”

For Qaqamba, being separate from the violence-torn single blocks offered freedom. She clarified what she meant by freedom: *“I mean peace of mind in your own space.”*

The description given by Qaqamba is consistent with that by Burger (2019c:19) of the existence of “no-go zones” in Glebelands CRU. Ordinary movements such as visiting the hospital, friends or family and going to work or shopping had to be curtailed to reduce the risk of being attacked or caught in the crossfire in Glebelands (Burger (2019c:21).

Fenyane (2016:91) attests that the conversion of the hostel rooms into family units has benefited the occupants, whilst Ntuli (2017) states that the development of the family units at Glebelands has been criticised. The participants' views were that those who qualified to live there were better off than those who lived in the single-unit blocks. The participants spoke in unison of the benefits that the family units offered women with families: the family units were more spacious, provided privacy for family members, privacy from other residents, and freedom of movement – factors that would have improved the quality of their lives. The positive factors they identified are important for the subjective well-being of

women and the children they care for (Clapham et al 2017:270; Sobantu et al 2019:4). Women spend more time at home than men and need more space (Chenwi & McLean 2009:534). The new family units are more attractive than the old block buildings, provide residents with decent accommodation, uplift the general Glebelands CRU surroundings, and are conveniently situated for access to public facilities that residents need, as mentioned by Fenyane (2016:91). Paglione (cited in Sobantu et al 2019:6) indicates that when housing is adequate and provides facilities for beneficiaries, the occupants can lead undisturbed and happy lives. Most participants recognised that they could not have afforded to live in the family units because the rentals were higher, and they would have had to pay for electricity and water. As unemployed single women, and in some cases as unofficial or illegal Glebelands residents, their applications for family units would not have been considered because they could not provide salary slips and Glebelands rental statements. To qualify for the family units, each household had to earn between R800 and R3 500 per month, which meant that women who depended mostly on social grants would not be able to live in the new family units.

Nonetheless, as discussed next, the participants acknowledged that Glebelands CRU offered women affordable rental accommodation, making their lives as disadvantaged women much easier.

- **Access of women to affordable rental accommodation**

Pricer (2020:562) asserts that even though there is a range of housing programmes designed to meet the housing needs of low-income individuals, the scarcity of affordable low-cost housing rentals remains a concern, and the demand far exceeds the supply. Unfortunately, disadvantaged women experience many stumbling blocks when trying to secure affordable accommodation: extensive background checks and a lack of knowledge and resources to appeal application rejections (Pricer 2020:563). The challenges that migrating women face when trying to secure affordable accommodation in urban and peri-urban areas, particularly those who have to care for their children, are discussed in section 3.3 (Women and housing). Even though their dire financial circumstances and their status as single women had precluded them from living in the family units, they were grateful that Glebelands CRU provided them with affordable single room or unit accommodation where they were not charged for services such as electricity and water. Some indicated that they did not pay any rent at all.

In some cases, participants suggested that the block committees were amenable to negotiating rentals for the women in their blocks. For example, Ulwazi shared that she did not have to pay rent in her block:

"I do not pay rent here. Even if you are not working, you can stay here. When you want a bed or a room you negotiate with the block committee what amount of money you can afford to pay them. Depending on how you negotiate you are able to get the bed."

Ulwazi then mentioned those who boycotted paying rent, herself included: *"We have free water and electricity. The rent is free as well, as much as I have been told that others are paying."*

Sindisiwe also shared that she did not pay rent: *"I literally stay for free, because I don't pay for water and electricity as well."*

Lindelwa was another participant who did not pay rent for the bed she was using and appreciated how reasonable the accommodation costs were at Glebelands CRU in comparison to private accommodation in the area: *"We are all not paying ... It's R45 per bed ... I was staying at Umlazi Township and the rent was very high, it was R600, it was a back room at D section. I couldn't afford it."*

Even though Nandipha was a registered resident, she did not pay rent because of the rental boycotts: *"I don't pay for the room as much as I am registered and have a bill. I get water and electricity for free every month."*

Her explanation for not paying the monthly rental was: *"We are supposed to be paying the rental at the municipal office in Sizakala Centre at Mega City, but I am not paying because others are not paying as well."*

Qaqamba, too, stopped paying rent because of the rental boycott. She feared the reprisals of those who had initiated the rental boycotts:

"People who were paying rent were being killed. I think the rent was about R100 and the residents were saying it's too expensive. As the residents continued to mobilise for the protests, I also stopped paying as I did not want to do what others were not doing."

Officially Glebelands CRU residents were expected to pay set rentals directly to the superintendent's office, but the old blocks' residents were not paying their rentals because of the boycotts. Municipal rentals were tabled as follows: R50, for single bed; R250, for two bedroom family unit; R350, for three bedroom family unit and R450, for four bedroom family

unit (Ntaka 2021). One perspective is that the eThekweni Municipality did not have an updated data list of all the residents living in Glebelands CRU because many of them lived there illegally and therefore were not billed. Some blocks committees were alleged to collect the rentals directly from the residents in their blocks for their own means. The absence of rental collections had resulted in the deterioration of services available to residents living in the CRU, especially maintenance of the blocks and the CRU grounds (Dlamini cited in Ubisi 2013:11; Fenyane 2016:11; Mpehle in Ubisi 2013:11; Thani et al 2018:671).

Non-payment of rental and service fees to the eThekweni Municipality appeared to be the norm at Glebelands CRU. The rental boycotts were initiated in 2006, even before the CRU conversions, for several defensible reasons, according to Burger (2019a). At the time of writing, this matter remained unresolved, and the rent boycotts continued in several of the Glebelands' blocks. Predominant citizen protests driven by poor service delivery should be recognised as an indication that the services the government promised them had not been delivered (Ndinda et al 2011:781; Pithouse 2014: i43). Some of the storylines point to the lack of governance in Glebelands CRU and intimidation of residents by those who do not operate within the rules and laws.

However, it must be acknowledged that by not paying high rental and service costs the women could spend their meagre incomes on other necessary expenses such as food and health care (SJ Newman 2008:904). Living in the family units would have been unaffordable to them, which could have exposed them to financial stresses leading to household conflict, harsh discipline of children, and parents being forced to leave their children unattended in order to work longer hours to offset their monthly expenses (SJ Newman 2008:904). However, the non-payment of rentals by residents is a matter of concern as it is not a sustainable solution, and yet nothing was being done to address the root cause of the residents' problems, which was the dissatisfaction with the poor management of the CRU (Burger 2019a; Ubisi 2013:11-12).

Another positive benefit of living in Glebelands CRU that emerged from the findings was the support women received from other women who lived there, which is considered next.

- Support received by women from other female residents

Support from those living close to people is crucial for their well-being (Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5; Payne 2014:190). The regular face-to-face contacts women encounter in their daily activities is a protective factor that enables them to adapt to the stressful contexts in

which they find themselves (Germain & Gitterman 1995:818). The participants identified these contacts as one of the advantages that contributed positively to the lives of women who lived in Glebelands CRU.

Through the face-to-face contacts with other women in Glebelands CRU, Lindelwa suggested, women received valuable support and guidance:

“Women of Glebelands have good relations amongst themselves. Women that I have met in Glebelands CRU are my greatest support system ... We sit and discuss issues with one another and seek advice from one another as well when something has happened. We tell one another of the recent things that have occurred so that we all know what is going on ... although we never get to know the whole story. I choose whom I share things with especially the sensitive information.”

Support amongst women living in Glebelands CRU was important given the ongoing violence in Glebelands (Burger 2019c:27). However, as Lindelwa mentioned, it was of the utmost importance that women exercised discretion in terms of who they chose to “open up” to.

Sindisiwe suggested she enjoyed the companionship of the women she had met in Glebelands CRU:

“I enjoy the company of other women. I have made a lot of friends and we discuss a lot of things together. I am also happy that I now share a room with another woman, as sharing with men is not easy.”

However, like Lindelwa, Sindisiwe had realised that not all relationships with others in Glebelands CRU were supportive and trusting, and women had to be very discerning about whom they confided in:

“We do talk as neighbours, but I can’t say there is much support as everyone thinks for herself and her family. We are civil with one another, but I can’t say I trust them completely, and I don’t believe they trust me completely either. There is no trust amongst us as the residents. We are all not sure who is close to who, as there is a lot happening all the time.”

The longstanding history of political betrayal, administrative neglect, social stigma, civic disregard, police brutality and political manipulation, as reported by Burger (2019c:19), explains the distrust amongst residents that Sindisiwe and Lindelwa mentioned. For those who had formed positive networks of support with women in Glebelands CRU, these relationships updated the participants on developments in Glebelands CRU and offered

them advice when they needed it. Networks of support are endorsed by Muthwa (cited in Chenwi & McLean 2009:541) as valuable sources of information.

Women kept each other occupied, which distracted them from the disheartening events within Glebelands CRU. The relationships the women developed with other women within the CRU were one of the factors that enabled them to adapt to the harsh realities of living in Glebelands CRU (Congress 2013:129).

Women living in Glebelands CRU received more than advice and emotional support from one another. They often offered one another practical support, as explained by Nandipha:

“Neighbours and friends from Glebelands CRU used to help me a lot with taking care of the children, as they would come back from school and I would still be in the houses where I was doing the washing.”

Social networks offer their members extended support in the form of practical help with domestic work and childcare (Bradshaw cited in Chenwi & McLean 2009:541).

Ulwazi explained how she and a few women residents with whom she had established good relationships assisted one another in caring for their respective children:

“I do have friends within Glebelands CRU that assist me with my child, and I do the same for them, I help them with their children as well. Even if I don't have money from time to time or anything to cook, I approach that circle of friends. I don't have friends outside of Glebelands CRU though. With the friends from Glebelands CRU we share the little that we have.”

The small networks of support the women formed created a safety net. They turned to one another when in need. Participants thus depended on the support of other women, those whom they could trust, who lived in Glebelands CRU. The networks of support they belonged to offered them different kinds of support: assistance with domestic chores, advice, and distraction from their worries. In the investigation that Burger (2019a) conducted in Glebelands CRU, she describes the residents in Glebelands CRU as generally supportive and considerate towards one another and as offering one another practical assistance. They collected money for the burial costs of the families of their comrades who had been killed in the violence, offered rooms, food and transport to those who had been forcibly evicted from Glebelands, and came together to help one another deal with the daily threat of violence within the CRU.

The final positive benefit of living in Glebelands CRU was that, owing to its favourable location, it offered the women who lived there increased access to resources they needed, which included the OSS War Room. This is discussed next.

- **Accessibility of resources and the Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) War Room**

One of the aspects of adequate housing, as envisaged in the White Paper on Housing (South Africa 1994a), is to create viable socially and economically integrated communities, where citizens have convenient access to economic opportunities, health and educational and social amenities (Jacobs 2011:47).

One of the benefits of living in Glebelands CRU that contributed favourably to the quality of the participants' lives was the accessibility of services in and around Glebelands CRU.

The advantage of women being able to access services was raised by Lindelwa:

“Electricity and water are always there. Transport is close by. You choose the mode of transport that you prefer on the day. We also have a variety of shops close to Glebelands CRU and you get to choose the one that you like or need.”

Lindelwa later added:

“With most of the shops close by, we don't even have to take a taxi, as the Mega City Mall is just around the corner. Children have a wide variety of schools to choose from and they just walk to these schools.”

Mthobeli's storyline, too, confirmed that women were able to access the services they needed most: *“Free water and electricity. Transport is close by.”* Mthobeli added:

“Most of the basic amenities are close to Glebelands CRU. Children can walk to the schools. Clinic and hospital are close to us. We even have malls close to us. You only go to town if you really want to, but not because there are no shops around.”

It was clear that the location of Glebelands CRU suited the needs of women with children.

Ayanda also shared how convenient living in Glebelands CRU was for her to buy stock for her tuckshop and for children to access the schools:

“... here in Glebelands CRU we are so close to the malls, and all modes of transport (taxi, buses and trains) and that helps a lot to struggling women. Even with my tuckshop, I just go to Jeena's Store and other close-by wholesalers and come back without spending anything on transport. If I do spend on transport, for bulk items it is very little ... Our ward

has schools close to us, so children are able to walk to the schools and it's an added benefit for mothers."

Zanele highlighted the access women had to other services, such as the Department of Home Affairs, SASSA and health services they needed:

"Transport, hospital, malls, and schools are close by ... We are able to access resources like the IDs, grants and medical services without a challenge ... Although it is sometimes difficult to have IDs amended if the names were not written correctly. Some of the residents have to go back and forth trying to get the corrections done."

Sindisiwe, too, told about the outside services that were within reach without difficulty for herself as an unemployed woman:

"We are able to access the SASSA office in Emaweleni for grants application, but we receive the grants from the shops where we buy groceries. If we are sick, we go to Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital. I don't pay in hospital as I am unemployed. We have a lot of schools around the area but others who can afford prefer to have their children in Clairwood or Wentworth so that they can learn English. We attend church on Sunday and again on Tuesdays as it's our prayer days so we alternate the venues for the prayer days. These prayers are mostly attended by women as men are not interested. Even in the Bible, it's written that prayer answers everything. Maybe one day our prayers will be answered."

A service provided for residents in Glebelands CRU who were destitute was a soup kitchen, as mentioned by Zakhele:

"We also have a soup kitchen service in the hall and the people get served on certain days as much as I am not sure about the exact days. People who are hungry and cannot afford to feed themselves make use of the soup kitchen services. I think it's part of what the government is doing for those who are poor and have no support and are on medication."

Operation Sukuma Sakhe was started as a poverty alleviation concept focusing on needy communities, especially those on HIV/AIDS medication, through the provision of soup kitchens, and it was later extended to all other government services and brought closer to communities in an integrated manner; hence the existence of Operation Sukuma Sakhe war rooms in various wards (KwaZulu-Natal 2015:8).

The benefit of having access to a forum of service providers like the Community Care Givers, as volunteers in the Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room, was acknowledged too. Operation Sukuma Sakhe means "stand up and build" and is a call for people of KwaZulu-

Natal to work together to overcome social issues that are destroying communities, such as poverty, unemployment, crime, substance abuse, HIV and tuberculosis. The vision of Operation Sukuma Sakhe is to provide integrated and transversal services to communities by establishing effective and efficient partnerships. In other words, all government departments and service providers plan and implement their services together using War Room processes to achieve specific goals and objectives, respond to identified needs and enhance services delivered in a harmonised manner to maximise their impact (KwaZulu-Natal 2015:10-11).

The origin of “Masikusume Sakhe”, the motto on the crest of the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal, is taken from the Bible, book of Nehemiah 2, verse 18, where Nehemiah yearns to rebuild a city that has been destroyed (Operation Sukuma Sakhe: stand up and build 2015). The KwaZulu-Natal province uses the Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room to bring government services to the communities where potential recipients reside and offer the services in a more coordinated manner to advance intersectoral service delivery.

The benefits of having the OSS War Room meetings within the Glebelands complex was noted by Zanele:

“... there is also an Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room that meets in our hall. It serves to help residents with their issues ... Although, they don't only focus on us in Glebelands CRU. They focus on the whole ward. It was difficult before because social workers used to say they were afraid to conduct visits here in Glebelands CRU. You know, sometimes when you go to them for assistance, they are required to do a home visit, but I think the Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room has helped a lot although one still gets social workers who are still afraid to do home visits. The volunteers of the ward are also involved in assisting different departments when they want to do interventions ... It's a government structure that sits in our hall with different government departments and organisations and gets reports from the ward volunteers about our problems, especially Department of Social Development, Department of Health and South African Social Security Services (SASSA) ... The community development worker of the ward stays here in Glebelands CRU and he is very active. The convener of the war room is in most cases at the hall as well, so you can know about it even if you visit the ward councillor's office as it is on the way.”

Thus residents get more easily assisted by government closer to their place of residence, with the OSS War Room being more conveniently accessible and accommodating all the relevant organisations under one roof.

Another participant, Duduzile, mentioned the benefit of having volunteers in Glebelands CRU because of the OSS War Room meetings in the Glebelands hall:

“There are community workers that work as volunteers for the War Room. They profile us and refer our cases to the relevant departments ... But I think they focus more on grants, people without identity documents challenges and health-related issues. I am not sure who they all report to ... but I have been part of the programmes that the different departments carried out together. They were on gender-based violence, social cohesion workshops, Diabetes Day and Sports Against Crime. Oh, they have nurses as well.”

These education programmes were positive measures to empower the residents of Glebelands CRU.

It can be concluded that residents at Glebelands CRU were able to access necessary services, and indicators of adequate housing (Paglione cited in Sobantu et al 2019:6). The central location of Glebelands CRU made it easier for residents to access other legal entitlements that were needed to improve their health and socioeconomic circumstances (Chenwi & McLean 2009:520). The consensus is that housing for vulnerable beneficiaries such as South African women, children and older persons affected by disadvantage, exploitation and violence must increase their access to services that will enable them to build peaceful, healthy and relaxed lives for themselves and their families (Paglione cited in Sobantu et al 2019:6).

Having access to transport was important for participants. During the apartheid era, the development sites were built in the greenfield areas remote from urban centres. Accordingly, transport costs were high and contributed to economic isolation of the poor (Jacobs 2011:50). Access to the services of the Department of Home Affairs, SASSA, Department of Social Development, health facilities, schools and retail outlets contributed positively to the lives of women living in Glebelands CRU. These resources are acknowledged to contribute to the health, empowerment and inclusion of women, mitigate social problems, enhance the educational achievement and increase the labour involvement of women and their children. According to scholarly opinion (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19; Sobantu et al 2019:4), these factors must be considered when providing housing to uplift people out of poverty. Having the OSS War Room meetings at Glebelands

exposed residents to integrated intersectoral services, and as attested by some participants, the services they received were better coordinated and reached them sooner.

However, some participants indicated that living in Glebelands CRU had not contributed positively to the quality of their lives as women. Their perspectives are presented next.

5.2.6.2 Sub-theme 6.2: Negative impacts

Housing legislation has been introduced by the post-apartheid government to improve the living conditions of previously disadvantaged groups, which applies in the case of this study to women and children (Ubisi 2013:29). Three participants were critical of the affordable subsidised rental housing stock that the government had provided for them at Glebelands CRU. These participants identified three respective needs of theirs that were overlooked: single women with children were excluded from the newly built family units; women living in Glebelands had nothing to be proud about; and the needs of older women residents were ignored. Each woman reflected on how the issue they raised undermined the quality of their life as a woman.

- Exclusion of single women with children from the family units

Lindelwa shared that not all the residents had benefited from the CRU Programme:

“Not all women were able to be part of the programme. There is a list that is being followed. There are still the old blocks that we live in, and the new family units that have been built don’t accommodate everyone. Some of us still stay in the old blocks, like myself ... The applications for the family units were done through the ward councillor’s office.”

According to Burger (2019b), several allegations were made that the allocation of family units at Glebelands CRU had not been open and transparent. Relatively affluent people “from other areas” were reported to have been allocated new family units, while residents living in the overcrowded rooms in the old blocks were overlooked.

It was clear that Lindelwa did not understand the housing allocation process that was meant to be followed by women who wished to apply for a family unit in Glebelands CRU. Women who should have been beneficiaries of the family unit housing were excluded from the planning consultations, and allegations about the lack of transparency and misunderstandings about who was entitled to benefit from the family units had fuelled residents’ allegations of corruption and of mismanagement amongst the government officials responsible for managing the applications. Subsequently those who needed housing allocation the most were unable to access it as expected (Lemanski and Levenson cited separately in Manomano 2018:2), despite national policies introduced by the

democratic government to promote and regulate the development of affordable housing for low-income citizens who had migrated to the cities (Sobantu & Nel 2019:284).

- Loss of pride suffered by women living in Glebelands CRU

For Duduzile, her disappointment was that as a women resident living in Glebelands CRU, she had nothing to be proud about: *“There is nothing to be proud of about being a woman resident of Glebelands CRU.”*

Under theme 4, Duduzile complained about sleeping arrangements by which unrelated residents of mixed genders had to sleep in the same room and about ongoing violence and block committees’ rules favouring male residents (Goffman cited in Keene & Padilla 2010:1216). Living conditions in CRUs are far from what the democratic government envisaged (Xulu 2012:2). Elder (in Xulu 2014:144) asserts that the transformation of hostels has not benefited occupants to the extent that they should have. The conversion of Glebelands CRU had not eased the overpopulation in the old blocks in Glebelands.

- Overlooking of the needs of older women residents

Qaqamba noted that the conversion of Glebelands CRU should have included housing demarcated for the elderly:

“I don’t think there is anything to be happy about especially for elderly women. There should be special places for elderly women within the units, as we also have our own needs because of our age. We should not be made to share with the young ones as their needs are different from ours.”

As mentioned by Ngcongco and Mtshali (2006:216), older women do not appreciate being housed with younger women because their needs are different. Older women may not be comfortable with loud music and multi-storey buildings because of walking difficulties, whilst young people may prefer loud music at certain times but do not mind multi-storey buildings. The existing housing had focused more on women accompanied by children and overlooked the housing needs of single older women (Darab & Hartman 2013:354).

The above storylines reflect the views of a minority of participants who failed to recognise any positive contribution that the conversion of Glebelands CRU had made to the lives of the women living there. Their complaints were that the family units that would have benefited woman-headed households were not available to them; the social milieu and living conditions of Glebelands CRU robbed women of their pride; and the housing needs of older women were unaddressed.

In conclusion

The right of women to housing continues to be a neglected and ill-defined component in human rights discussions (Hohmann cited in Sobantu et al 2019:2). The women had experienced few benefits, if any, from the Glebelands CRU conversion. This is supported by Xulu (2012:13), who found that women who participated in a KwaMashu CRU study did not know that the hostels they resided in were referred to as CRUs because the conversions that had been effected had not benefited them as outlined in the objectives of the CRU policy. The woman-headed households in Glebelands CRU had remained in the old, overcrowded blocks living with other families who shared their allocated units, which was not conducive for family living. The means test that determines who qualifies for family unit accommodation excludes most the single-parent families. Even though the participants did not live in the family units, the general sentiment was that those units offered more conducive living conditions for mothers and children who lived together; greater privacy between parents and children, and privacy between the families who lived in the family unit blocks; and, lastly, greater freedom because acts of violence and killings were not prevalent in the family units. Therefore, there is support for the development of more family units. Although participants did not experience the benefits of living in the family units, they recognised that several positive aspects of living in Glebelands CRU had benefited them as women. The women had shelter for themselves and their children. They did not have to worry about the cost of their accommodation. The low-rental stock they had access to was affordable, and they did not have to pay for services such as electricity and water. Several participants mentioned the supportive relationships that women living in Glebelands shared, which offered emotional support, fun and practical help. Their accommodation was centrally located, which meant that they did not have to spend money on transport and could access a range of services that were closely situated to the Glebelands CRU. The intersectoral, integrated OSS platform that was convened at Glebelands CRU regularly profiled residents to monitor their needs for services, appointed a community development worker, who offered valuable interventions, and provided a soup kitchen to ensure that indigent residents were adequately nourished; and residents could benefit from a range of awareness campaigns that empowered them to take charge of their health and social well-being. The women had developed their own social networks and had access to a network of services coordinated by the OSS War Room, which Chenwi and McLean (2009:541) emphasise are important networks of support for families.

The seventh theme that emerged from the findings is related to the strategies that women residents used to adapt to living in the Glebelands CRU.

5.2.7 Theme 7: Strategies women residents used to adapt to living in Glebelands CRU

Sub-themes:	7.1 Remaining submissive
	7.2 Avoiding getting involved in or discussing Glebelands CRU issues
	7.3 Abiding by the rules

It is normal for a person to become overwhelmed when a situation leaves them feeling vulnerable, oppressed, abused or manipulated by others more powerful than they (Gitterman & Germain 2008:2). The challenges participants encountered when they first moved into Glebelands CRU, their accounts of the challenges of the general living conditions in Glebelands CRU at the time of the study, and, more specifically, their perspectives on the challenges faced by women living in Glebelands CRU are detailed under themes 3, 4 and 5. The descriptions reflect the harsh living conditions the women were exposed to, one of these being the subordination of women.

Based on the theoretical framework and outline of the life model presented in sections 2.1 and 2.2, it was anticipated that some participants would have adapted to the living conditions in Glebelands CRU. The process of adaptation refers to the coping measures a person uses, such as cognitive, sensory-perceptual and behavioural processes, to improve their fit with the environment and enable them to continue functioning adequately (Littlefield 2003:3). The women were asked how they coped with the challenging situations they faced in living at Glebelands CRU. The research interest was to establish what strategies the women used to maintain their equilibrium. The responses of the women to this question are presented in terms of three sub-themes: remaining submissive; avoiding getting involved in or discussing Glebelands CRU issues; and abiding by the Glebelands CRU rules.

5.2.7.1 Sub-theme 7.1: Remaining submissive

As mentioned in section 5.1, one of the challenges the women had to cope with was that of surviving in a male-dominated environment where lack of attention to their needs and the subordination of women were the status quo. Whilst the women were entitled by law to benefit from the nation's housing and land reform initiatives, the patriarchal structure associated with old male hostels still prevailed in their subsidised low-rental accommodation (Jacobs 2011:51). Even though legal rights to gender equality outlined in section 3.1 were introduced to correct

discrimination against women, as observed in this study, they had not in and of themselves transformed these women's lives (Jacobs 2011:52). The Glebelands CRU Programme, according to the excerpts taken from the interviews, indicated that the measures introduced in housing to redress the power imbalance between men and women had failed. Men continued to dominate and control women with their presence as was the norm before the CRU conversion (Saugeres 2009:194).

The women adapted to the male-dominant order in Glebelands CRU by remaining submissive and not challenging the status quo of the patriarchal system that prevailed there. Several participants explained that they never questioned the directives they received from male residents or the men-only block committees, even when the directives contravened their rights. They did what they were instructed to do. Submission was a coping strategy they used to survive in their male-dominated environment.

Ayanda respected the requests of the block committee and complied with them: *"I respect the committee and if there is a need to pay for something as a contribution, I also contribute without questioning to avoid unnecessary noise or confrontation from them."*

Ayanda's compliance was thus to avoid "unnecessary noise" and "confrontation" within the CRU. Whilst Ayanda was not specific about what the payments were for and how much they had to pay, Zungu (2021) mentions that Glebelands CRU residents had been forced to pay protection fees of between R100 and R500 monthly, supposedly for someone to protect them through traditional rituals, *"intelezi"* (Asmal 2014; Ngubane 2019).

Later Ayanda added: *"It really helps [referring to being compliant], as questioning everything can make you unpopular."* Women avoided being negatively labelled and ostracised by obeying the instructions issued by men without question. This was a means for Ayanda to be accepted and respected as a woman who did not question male directives (Blokland 2008:42).

Another example of remaining submissive was presented by Duduzile: *"... I mind what I say and do."* Her motivation for being cautious was explained:

"Other people will tell you that the committee members don't like that one, and they moved them ... or the one that was moved had a misunderstanding with another person in the room and they [block committee members] favoured the person who was not moved ... I am okay not having an opinion, and I prefer it like that ... I prefer it that way. It gives me peace of mind."

Duduzile explained the benefits of being compliant in Glebelands CRU:

"It is better if you are not known to be a confrontational person with all that is happening here. It is also important to always be cautious here at Glebelands CRU and not talk to everyone anyhow about your feelings. In that way you will have peace in your life ... I have to consider my children as well in my decisions."

Dudzile was cautious about what she said or did, given the power of the block committees to lord it over women residents in Glebelands CRU (Asmal 2014; Thobejane cited in Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). She had to keep her opinions about hostel issues to herself, rather than offend those in power. The situation in Glebelands CRU was volatile and she had to be mindful of the needs of her family. The block committees, consisting only of men, controlled the property and resources that the women could access, a typical indicator of patriarchy (Sultana 2012:9).

The women, according to Dudzile, had from a cultural perspective been socialised as women to be submissive to those in power:

"We learn to be submissive. We believe it is the right thing to get information from our partners all the time ... and we become dependent on our partners for most things. We depend on our partners to make decisions outside of the hostel, such as family issues and other decisions that need to be taken in our day-to-day lives. We are guided by them when we encounter different situations."

The patriarchal values and norms perpetuated the exploitation of women in all facets of their lives (Thobejane cited in Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:2): their freedom over themselves, their property, their legal rights, the opportunities they were afforded, and their mobility (Sultana 2012:7). However, the women were not totally powerless. Dudzile demonstrated that she had some control over her life. She could avoid discord in Glebelands CRU and knew what to do to fit in (Littlefield 2003:5; Teater 2010:24). This enabled her to fulfil her own life purpose, to protect the well-being of her family. As pointed out by Boes and Van Wormer (1997:410), outward appearances suggest that women who submit to men have no resources, but when seen more closely they are discovered to have immeasurable strength, because they learn to survive in a world full of danger and to triumph in doing so despite their horrible surroundings and day-to-day realities.

A further strategy the participants identified that enabled them to survive in their challenging circumstances was to avoid any involvement in discussions or activities in Glebelands CRU. This is discussed next.

5.2.7.2 Sub-theme 7.2: Avoiding getting involved in or discussing Glebelands CRU issues

The connections or social ties a person develops with individuals, groups or a community is an important protective factor that serves their well-being (Motsabe, Diale & Van Zyl 2020:189). Social connections advance social inclusion. Social inclusion offers people several benefits: a sense of belonging; acceptance for who they are; community recognition of their role in their social context; active participation; opportunities to pursue activities aligned to their personal preferences; and supportive relationships (Inclusion NB [sa]). These conditions contribute to health and happiness. Participants' views of connecting with others in the CRU were in stark contrast. Several participants shared that to survive and protect themselves and their families in Glebelands CRU they kept to themselves and avoided engaging in activities or discussions with others in the CRU.

Lindelwa explained why she excluded herself from discussions and activities:

"The only thing that I have participated in was the gathering that was called by the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Premier in Glebelands Sports Grounds, where he said the conflicts and fights should end. But I haven't participated in any other thing within Glebelands CRU. I don't go to the hall unless I need to go to the ward councillor's office to get a letter when someone requests me to provide a proof of my residence. I don't desire to attend the meetings, even if I get to be told about them. I don't want to be associated with a certain rival group or faction ... I really hate the violence in Glebelands CRU because it is not helping anyone ... So, I avoid everything that I possibly can, at all costs!"

The same sentiment was shared by Mthobeli. She limited her interactions with others too, for the same reason:

"I stay in my room most of the time. I don't interact much with other people. As I said, I sleep most of the time to avoid getting into trouble for anything ... I don't want to be suspected of any wrongdoing."

Mthobeli offered her explanation why:

"I don't want to get involved in something today that I cannot deal with tomorrow. So, I don't get involved. I don't know what causes the violence, so! The less I know the better. I am known even in Glebelands CRU for staying in my room and keeping to myself and my children. It works for me that I don't dig, and I don't share. There is always the risk that information gets

distorted along the way, which puts me in danger if my words get twisted. Stay away from trouble at any cost. If it doesn't affect you, learn to stay away as much as possible."

The potential consequences of opening up to others clearly presented risks for participants. In most situations knowledge is power, but in the Glebelands CRU context residents suspected of having knowledge about the happenings in Glebelands CRU were at great risk. Mthobeli's resolve was to avoid being curious and asking questions because the information and the knowledge she accessed would put her and her children at risk.

Keeping to oneself was a common practice amongst the women in Glebelands CRU, as shared by Ulwazi:

"I don't like talking. I only go outside when I must wash our clothes and dishes. Most women prefer to stay indoors in Glebelands CRU to avoid trouble ... because even if you talk to another woman you don't know what she will tell you. In fact, most of us do like that. I only go outside when I know exactly where I am going and what I must do. Other than that, I stay in my room."

Trust was an issue for many of the women. Olwethu shared:

"There is great lack of trust amongst us. I cannot talk freely as I am doing with you. One must choose carefully what you say to people around you at Glebelands CRU. I don't know if someone might find out and see to it that I get killed. Maybe you talk to the person who is very much aware about what is going on and what the causes of violence are, yet they will say they don't know. We all say we don't know. I just don't say anything, to be safe, even if I suspect that a person is somehow connected to what happened. As a person I may have my own suspicions, but I also pretend not to know and do not understand anything about what happens here."

Feigning ignorance was a coping strategy because it protected the women from being targeted.

Fear of suffering reprisals for speaking to others about the happenings in Glebelands CRU was something that bothered Zanele too. She said that, in general, women who were questioned about Glebelands CRU would deny that they had any knowledge of what was happening, to avoid being implicated in the ongoing conflicts and violence in the CRU: *"We just pretend we don't know, like everybody else so as to be safe."*

After sharing this, Zanele confessed that she even lied to the children she was with to shield them from the truth about the ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU:

"We persevere when the worst things happen in Glebelands CRU. I even lie to the younger children and say it is cricket that they hear all the time. It's not easy to lie to grownups. You witness something, and as a woman you choose to keep quiet for your own safety. Women are not at all safe with the violence-related activities. Yet they pretend, including myself, as if everything is fine. The reality is that it is tense in Glebelands CRU and the environment is not healthy, but I do need cheap accommodation, hence I am still staying there."

The women kept their knowledge and experiences of the ongoing violence to themselves, preferring not to know what was happening, and went about their daily activities, avoiding discussions with others to protect themselves and their children. Zanele had developed a new behaviour, lying, which was atypical of her, just to protect the children. Zanele depended on this accommodation because it was the only accommodation that she could afford.

The women avoided any form of disclosure about the violence, even when they suffered negative effects, and they made it clear that they would not even talk with a professional counsellor about their experiences. For Mthobeli, it was very difficult even to share her experiences with a social worker: *"... I don't think I need social workers. I am not a person who is comfortable to share my private life with a lot of people."*

Lindelwa explained that in African culture one tends to keep one's personal matters and experiences to oneself and that she did not believe in opening up to a counsellor:

"Maybe it is because most of us, as Africans, we don't believe in those things and how they assist ... maybe we will change one day. I don't think I'm the only one with that view, even if the service is for free, that is not what we strongly believe we need in our situation."

Gitterman and Germain (1976:602) indicate that coping measures emerge when a person weighs up their environmental demands and their personal capabilities.

One participant disagreed with the others. Duduzile indicated that her coping strategy was to chat to people whom she could trust. In her case these were the men she shared her unit with:

"At times I talk with the men that I share the unit with and ask them for assistance. I have seen that at times it's better if it's man to man rather than man to a woman, but in our unit we live as one family, so we talk about issues freely and that helps a lot."

A person's living experiences and interactions with significant others is important (Payne 2014:190). Bronfenbrenner (cited in Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5) affirms the importance of relationships that people have at the micro and meso levels of the ecological system, because these have the biggest impact on a person's life. Transactions at these two levels are direct

and offer support to the individual. These “others” facilitate an individual’s adjustment to stress if the bonds between them are good (Congress 2013:129). When people share their secrets with someone they trust, they gain several benefits: they receive support, and the intrusive thoughts related to the secret are significantly reduced, which relieves their psychological stress (Slepian & Moulton-Tetlock 2019:472). The benefits of receiving social support include: emotional support that is comforting for the person and leaves them feeling loved, respected and/or cared for by others; instrumental/material support such as goods and services that enable the person to overcome practical problems; and informational/cognitive support that offers the person information they need in order to cope with their current challenges, understand the crisis, and adjust (Sippel, Pietrzak, Charney, Mayes & Southwick 2015:10-11). All of these contribute to the person’s well-being (Slepian & Moulton-Tetlock 2019:472).

Dudzile shared that she was selective about whom she spoke to on the issues that worried her. She explained that when one shared a living space it was difficult to completely avoid speaking about things that happened where one stayed:

“We cannot pretend that things are not happening here, so talking about it is important. Talking amongst ourselves helps them [the children] to also understand that they can’t talk anything, anyhow to everyone, young as they are. I also have a belief that talking lessens the shock and trauma. We have never been exposed to [counselling] ... I don’t think that it is right to discuss Glebelands CRU issues with a lot of people.

There is evidence that when people who survive traumatic situations connect with others, they benefit from one another’s coping strategies, and their individual resilience is strengthened (Sippel et al 2015:13). However, in the Glebelands CRU context, social sharing of any kind was associated with risk (Slepian & Moulton-Tetlock 2019:477). Given the frequency and severity of the violent outbreaks, participants restricted their associations with others and kept to themselves. The women did not want to be associated with others who, unbeknown to them, could be partisan in the conflict in Glebelands CRU. Accordingly, their social connections were limited. The participants chose to “live their lives with curtains closed” and kept to themselves so that they were not associated with others involved in the wrongdoings in Glebelands CRU (Blokland 2008:42). By socially excluding themselves, they managed the stress of the ongoing conflict and violence, something they could not change, which allowed them to complete their daily routines (Littlefield 2003:3). It is suggested that one of the coping strategies that feminist women use in response to discrimination is disengagement (Watson, Flores, Grotewiel, Brownfield, Aslan & Farrell 2018:291). The description given by the women was that they had

chosen to disengage from others in Glebelands CRU. Only one participant relied on her roommates to offer her social support in the absence of a family.

The last sub-theme that was mentioned as a coping strategy was remaining compliant with the Glebelands CRU rules, which is discussed next.

5.2.7.3 Sub-theme 7.3: Abiding by the rules

A person is largely defined by the physical and social settings they find themselves in (Germain & Gitterman 2008:7). All physical and social settings create a range of stressors for the person that if not properly managed can negatively affect their well-being. The Life Model of Social Work Practice supposes that people have inherent strengths to manage those stressors and naturally do so to preserve their well-being (Gray et al 2018:52; Schenk et al 2015:96). A strategy the women used to survive the authoritarian Glebelands CRU context was to abide by the rules without question or confrontation of those who held the power, the block committees. Several excerpts illustrate the women's resolve to conform and comply with Glebelands CRU rules and regulations, even when the rules were harsh and unfair.

Ayanda shared that even when she did not agree with the rules, she complied:

"I listen and abide by the rules even if I don't agree. Women are forced to keep their children indoors as they are schooling. The rules are tough, and the children are fully aware that they are not welcome here ... I am not happy about this but that is the life we are living here in Glebelands CRU. When my children come back from school they don't play outside, they sit inside the unit and confine themselves to the room itself and watch TV or go to their friends in the other blocks."

The CRUs were meant to increase the access of women and children to adequate housing in the form of affordable subsidised rental stock (Department of Human Settlements 2006; Ubisi 2013:29). Ayanda was disturbed that children were not welcome in the block where she lived because the block committee in her block had rules to regulate children's behaviour that were contrary to the well-being of children. Children's right to play in the open spaces of her block was denied (South Africa 1996a: section 21(2)). Ayanda also pointed out that this rule was inconsistent with the other Glebelands CRU block rules.

The men's intolerance of children staying in Glebelands CRU dates to 1960, before legislation and policy amendments were introduced to permit women and children to live in the hostels (implementation of the eThekweni Municipality Hostels Policy in 1998), originally built for men. Children were restricted to staying in the room or unit to make sure that they did not disturb the

male migrant workers, who were intolerant of their inclusion in the hostels and complained about their disruptive behaviour (Saugeres 2009:204). Women living in Glebelands CRU complained that their units had been broken into and their children physically assaulted and verbally threatened because male residents resented children living in the public housing that had been intended for them (Saugeres 2009:204).

Some of the Glebelands CRU block rules made the living spaces intolerable for children. Burger's 2019 investigation of Glebelands CRU (2019c:14) notes that the scholastic performance of the children living in Glebelands CRU was negatively affected by the lack of suitable spaces where they could study and by the noise of the uncooperative residents (usually men), which affected their concentration and made it difficult for them to do their homework. Furthermore, they had no suitable places in which to play close to their units, they were stressed by the frequent episodes of violence, and they feared for the lives of their parents (Burger 2019c:14).

Women, too, were expected to comply with the rules in Glebelands CRU. Lindelwa stated that it was best to adapt to the rules to foster peace: *"The only way ... is to follow the rules and adapt to the situation to have peace. There is nothing else ... I have told my mind that it is simple because I want peace."*

Nandipha also confirmed that she willingly complied with the rules: *"I comply with the rules that are set in my block. I also know that as long as I'm still a resident of block__, I have to just obey."*

Lindelwa, Ayanda and Nandipha both appraised the situation and decided that the outcome they wanted most was to avoid trouble. They conformed, even when they disagreed with the rules. The strategy was successful because by conforming they did not suffer comebacks from the block committees. This peaceful outcome was so worthwhile to Nandipha that she was not resentful about having to comply.

Nandipha later added her third coping strategy, which was to never give up on hope. Her hope was that her applications for better housing in Glebelands CRU would eventually be successful:

"I realise there are things that I will not get but I still go to the councillor's office to try my luck, anyway. When there are lists to be submitted I give my name as well, as much as I know very well that chances of being considered are nil."

The house rules differed from block to block. Some blocks accepted children and others did not. To maintain peace, the women obeyed their block's rules, despite the inconsistency in

Glebelands CRU. The storylines do not state explicitly whether the women's compliance was associated with their subordinate position as women in the Glebelands CRU. They confirmed that they, as women, had no power to represent the needs of their children. The women resigned themselves to obeying the rules for several reasons. Firstly, their compliance meant that they and their children would be treated well and not be abused. Secondly, the cultural ideologies regarding the subservience of women that they had internalised had prepared them to accept their lesser position as women, their exclusion from decision-making processes in block committees, and the roles and responsibilities they were expected to fulfil in Glebelands CRU. Their compliance is consistent with the compliance of women in patriarchal religions (Leamaster & Bautista 2018).

This concludes the participants' descriptions of the coping strategies they used in order to survive living in Glebelands CRU.

In conclusion

To maintain peace the women remained submissive and excluded themselves from discussions and activities in Glebelands CRU. They did not want to be targeted as troublemakers or as uncooperative residents. They were willing to forfeit social support for personal safety. They feared that any social interactions they engaged in could be misconstrued and lead to their being linked with those associated with the violence in Glebelands CRU. In a volatile climate such as theirs, anyone stood the risk of having their words or intentions twisted by others. It was difficult for the women to know whom to trust, so the only way to for them to be recognised as neutral in the Glebelands' conflict was to confine themselves to their units and to leave them only to complete necessary household chores and errands. People develop distinct behaviours to manage their stressful life situations (Germain & Gittermain 1995:819). The coping measures the women developed meant that they remained submissive to men and the block committees, avoided discussions and activities with others, and unquestioningly obeyed the rules in Glebelands CRU. These three coping strategies were regarded as the best options open to them. Failure to submit meant that they were at risk of being killed or of losing the only roof they had for themselves and their children, and that they could be harassed and ostracised by other residents. The storylines reflect that they had developed insight about the environmental demands made of women living in the Glebelands CRU, and that they used this insight to adapt in the best way possible so that their lives would be bearable (Germain & Gitterman 1976:602; Teater 2010:24). Their adaptations allowed them to go about their daily routines and to work towards their primary goal, which was to take care

of their families (Littlefield 2003:3). Their submissiveness in order to maintain long-term security in their lives is consistent with the observations of Kawarazuka, Locke and Seeley (2019:384) on women's strategic agency in situations dominated by patriarchy. This coping strategy to secure their accommodation and security indicated their personal agency rather than mere compliance with traditional gender norms (Kawarazuka et al 2019:387).

The last theme for discussion is the recommendations for improving the lives of women living in the Glebelands CRU.

5.2.8 Theme 8: Recommendations for improving the lives of women living in Glebelands CRU

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Sub-themes: | 8.1 Providing family unit accommodation for woman-headed households |
| | 8.2 Resolving the issues of governance |
| | 8.3 Addressing the violence |
| | 8.4 Addressing unemployment of women |
| | 8.5 Increasing the representation of women in CRU issues |

Rapoport (cited in Tomah et al 2016:1) posits that having a home offers more than just a shelter. A home satisfies a person's needs – such as for privacy, identity, social identity, family boundaries, intimacy, a sense of belonging, and connections within a larger community – and it determines their social status (Gonyea & Melekis 2018:46; Tomah et al 2016:1). Despite national efforts to incorporate gender concerns and ensure women's participation in housing delivery in South Africa (Chenwi & McLean 2009:517), the preceding themes discussed have outlined challenges the participants experienced with regard to living in Glebelands CRU and the coping strategies they adopted to enable them to adjust or adapt to the challenges.

The final question the participants were asked was: "What recommendations do you have for improving the lives of women living at Glebelands CRU?" Their responses are presented in respect of five sub-themes: providing family unit accommodation for woman-headed households; resolving the issues of governance; addressing the violence; addressing unemployment of women; and increasing the representation of women in Glebelands CRU issues.

The discussion commences with the women's recommendation that woman-headed households should be provided with more family unit accommodation.

5.2.8.1 Sub-theme 8.1: Providing family unit accommodation for woman-headed households

Determining what constitutes overcrowding is challenging because there are no universal academic indicators of how overcrowding must be measured (SJ Newman 2008:903; Ramalhete, Farias & Pinto 2018:1203). However, the hazardous consequences of people living in overcrowded housing appear to be well researched. Housing that is too small and fails to provide usable living spaces for all its inhabitants leads to a range of poor health outcomes that undermine people's well-being. These include: acute respiratory infections; diarrhoeal diseases; poor ventilation, which hastens disease transmission among residents; noise exposure; and a lack of privacy that leads to psychological stress (SJ Newman 2008:903; Nkosi, Haman, Naicker & Mathee 2019:1). Black African women, because of their poor socio-economic status, have for decades struggled to access adequate housing for themselves and their extended families (Nkosi et al 2019:1). The CRU policy framework (Department of Human Settlements 2006:5) caters for woman-headed households in terms of its fifth objective, "Provide rental accommodation for lower income groups not viably serviced by the social or other housing programmes", and its third principle, "Ensure equity as far as possible through the application, implementation and management of the programme"; however, these have been brushed aside in Glebelands CRU. Based on the storylines shared by the women, it appears that the woman-headed families did not qualify for family unit accommodation. Instead, they were expected to continue living in the single units, with their children, sharing the functional spaces with non-relatives. The single units were not designed to accommodate families, let alone those headed by women.

Most participants recommended that more family units be built to overcome the overcrowded living spaces they were subjected to and offer a solution to the problematic housing conditions experienced by single mothers and their children living in Glebelands CRU. This solution, in their opinion, would ease much of the tension experienced by women living in Glebelands CRU.

Ayanda explained why the family units were better suited to single-parent households:

"The government must give us family units, even if it means we have to pay for them. This will improve our living conditions because a mother and her children will have more space and won't be made to share with other families. This will avoid the overcrowding and sharing of spaces as we are doing now."

Participants such as Ayanda were willing to pay more rental for such accommodation because the benefits of living in a more spacious family unit that offered families more privacy outweighed the extra cost.

According to Qaqamba, much tension in Glebelands CRU was associated with women being expected to share with many other residents the limited functional spaces in their blocks, such as bathrooms, toilets and kitchens. Qaqamba concluded that the number of family units in Glebelands CRU needed to be increased:

“If the family units can be extended so more families can live in them, more people will be at peace. Sharing a unit is not always nice, as people might have their own different personalities ... The conflict in the units is caused by minor things, like sharing the kitchen sink. Some people are just not tolerant of others.”

Mthobeli’s ideal wish was to be allocated an RDP house because she did not believe it was appropriate to raise children in the Glebelands CRU. She recommended that women with children who did not qualify for RDP housing should be accommodated in family units:

“I would request the government to build an RDP house outside of Glebelands CRU because it is not right to raise children in a hostel. If the government cannot help me with that, I would prefer to stay in the family units because it’s better there as the resources like bathroom, toilet and kitchen are not shared with other people, except for your family or relatives.”

Mthobeli’s storyline supported the view of the others that single-parent households should be allocated family unit accommodation, because those households, like intact families, needed functional spaces for themselves, such as bathrooms, toilets and kitchen areas. Many South African women living in poor socio-economic situations are the heads of their families, earning even less than male South Africans if they happen to become employed (Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa 2021:17).

Duduzile recommended that if the province and municipality were not able to build more family units, they should remodel the existing Glebelands CRU blocks to deliver more family units for women with children. Failing that, Duduzile suggested that single women living with their children should be allocated more than one room in the Glebelands CRU blocks where they lived:

“If they can’t build more family units then they should change our rooms into family units. And if they can’t do that, then, when a person has lots of children living with her, she should be allowed to have more than one room. This would be better for us.”

Finally, Zanele agreed that the family units were more conducive to family life. She anticipated that those who lived in a family unit would experience less stress and conflict than those living in the units intended for single people:

"I believe that if there can be more family units that are built, the situation can be better from what it is now. In the family units, we can enjoy family life more and enjoy staying with our families peacefully."

Many families are headed by single parents, whether a man or a woman, although the most common woman-headed households in South Africa are skip-generation families in which children are cared for by a grandparent (Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa 2021:7). The prevailing housing practices in Glebelands CRU did not appear to take cognisance of this reality. According to Ooms (cited in Revised White Paper on Families 2021:7), the important responsibilities that family life should fulfil are: the provision of family members' financial needs; child rearing and socialisation of the next generation; caregiving through providing emotional, mental, spiritual and physical care for all family members, particularly children, older people, those who are ill and those with severe disabilities; and the instilling of values.

The general sentiment was that single women whose children lived with them needed extra space to meet their family's needs, not just extra sleeping places but also functional spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and toilets that they could use. Being allocated a family unit would strengthen their families and reduce tension amongst the Glebelands CRU residents. The Glebelands CRU programme had failed to upgrade the housing options for single women and their children. According to Ramalheté et al (2018:1203), when housing solutions are sought, financial considerations mostly outweigh long-term housing solutions. The single women believed they were excluded from the family unit accommodation for two reasons: their low monthly incomes; and corruption amongst those who assumed responsibility for the allocation of bed spaces (Oliphant & Naidoo 2017). The demand exceeded the supply, and the family units were seized and inhabited by single hostel residents before they were allocated to families (Thani et al 2018:674). The participants perceived the allocation of family units in Glebelands CRU to be unfair and corrupt. The people suspected of being responsible for the Glebelands CRU violence and revenge killings were alleged to be the same people who oversaw the space allocations, not the eThekweni Municipality, as outlined in section 3.5 (Ntuli 2017; Thani et al 2018:674). KwaZulu-Natal province initially administered the converted Glebelands Hostel and

handed the responsibility for allocating housing to eThekweni Municipality in the late 1990s (Burger 2019a).

The housing needs of low-income single-headed families were not addressed by the Glebelands CRU project. Failure to address the needs of households headed by single women is not unique to Glebelands CRU. Luhanga (2020) discusses the hostels in the Wolwerivier area, where the growing woman-headed families, in some cases three-generation families, are housed in one-room units. When their complaints about overcrowding were ignored, they resorted to land invasions (Luhanga 2020). The women had shelter and a place to live, but their living conditions did not enable them to elevate themselves out of poverty (Ramalhete et al 2018:1203). The lack of social transformation in housing remains a factor that keeps women and their children trapped in unfavourable living conditions (Kubheka 2021).

Kubheka (2021) maintains that real social and economic transformation backed by sound governance is the best means to free Glebelands CRU residents from the cycle of generational violence caused by limited shared resources. People might have a shelter and a place to live, but they need more supportive societal conditions in order to develop and to leave poverty behind.

The next sub-theme for discussion addresses the participants' recommendation for the improved governance of Glebelands CRU.

5.2.8.2 Sub-theme 8.2: Resolving the issues of governance

Prinsloo (2013:3) defines governance as the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. Several factors constitute good governance, such as accountability, transparency, the rule of law, responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness, equity, control of corruption, ethical practices, a consensus orientation and a strategic vision (Prinsloo 2013:8-12), which contribute positively to adequate housing. Poor governance leads to inadequate housing (UN-Habitat cited in Maratlulle 2021:3). Good governance of housing is therefore very important, and the coordination and management of the conventions and power dynamics between the formal and informal role-player must be well coordinated and managed (Scheba & Turok 2021:7). The participation of the beneficiaries of housing must be included in housing development and decision-making about housing governance, and their feedback about the housing services they receive must be taken seriously (Prinsloo 2013:12). Adequate housing is imperative for advancing equity in South Africa, and so good governance is crucial.

The participants suggested that the governance of Glebelands CRU was seriously lacking. The problems they wanted to see addressed included resolving the conflict about who oversaw the allocation of bed spaces – the superintendent and ward councillor or the self-appointed block committees? This problem warranted the intervention of national, provincial and local governments.

Nandipha suggested that the municipality had failed the residents of Glebelands CRU by not clarifying what the roles of the superintendent, ward councillor and block committees were. This resulted in frequent clashes between the councillor and the block committees and in the unfairness with which some residents were treated:

“The conflict between the councillor and block committees has a negative impact on us as residents, especially women. If they could sort their problems so that all residents are treated equally. I am told that government once stopped the block committees, hence the continuing fights between the two. You see, there are two centres of power within one place. Government needs to find a way to end the conflict between these two structures as Glebelands CRU belongs to government and we are suffering as the residents in the process of this cold conflict.”

Nandipha’s suggestion was that the national government had to be involved in settling the battle for power between the councillor and block committees so that peace in Glebelands CRU would be restored.

According to Lindelwa, the block committees undermined the authority and roles of the Glebelands CRU superintendent and interfered when legal residents attempted to pay their rentals at the superintendent’s office, and the eThekweni Municipality needed to intervene:

“The eThekweni Human Settlements department needs to attend to the issue of block committees. Those with bills should be allowed to liaise directly with the superintendent’s office for anything that she needs without the interference of another person, as the landlord is the municipality. I am referring to us with block committees in our blocks.”

Some participants, such as Qaqamba, accused the municipality of failing in its duty as the official landlord by failing to resolve the issue of governance: *“The municipality, as the landlord, is too relaxed. It’s like the authorities don’t care at all.”*

In conclusion, participants indicated that the governance issue of Glebelands CRU had to be resolved to improve the lives of the residents. Lack of clarity about the roles that the municipality (superintendent and councillor) and block committees were meant to play in the governance of Glebelands CRU had created confusion, conflict and breakdown of law and order in Glebelands

CRU (Burger 2019c:2; De Haas 2016:43). The sentiment was that if the issue were not resolved at local government level, the national government should intervene to settle the battle for power in Glebelands CRU between the councillor, superintendent and block committees once and for all. The self-appointed block committees ignored the implementation of the eThekweni Hostels Policy in 1998 by which authority for bed allocation was denied to them and assigned instead to councillors. The block committees continued to take control of rentals and bed allocations, and generally it was felt that this resulted in the ongoing corruption and violence as reported by Burger (2019c:8). The lack of intervention to resolve the matter gave residents the clear message that the eThekweni Municipality failed to take the needs of Glebelands CRU residents more seriously (Burger 2019c:8). When hostel maintenance collapses, hostels become poorly managed, and then criminal activity is overlooked and overcrowding and chaos co-occur (Fenyane 2016:11; Singh 2018). The Public Protector had been tasked to investigate the violence and corruption in Glebelands CRU in 2016, as discussed in section 3.5. The findings of the investigation were that the eThekweni Municipality had failed to safeguard the well-being of the Glebelands CRU community as mandated in section 152(1)(b) of the Constitution and section 4(2)(d) of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 (Oliphant & Naidoo 2017). The corrective actions stipulated by the Public Protector were not adequately fulfilled, particularly regularisation of residents and remedying of the dysfunctional billing system. Despite the allocation of a vast budget, estimated at R17 million, to renovate Glebelands CRU and improve the safety of residents, it is alleged that the expensive perimeter fence erected was an unjustified priority in view of other pressing needs (Burger 2019a). The recommendations for remedial efforts have not been adequately implemented.

A further recommendation made by participants was for authorities to take more seriously the violence happening in Glebelands CRU. This is discussed next.

5.2.8.3 Sub-theme 8.3: Addressing the violence

A strong correlation exists between violence and place. Violence is most prominent in structurally disadvantaged spaces where high unemployment, economic distress and increased social isolation intersect (Love 2021). The violence as presented by participants confirmed that the problem was deeply rooted. The history of violence in Glebelands CRU is presented in section 3.5 of this study. In summary, a criminal element who were resident in Glebelands CRU had been associated with the ongoing violence in the CRU and used the Glebelands CRU as a base from which they conducted their operations. This group were suspected of involvement in the intergroup conflicts in KwaZulu-Natal that led to a presidential

task team being appointed in 1996 to solve the violence in Glebelands CRU, as indicated in the National Crime Prevention Strategy (South Africa 1996b: section 5). Unfortunately, the violence has continued, with only a few brief periods when it has abated.

Remedial actions that were implemented in response to the Public Protector's findings failed to combat the violence. These actions included the installation of CCTV cameras (Silekwa 2019), the erection of perimeter fencing, and the introduction of a biometric access control system. Like Burger (2019c:10; 2019a), participants were not convinced that the local, provincial and national governments were truly committed to resolving the violence problem.

The National Crime Prevention Strategy (South Africa 1996b: section 8.2) states that provincial government has a key role to play in both in the development of provincial strategies and the organisation of multi-agency and citizen resources to implement crime prevention initiatives.

There was consensus amongst the participants that the violence in Glebelands CRU had to be addressed to improve the lives of women living there. The solutions proposed by the participants for quelling the violence included: revisiting the security measures that had been installed, such as the perimeter fence and CCTV cameras; adopting a more consultative approach in addressing violence to include the residents' perspectives and proposals on how it should be resolved; and taking a more holistic approach to tackling the violence by concentrating on the socio-structural and contextual challenges the residents faced, such as unemployment and overcrowding in Glebelands CRU.

Participants suggested that the measures the eThekweni Municipality had implemented to reduce violence in Glebelands CRU had failed. Zanele suggested that residents should be consulted about what solutions were needed to resolve the violence in the CRU:

"The green fence for the whole of Glebelands CRU was a total waste of money on the part of government. Instead of spending money on the fence, they should have spent it on extending the family units. That would have made sense! How does the fencing assist the residents? Whoever recommended it didn't prioritise what residents of Glebelands CRU need."

Zanele continued:

"People of Glebelands CRU don't need the fence but they want to live freely and not be intimidated by violence and an unstable environment. The money was also wasted on the CCTV cameras. There are deaths that continue to happen, even with the CCTVs there. I don't even think they are working. People are fighting over the limited resources of beds, hence the

violence, but government is prioritising other things. Government is not addressing the causes of the killings, yet they are known to everyone living here.”

The storyline offers two insights: the first is that residents were never consulted about the causes of the violence or the solutions that were needed to address it; the second insight is the notion made by several scholars that since overcrowding and chaos co-occur, the overcrowding needed to be resolved (Fenyane 2016:11; Singh 2018). The shortage of bed spaces (overcrowding) had significantly contributed to the killings in Glebelands CRU (Burger 2019c:10).

An excerpt from Qaqamba's interview highlights the eThekweni Municipality's passivity in attending to the violence, which targeted both men and women living in Glebelands CRU:

“The office of the superintendent is aware about the violence, but they can't do anything. The municipality, as the landlord, is too relaxed. It's like the authorities don't care at all. Everybody is being murdered here. It's not like the killings are targeting men only; even women are being killed. People are unemployed and they have a lot of time at their hands to plan and do crazy things. Maybe securing of jobs can be a solution as well.”

The insight offered by Qaqamba was that in the absence of gainful employment, the idleness experienced by some residents had led them to behave badly and commit acts of violence. She therefore proposed that the high rate of unemployment amongst residents needed to be managed. This accords with the perspective of Kubheka (2021) that vulnerable people need more than a place to live, they need opportunities to develop and uplift themselves from poverty. The high level of unemployment in Glebelands CRU was a significant socio-structural factor that created fertile ground for criminal activity to thrive in the CRU (Burger 2019c:5). In summary, the participants' recommendations for quelling the violence in Glebelands CRU included revisiting the remedial actions the eThekweni Municipality had implemented, such as the perimeter fence and CCTV cameras, and adopting a more consultative process to combat the violence and its underlying causes, such as the overcrowding and unemployment. More opportunities were needed for residents to uplift their socio-economic status, and one way of doing that was to increase their access to employment opportunities. Harrison and Rosa (2017:10) assert that community members are important in the process of upgrading housing because their experiences are needed to guide and influence the process. Participation and ownership are key processes for increasing the social inclusion of vulnerable people (Madzivhandila & Asha 2012:370). Burger (2019c:16) endorses the claim that security measures introduced by the eThekweni Municipality had failed. The installed CCTV cameras

seldom worked, and when they did they invaded the privacy of residents who were not involved in the violence.

Increasing safety and preventing violence are key interventions required to transform housing in South Africa (Harrison & Rosa 2017:5). The National Development Plan (NDP) acknowledges that safety and security are directly linked to socio-economic development and the advancement of equality amongst all persons in South Africa, and rely on job creation (Harrison & Rosa 2017:15).

The next sub-theme that is discussed reflects participants' perspectives on the creation of employment opportunities for women living in Glebelands CRU.

5.2.8.4 Sub-theme 8.4: Addressing unemployment of women

Creating jobs and reducing unemployment are key interventions needed to combat social challenges in South Africa (Leibbrandt, Woolard, McEwen & Koep [sa]:4), especially for women. As stated by Bezuidenhout (2017:340), single women who are unemployed or earn a small salary and are responsible for children and other family members who live with them commonly live in poverty. Black women receive lower incomes and experience less job security than men, which compounds their hardships (Chenwi & McLean 2009:530).

The importance of addressing the unemployment of hostel residents was seriously contemplated at the outset of the CRU conversions. One of the anticipated bonuses of converting the hostels into CRUs was that the conversions would create employment opportunities for unskilled and unemployed hostel residents. In the United States it has been estimated that for every 100 family units built for people with lower incomes, 30 long-term jobs would be created (Wardrip, Williams & Hague 2011:5).

Most participants in the study were unemployed and were acutely aware of the hardships they suffered as a result. Their storylines indicate that as women they had not benefited from the expected job creation. Sexism and nepotism blocked them from the opportunities they needed. Accordingly, they recommended that work opportunities linked to the Glebelands CRU should be reserved for its residents, especially women.

Olwethu reasoned that expanding the Glebelands CRU programme and building more family units could benefit women, provided men were not given preference when the positions were filled: *“Our women can be given more job opportunities if they build more family units here. This will definitely improve the lives of women.”*

Duduzile supported Olwethu's recommendation. She felt strongly that employment opportunities created through the CRU developments should include women and not just male residents:

"Women should also benefit from the projects that are brought to the CRU, e.g. Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), road renovations and grass cutting. These projects are dominated by men."

Duduzile stressed that people living in other areas should not be appointed in employment opportunities created by the EPWP when unemployed women living in the Glebelands CRU had the relevant skills for those positions:

"The majority of women living here are unemployed, and yet they use people from other areas to provide services, areas such as Illovu and Clermont. Those are the ones I know about. When the CRU started, women were trained in a lot of skills, but when the vacancies were announced, the women were not prioritised ... My training was in Community Care Giving (CCG). Some of the vacancies here were for the cleaners, but not all the cleaners employed here are residents of Glebelands CRU ... This has not been raised openly, because no-one wants to be targeted."

Recruitment processes were not open and transparent, according to Sindisiwe:

"I see people working here, but I don't know how they get the jobs. Some are from within the hostel and others are from outside. Some of the outsiders even work here in Glebelands CRU as cleaners!"

Her storyline intimates that it was unjust to appoint cleaners from outside to fill the positions as Glebelands CRU cleaners, because the unemployed women living in Glebelands CRU were capable of doing that job.

Mthobeli, too, held that the appointments within job development projects in Glebelands CRU were unfair:

"The development projects benefit certain individuals. We don't all benefit. You get the same people who always benefit from the projects in Glebelands CRU, be it ... for cleaning the roads, sweeping of pavement, cutting the grass, collecting refuse, all the EPWP. I always give my name to the councillor's office, but I don't get to be part of the projects. It's been nine years since I have been given something. Even then I got that job because the lady who was at the councillor's office knew me. Other than that, there is nothing that I have benefited from."

The job allocations in Glebelands CRU were unfair because of nepotism, according to Nandipha. She recommended that fairness and objectivity needed to prevail when people were appointed to the development jobs created within Glebelands CRU: *“... equal job opportunities for all of us irrespective of the block you reside in. I would like to see myself and other women in all the blocks receiving the same treatment.”*

Employment opportunities are important for single mothers and their children. Having a source of income ensures that their basic needs are met. Whilst the development projects were intended to create work opportunities for and to skill the residents of the Glebelands CRU to uplift their economic status, the women residents were sidelined. Alleged nepotism within Glebelands CRU determined who was selected for the jobs available. Burger (2019b) confirms that only the ward councillor’s supporters were selected for the Makhathini Projects to repair the damages that affected the Glebelands CRU after the October 2018 storms. The long-term unemployment experienced by the Glebelands CRU women because of such prejudice within the CRU projects made it difficult for them to be self-supporting (Gousia, Baranowska-Rataj, Middleton & Nizalova 2020:168).

The last of the participants’ recommendations to be discussed is the need to for women to be better represented in Glebelands CRU issues.

5.2.8.5 Sub-theme 8.5: Increasing the representation of women in Glebelands CRU issues

Consultation is one of the key Batho Pele principles and fosters effective and efficient service delivery in communities (Department of Public Service and Administration 1997). The involvement of potential and actual housing beneficiaries is important as they are the most knowledgeable about their situation and their needs (Ubisi 2013:61). The inclusion and representation of housing beneficiaries in housing consultations creates opportunities for beneficiaries to express the uncertainties they have as well as their housing needs, which guides housing developers (Kabajuni cited in Ncube 2017:7). Additionally, involvement and participation are vital processes for promoting the social inclusion of disadvantaged individuals, such as the Glebelands CRU women (Madzivhandila & Asha 2012:370). The women living in Glebelands CRU found themselves in a male-dominated environment where their representation in Glebelands CRU issues was lacking, as reflected in the storylines that follow.

Ayanda recommended that a women’s committee be established to ensure that the women’s opinions would be represented in Glebelands CRU: *“Women need to have their own committee as well so that they will report to people who will understand their needs well as women.”*

Mthobeli recommended that block committees be inclusive of both genders: *“Block committees should incorporate women in their structures as they are also residents in Glebelands CRU.”*

Ulwazi suggested having separate blocks for different genders:

“... the women are not safe in this ongoing violence. I would also prefer for women to have their own block and for men to have their own block as well. It is not right to be mixed in the same unit with men.”

The above storylines emphasise the importance of women’s inclusion in decisions about housing that affect them in Glebelands CRU.

According to the Housing White Paper (South Africa 1994a), housing strategies must regularly evaluate and support the role of women in the housing delivery process (Fenyane 2016:89). Unfortunately, the under-representation of women residents in CRUs is not uncommon. Pule (2016) reports that women were not represented in the CRU consultations in Limpopo province at all, which means that the specific housing needs of women were overlooked. According to Silekwa (2019), women in eThekweni hostels were not present during the consultations that were arranged whilst the hostels were converted into CRUs. It is noted, too, that women were excluded from job opportunities created by the R34 million Mahikeng CRU project, and men from rural areas were allocated jobs that the women could have performed (South African Government 2013). When the people who need housing the most are excluded, they become hopeless because their exclusion denies them access to opportunities they need to uplift themselves (Lemanski and Levenson cited separately in Manomano 2018:2). Public participation is an essential process for ensuring that government decisions address the needs of the specific communities for which services are designed (Prinsloo 2013:9). Community participation ensures accountability and transparency, which are intrinsic to good governance. The under-representation of women in Glebelands consultations and the Glebelands power structures, and their exclusion from opportunities intended for all Glebelands CRU residents, as highlighted throughout the findings, confirm that transformation of housing is not happening. It is therefore important to make sure that opportunities are especially created to ensure that women’s needs in Glebelands CRU housing are properly represented.

In conclusion

Five recommendations for change in Glebelands CRU were shared by participants: developing more family unit accommodation for woman-headed households; resolving issues of

governance; addressing violence in Glebelands CRU; creating unemployment opportunities for women; and increasing the representation of women in CRU issues.

Housing has an important role to play in social transformation for women, and housing authorities are obligated to redress the housing inequality that exists between men and women living in Glebelands CRU, in line with the CRU policy framework objectives (Department of Human Settlements 2006). Additionally, the quality of housing services and safety, such as that associated with hostel maintenance and governance, impacts significantly on women, who are usually single-handedly responsible for their own well-being and that of their families. Further factors mentioned are the ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU, lack of consultation with residents, the municipality's lack of interest, corruption, different political affiliations, the high levels of unemployment and the overcrowding experienced by Glebelands CRU residents. It is evident that the last two factors were main causes of the unrest and therefore have required urgent attention. Clearly, transformation of housing in South Africa requires that matters of safety and the prevention of violence should be prioritised together with the stated recommendations. Living in Glebelands CRU had not ended the women's struggle to support themselves and their dependents. They needed access to opportunities for skills development and employment to enable them to escape from the unsatisfactory living conditions they endured. The participants felt strongly that work opportunities linked to the Glebelands CRU should be reserved for Glebelands CRU residents, especially the women, who in many instances had the necessary skills for some of the jobs that were created. The status of women living in Glebelands CRU had not improved even though the Glebelands CRU programme had commenced in 2004 (Thani et al 2018:670; Xulu 2012:8). Men dominated the environment where the women lived. Women's housing needs were overlooked and poorly represented. Measures were needed to advance women's representation in all Glebelands CRU matters. Clapham (cited in Clapham et al 2018:266) notes that housing policies and their implementation should be judged according to the extent to which they improve the well-being of beneficiaries. The recommendations made by the participants in terms of this theme warrant the attention of the Glebelands CRU developers and administrators. If the well-being of women living in Glebelands CRU really matters to them, they should start turning their attention to transforming the status of women in housing.

CRU needs are not culture-sensitive and gender-sensitive to women, as women look after their children and their grandchildren. Changing the way the world perceives the strength and coping strategies of women is an important task for the citizens of South Africa, and for social workers

as part of the government of the day, so that the well-being of women and those dependent on them, especially children, may change for the better.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher has unpacked the research findings according to the biographical data of the research participants and the themes, sub-themes and categories that emerged during the data analysis.

The summary of the biographical information of the research participants was put in table form. Pseudonyms were used for the ten women, and nine biographical elements were discussed to understand the participants better. These elements covered their individual ages, marital status, place of origin, ethnic group and religion, highest level of education, type of accommodation rented, number of children living with them, employment status, classification as either a legal or an illegal resident, and number of years spent in Glebelands as a resident. These elements were analysed and the findings supported with reference to existing literature.

The second subsection mentioned above reflected on the themes and sub-themes in relation to available relevant literature. It was important to check instances where the literature contrasted with or supported the storylines of the participants. Their storylines relating to some of the questions were also contrary, showing the participants' independent thinking and the unique situations they had experienced. The storylines were specified and compared with relevant literature. Eight themes emerged in total, each being summarised to provide a full picture of all the themes and sub-themes that were discerned. In some instances the summaries were supported by or contrasted with literature in order to understand better how the findings compared with those arising from other research studies.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

As stated in Chapter One, the primary aim of the study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women residents living in Glebelands CRU, because little had been documented about their experiences. It was hoped that the study would generate suggestions to improve the living conditions for the women and their children who lived there. Chapter One addressed the introduction and problem formulation, problem statement, rationale, research questions, purpose and objectives before introducing the research plan that was developed to achieve the research purpose and objectives. Chapter Two outlined the theoretical framework chosen for the study, a combination of the ecological systems and feminist perspectives. The ecological perspective included Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and Gitterman and Germain's Life Model of Social Work Practice. The literature review was presented in Chapter Three and focused on national policies related to affordable rental housing stock for disadvantaged low-income earners living in the cities and on women's status in housing. The chapter provided context-specific information about the history and status of Glebelands CRU. The purpose of Chapter Four was to offer an applied description of how the research plan was operationalised to arrive at the findings reached for presentation in Chapter Five. The findings were presented in two parts. The first part presented the biographical information of the research participants, and the second part discussed the eight themes and their sub-themes, as they emerged from the raw data, augmented with relevant literature from the literature control.

This chapter is the final chapter of this dissertation. The research report from Chapter One to Chapter Five is summarised, and the researcher's summaries and conclusions about the introduction and orientation of the study, the theoretical framework, the literature review, the applied research methodology and methods, and the research findings are offered. This chapter concludes with the researcher's reflections about the limitations of this study and with recommendations concerning social work education, practice and support, housing practices, policy development and future research, as informed by the findings.

The discussion commences with summaries and conclusions of the preceding chapters.

6.1 CHAPTERS ONE TO FIVE – SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

In this section, summaries and conclusions of the preceding chapters are presented sequentially.

6.1.1 Chapter One: General overview of the study

Chapter One commenced with how and why the research problem was formulated (section 1.1), providing a general introduction and orientation to the study and preparing the reader for the research topic. Housing was presented as a basic human need and human right according to the South African Constitution (South Africa 1996a) and as affirmed by Manomano and Tanga (2018:19) and by Sobantu and Nel (2019:284). The benefits of adequate housing were expounded. The benefits mentioned included: offering people stability and security, protection from the elements, improved health conditions, reduced behavioural problems, better educational performance, increased labour force participation, and feelings of self-worth, dignity, pride and social inclusion (Hoek-Smit 2011:51; Manomano & Tanga 2018:19; M Newman 2008:295; Olifeni & Reeves cited in Sobantu et al 2019:5; World Bank 2013:6). The underlying reason given for providing vulnerable groups, especially women, with adequate housing was that housing is a powerful catalyst for uplifting and empowering previously disadvantaged people.

Section 1.1.1 then highlighted the early legal and policy restrictions imposed during the colonial and apartheid eras that restricted black women from migrating to the cities (Ndinda 2001:62; Pillay et al 2002:7; Thurman 1997:45). It was mentioned that despite the restrictions many women chose to live with their partners illegally and suffered regular raids conducted by the authorities in the hostels. Women who did not have permits to live there were ferreted out (Thurman 1997:45). The abolishment of the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 in 1986 resulted in a massive influx of women into male hostels. The influx of women from the homelands, added to the already long list of challenges that compromised the well-being of the residents in male hostels, such as overcrowding (Thurman 1997:45; Xulu 2014:141) and ongoing individual and collective conflict related to ethno-political issues (Zulu cited in McKinley 2020:39). The inclusion of women in the male hostels met with much resistance from older male residents, who resented having to forfeit their privacy in mixed gender hostels (Ramphele in Vosloo 2020:27; Xulu 2014:151).

Section 1.1.1 then discussed the changes in South Africa's housing policies introduced to address the demand for secure, stable rented accommodation, particularly for disadvantaged women and children (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:223; Xulu 2014:141). The Policy Framework

and the Implementation Guidelines for the Community Residential Units Programme. as introduced in 2004 and finalised in 2006, were explained (Department of Human Settlements 2006). It was stated that some of the most important purposes of the CRU Programme were as follows: to address the high level of migration, especially by women, from rural and neighbouring states into urban areas; to enable low-income families to access affordable accommodation in well situated areas offering municipal services, accessible employment opportunities and healthcare services; and to enable women and their children to enjoy a family life (Thani et al 2018:674). The plan to convert the old hostels into suitable accommodation for families was also highlighted (Department of Human Settlements 2006).

Next, to position the study, section 1.1.2 gave a contextualised perspective of Glebelands CRU. It was stated that Glebelands CRU was one of ten hostels managed by the eThekweni Municipality. A spatial description was given of the 72 blocks of double-, triple- and four-storeyed buildings that accommodated men, women and children in Umlazi. Whilst the 2 224 units in Glebelands were intended to create 11 777 bed spaces for low-income people, the reality was that an estimated 22 000 people of different ethnic groups were housed there, only 11 390 of whom were officially registered (Nyawose 2019). The following issues of concern were then unpacked. Glebelands was a male-dominated community. Of the estimated 22 000 residents living there, only between five and six thousand were women (Nyawose 2019). Lack of governance meant there was no effective metering of municipal services; no database of residents, illegal occupation of bed spaces, poor maintenance of buildings, countless undeterred criminal activities, and a range of different health and safety issues (Oliphant & Naidoo 2017; Silekwa 2019). It was concluded that Glebelands CRU had failed to provide the women residents and their children with physically adequate and safe housing that would assist them to uplift themselves eventually out of their poor socio-economic circumstances (Clark 2018; Khoza 2014:69). It was stated that the women and their children were caught up in what was described by some as a “war zone” (Burger 2017a; Ndaliso 2016; Silekwa 2019; South African Police Service 2019; 2021).

The problem statement was introduced in section 1.2, highlighting three themes. The first was the failure of existing research and publications to explore the male-dominated conditions of life in CRUs, which could relate to the experiences of women residents in the Glebelands CRU. To redress the inequity suffered by women who lived there, empirical evidence would be required of their marginalised experience of the living conditions that prevailed under the CRU dispensation. Secondly, although the number of women residents in the Glebelands CRU had

increased, there were no publications about their experiences of life there or the coping strategies they used to survive in the overcrowded, violent, unsafe and unhealthy spaces they had been allocated. Without a detailed understanding of their experiences, it was concluded that little would be done to improve the living conditions for women there. The third theme was the extent to which women had been consulted about the provision of housing for them; this highlights the principle of participation and inclusion. Several sources were cited noting that inclusive consultation and participation were integral principles in post-apartheid housing policies and frameworks, and that beneficiaries of local and provincial housing needed to be included in deliberations about housing developments, particularly CRU housing programmes. Utilising the experiences and insights of beneficiaries of housing was considered a valuable means to transform housing developments and ensure that housing played a role in uplifting their socio-economic upliftment and well-being (Department of Public Service and Administration 1997; Kabajuni in Ncube 2017:7; Madzivhandila & Asha 2012:370; Todes et al 2010:72-75; Ubisi 2013:61-62). There was evidence that male residents had been included in discussions about the Glebelands CRU conversions, but the researcher was unconvinced that women residents had participated equally in these platforms.

The problem statement as developed for this study was stated in Chapter One as follows:

Based on the dearth of available literature on the topic, there is a need to explore, describe and contextualise the challenges and coping strategies of women who live in Glebelands CRU in order to learn more about their experiences, needs and coping strategies. This knowledge could contribute to the development of interventions for female residents living in Glebelands CRU and inform the policies and practices of the human settlements departments at local, provincial, and national levels to improve the living conditions for women who are accommodated in CRUs.

The rationale for this study, discussed in section 1.3, was motivated by the researcher's professional experience working in Glebelands CRU for the Department of Community Safety and Liaison. The meetings that the Department of Community Safety and Liaison had convened were attended mostly by men, and whilst a few women were present in some of the meetings, they did not voice their opinions. In the researcher's perspective, the dialogues initiated by the provincial department had failed to provide women residents with a culturally and contextually appropriate platform for them to share their personal experiences about the Glebelands CRU, particularly about issues such as the violence, unsafe housing and unsatisfactory health conditions that affected them as women (Khumalo 2013:3). The researcher was curious to

learn why the women had chosen to stay in the old converted hostels, and she wanted to establish whether the low-cost housing accommodation they were allocated had improved their access to the opportunities and resources they needed to uplift their lives.

The conclusion that the researcher reached is that the women in Glebelands CRU were not given adequate opportunities to make explicit their views about the accommodation they were allocated at Glebelands or their perspectives about how housing for low-income women should be improved so as to contribute to their and their families' needs. Reference was made to South African legislation and policies introduced to uphold the housing rights of citizens, especially vulnerable women and children, which stressed the importance of women's participation and inclusion in developing housing.

The researcher therefore recognised the importance of addressing the gap in information about the experiences of women living in Glebelands, the challenges they faced and the coping strategies they applied to survive in the converted CRU. After referring to South African legislation and policies that promoted equitable housing for women and supported her motivation for conducting this study, the researcher concluded that as a social worker she had a duty to explore systemic issues responsible for the oppression of women (Manomano 2018:19) in respect of their housing. Existing research publications about CRUs had provided limited insight about women's experiences of housing, despite the rapid growth in the number of women who had been absorbed into the hostels converted into CRUs (Nyawose 2019).

Section 1.4 of Chapter One presented the research question and five sub-questions, the research goal and the research objectives for this study. The overarching research question was: *What are the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi?*

The five sub-questions, indicated in section 1.4.1, were developed at the start of the study to direct the investigation. They are presented below together with summaries of their answers to show that they served their purpose in keeping the research process focused on fulfilling the research goal. More detail is offered in the summary and conclusions of Chapter Five as presented in section 6.1.5.2.

1. “What motivates women to live at Glebelands CRU?”

Multiple factors motivated participants to move to Glebelands. The reasons were mostly personal, such as to join a partner or parent who was already living there, to escape political victimisation, to separate from an uncaring, non-supportive or violent partner at their previous accommodation, or to resolve intimate relationship problems such as suspected infidelity and/or non-support by the partner who lived in the migrant hostel in Glebelands CRU. Some participants left their rural households because of poor infrastructure in the rural areas where they had lived. Those participants needed electricity and sanitation, retail outlets, education and healthcare, things they regarded as essential to start small self-start-up businesses and fulfil the basic needs of their children. The last but most popular motivation to live in Glebelands CRU was participants' wish for the affordable rental accommodation that was provided there.

2. “What are women’s experiences of living in Glebelands CRU?”

The participants' experiences of living in Glebelands CRU were discussed in two parts outlining respectively their negative experiences and their positive ones.

The participants' negative experiences significantly outnumbered the positive ones. The negative experiences were stressful and included the following: the ongoing violence and murders in Glebelands CRU, overcrowding and lack of privacy, and the bad behaviour of other residents (section 5.2.3); unsatisfactory sleeping arrangements, lack of security, difficulty of raising children in a violent context, the inconsistent rules imposed by different block committees, and the poor municipal maintenance in Glebelands (section 5.2.4); the exclusion of single women and children from the family units, their loss of pride as women, and the failure of Glebelands CRU to cater for the needs of older female residents (section 5.2.6).

Being female further contributed to the participants' negative experiences of living in Glebelands CRU. Male dominance of women in the CRU was reflected in the disrespect shown to them by male residents, who treated them disdainfully, and in their exclusion from deliberations related to Glebelands CRU matters. The women also suffered stigmatisation from the outside community, and they lacked employment opportunities in and around Glebelands, which hampered their ability to elevate their socio-economic status and improve their and their children's well-being (section 5.2.5).

The researcher concluded that disadvantaged women are dependent upon low-cost rental accommodation to care for themselves and their families. Glebelands CRU was one of the few places that offered them and their children shelter; the accommodation was affordable; they received support from the other female residents in Glebelands CRU; it was convenient to be closely situated to the Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room, which kept them informed about resources and opportunities women could access. Lastly, participants mentioned that the family units that had been built were well designed for family living but did not benefit them because as single parents they did not qualify to live in the family units. They were hopeful that in time to come more units would be made available for which they would be allowed to apply (section 5.2.6).

3. “What are the challenges women face living in Glebelands CRU?”

The situational factors that most challenged the women living in Glebelands CRU were the overcrowding and lack of privacy, the ongoing violence and murders, and the unruly, bad behaviour of other residents, particularly males (section 5.2.3).

4. “What coping strategies do women use to address the challenges they face living in Glebelands CRU?”

The participants identified several coping strategies they used to overcome the challenges associated with living in Glebelands CRU. Their strategies included remaining submissive within the male-dominant hostel milieu, refraining from involving themselves in any Glebelands CRU politics or matters, and abiding by the CRU rules even though they discriminated against women and children (section 5.2.7).

5. “How can the Glebelands CRU be improved to meet the needs of the women who live there?”

The recommendations made by participants for improving the needs of women who lived in Glebelands CRU were broad and overarching (section 5.2.8). Expanding the family unit accommodation to include female-headed households would provide women and their children with suitable accommodation that they considered more conducive to family living. The family unit accommodation would alleviate the overcrowded conditions in which they lived, offer functional living spaces for themselves and their families, such as ablution facilities and kitchens, and provide privacy and freedom from the interference of other residents. Next, it was recommended that the governance issues in Glebelands be resolved. It was inferred that in the absence of strong governance, the Glebelands blocks

would not be properly maintained, and the criminal elements who lived there would continue to thrive and capitalise on the chaos associated with the lack of governance. Participants also recommended that housing authorities address the high level of unemployment amongst the female residents living in Glebelands CRU. The final recommendation made by participants was that measures be implemented to increase the participation and inclusion of women in Glebelands CRU issues. The participants held that women's representation was needed in matters that affected them in Glebelands.

Conclusion

The collective summary of the answers to the five sub-questions confirmed that an answer could be given to the overarching research question developed at the outset of the study: *“What are the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi?”*

Similarly, it was concluded that the research goal developed at the start of the study, namely *“to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences and coping strategies of women living in Glebelands CRU”*, as outlined in section 1.4.2, had also been achieved. The findings presented in Chapter Five attest to this.

The research goal was subdivided into four smaller research actions that had to be accomplished. These research actions formed the research objectives outlined in section 1.4.3. It is pertinent at this point to evaluate whether the four research objectives were achieved.

- **To acquire a sample of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi.**

A sample of ten women residents in Glebelands CRU were selected to participate in the study. They provided rich, detailed information about what it was like to be a woman living there (see Chapter Five). The selected women demonstrated both heterogeneous and homogeneous characteristics, which yielded both shared and individualised perspectives about the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women who lived in Glebelands CRU. Details about the selection of the sample are summarised in section 6.1.4 of this chapter. It was concluded that this research objective was fulfilled.

- **To explore and describe the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi.**

The information gathered during the individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the ten participants produced substantial information that was then analysed and presented as the findings of the study in Chapter Five. The summary and conclusions of the findings are presented in section 6.1.5 of this chapter.

It can be concluded that this research objective was accomplished. The interview questions, the interview protocol and the rapport that the researcher established with participants contributed positively to participants' willingness to share meaningful data that the researcher sought. The researcher is satisfied that the participants were adequately protected from the potential risks of participating in the study and were willing to share their experiences truthfully, without holding back once their trust had been gained.

- **To describe the findings regarding the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi.**

The voluminous information collected was analysed and the themes that emerged from the data were verified by the independent coder. Twelve themes emerged from the data, which were finally condensed into eight themes, which shortened the research report and reduced the necessity of repetition in the various sections.

The eight themes were: (1) participants' accounts of how they came to live at Glebelands CRU; (2) participants' descriptions of their previous living conditions before moving to Glebelands CRU; (3) participants' accounts of the challenges they faced when they first moved into Glebelands CRU; (4) participants' accounts of the general living conditions in Glebelands CRU; (5) descriptions of the living conditions in Glebelands CRU from a woman's perspective; (6) how the Glebelands CRU improves the quality of women's lives; (7) strategies women residents used to adapt to living in Glebelands CRU; and (8) recommendations for improving the lives of women living in Glebelands CRU.

When the study was completed and the research report was finalised, the researcher was certain that she could describe the essence of what it was like to be a woman living in Glebelands CRU. She had achieved a meaningful understanding of the women's experiences of living there and insight about the kinds of challenges they faced there, and she had gained knowledge of the strategies the women used to survive in the historically

male-dominant social milieu. The findings presented in Chapter Five attest to the depth of the information that was gathered during the study.

- **To draw conclusions about the findings regarding the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi and make recommendations about how their living conditions could be enhanced.**

Relevant participant storylines were extracted from the verbatim transcriptions to illustrate the themes and sub-themes that had emerged within the findings. These excerpts were juxtaposed against particular theoretical concepts of the ecological systems approach and the feminist perspective, outlined in Chapter Two. The researcher also compared the participants' lived reality as women in Glebelands CRU with relevant aspects of knowledge derived from the literature review presented in Chapter Three.

In the light of the findings, several recommendations were made about how the living conditions in Glebelands CRU could be enhanced to improve the well-being of the women and their families who lived there. These recommendations were presented in Chapter Five and are expanded upon at the end of this chapter (section 6.4).

It can be concluded that the research objectives developed for the study were achieved. The research plan developed for the study contributed to this favourable outcome.

The final part of Chapter One outlined the planned research methodology and methods chosen for the study. In summary, a qualitative approach was chosen (section 1.5.2). The study was to be conducted as a case study (section 1.5.2.2) that would integrate a phenomenological perspective (section 1.5.2.1) and an exploratory, descriptive and contextual research design (section 1.5.2.3). The anticipated population for the study were adult females who lived permanently in Glebelands CRU (section 1.6.1). A purposive sample was planned to consist of between eight and twelve women who had knowledge and experience of what it was like to be a woman who lived permanently in Glebelands CRU. Criterion sampling (section 1.6.3.1) and snowball sampling (section 1.6.3.2) were the sampling strategies that would be used. Individual face-to-face interviews would be conducted by the researcher using a semi-structured interview format that would be facilitated by an interview guide. All the interview questions chosen for the interview guide were open ended. In essence the research plan worked, and the summaries and researcher's conclusions about the applied research methodology and methods are

reflected upon in section 6.1.4. The discussion there confirms that the research methodology and methods chosen for the study enabled the researcher to answer the overarching research question, “What are the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi?” (section 1.4.1) and to achieve the research goal, which was “to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences and coping strategies of women living in Glebelands CRU” (section 1.4.2).

A summary of the theoretical framework and the conclusions reached about its value for this study are presented next.

6.1.2 Chapter Two: Theoretical framework

Two theoretical approaches or perspectives were adopted for the study: firstly, the ecological systems approach, which was a combination of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems approach (section 2.2.1) (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017; Onwuegbuzie et al 2013: 4-5) supported by Gitterman and Germain’s Life Model of Social Work Practice (section 2.2.2) (Gitterman & Germain 2008:51; Ungar 2002:482); and secondly, the feminist perspective (section 2.3) (Carter cited in Collins et al 2010:334).

Summary of and conclusions on the theoretical framework developed for the study

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological approach was used to bring attention to the ecological context in which the women living in Glebelands CRU were situated. The different constituent levels of the ecological system, namely the micro, meso, exo, macro and chrono systems, were discussed in section 2.2.1 in terms of their relevance to the study.

In the context of this study, the micro system referred to the most immediate environment of the women living in Glebelands CRU. This level of the ecological system brought focus to the participants’ daily experiences of living with their partners, children or fellow roommates in a unit in one of the Glebelands blocks (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017:3; Holosko et al 2013:129; Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5). The meso system as applied in this study referred to the range of individuals and groups with which the women and their cohabitant significant others formed relationships and interacted regularly and frequently in Glebelands. On the positive side, the women reported that many instances of the meso-level relationships they experienced offered emotional and basic support such as child minding, cooking or shopping. This support enabled them to adapt to and cope with their daily stressors. On the negative side, the meso system also generated stress for many women through factors such as lack of trust in others who lived in Glebelands CRU, political conflict, violent crimes, discrimination against women, prejudice,

unruly behaviour of other residents, social exclusion and factionalism, all of which undermined their well-being in Glebelands CRU (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017:4). The exo-level system as applied in the study referred to the networks of support the women had access to in the immediate vicinity of Glebelands CRU, such as health and welfare services, a feeding scheme within Glebelands CRU, access to the Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room, and close proximity to the transport system, retail outlets and other businesses (Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:5). On the negative side, exo-level factors that caused the women stress included poor policing, stigmatisation of Glebelands women residents, social exclusion from the community at large, lack of work opportunities for unskilled women, poor service delivery by the eThekweni Municipality, unsanitary housing conditions, ongoing crime and violence, nepotism and extortion (Eamon 2001:260; Paat 2013:960). The macro-level system as applied in this study referred to the broad, overarching systems that determined the quality of life that the women residents in Glebelands experienced. These included broad factors such as culture, economics, policies and legislation, religion, and government-regulated services. On a positive level, the changes in housing policies and legislation introduced by the South African government were designed to uplift the socio-economic status of marginalised women. The CRU Programme was initiated to facilitate the inclusion and participation of women in housing matters, provide marginalised women and their families with adequate, affordable, low-cost housing rentals, and facilitate their social and economic upliftment. However, the intersectionality of gender, race, poverty, poor education and breakdown of family life meant it was very difficult for the women to counteract the socio-structural factors that kept them oppressed and trapped in poverty. The chrono system factors that impacted on the women included socio-historical eras such as colonialism, apartheid and old laws and policies that restricted the rights of black people to decide where they wanted to live (the prime example of this was the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950); the development of the hostel system for male migrant workers that resulted in the breakdown of family life, and other disabling factors that kept black South Africans trapped in poverty (Ndinda 2009:317). In addition, some stressors that manifested as chrono system stressors were specific events that had affected the women living in Glebelands over time, sometimes even across generations. In the context of this study, participants reflected mostly on the violence and murders in Glebelands, which were traumatic for the women.

The Life Model of Social Work Practice (Gitterman & Germain 2008:51) was integrated into the theoretical framework. Like Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, it deepened understanding of the relationships that women living in Glebelands experienced across the

different system levels (Weick et al 2020:5). However, the model motivated a more action-orientated stance. It challenged the researcher to go beyond aiming for a holistic account of the research phenomenon and use the findings of the study to raise awareness of what must be done to improve the experiences of the women living in the Glebelands CRU and uplift their well-being and socio-economic development. The Life Model of Social Work Practice promotes the development of nurturing, responsive environments that support human growth, healthy living, and satisfactory levels of human functioning (Gitterman & Germain 2008:51).

The recommendations for creating a nurturing, responsive environment to support the growth and healthy living of women residents in Glebelands CRU and improve their human functioning were presented in section 5.2.8. These are broadened further in section 6.3. In addition, the findings of the study will be made available to the eThekweni Human Settlements Department, as per the conditions agreed to when permission was granted by the municipality for the researcher to proceed with the study (see sections 4.1 and 4.6.2). The researcher will utilise conference and workshop opportunities that present themselves to disseminate the findings of the study.

The Life Model of Social Work Practice, reflecting Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, introduced the notion of "goodness of fit" between people and their environment (Littlefield 2003:6; Teater 2010:24), which motivated the researcher throughout the research process to ask: "What needs to happen to advance the goodness of fit between the women and Glebelands CRU?" Next, the Life Model of Social Work Practice sat well with the researcher's belief that people have an inherent capacity within to adapt to their environmental stressors (Gitterman & Germain 2008:51). This assumption was valuable when analysing the findings about the coping strategies used by participants to adapt to their challenging circumstances in Glebelands CRU (section 5.2.7), because it highlighted the self-efficacy of the research participants rather than their problem-saturated stories. The Life Model of Social Work Practice confirms that people grow, develop and fulfil their potential when the environment they are in is responsive to their needs (Teater 2010:24). This explained why the women's well-being and socio-economic development had remained stagnant during their tenure at Glebelands CRU. The Glebelands CRU environment had failed to respond to the needs of women residents, and the CRU Programme had been unsuccessful in contributing to the upliftment of women in Glebelands. The reality was that the living conditions to which the women were subjected undermined their health, welfare and safety. The Family Model of Social Work Practice enabled the researcher to acknowledge that it was impossible for the women to disrupt on their

own the broader socio-structural factors responsible for their circumstances (Teater 2010:33). The concept of “environmental niche” coined by Gitterman and Germain (Littlefield 2003:6) aided understanding of how the social status of women living in Glebelands suffered because of the community at large and society as a whole. Naturally the women could not change on their own the socio-structural factors such as politics or socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, single-parent families, lack of education and training, gender discrimination (Littlefield 2003:5-6).

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems approach acknowledged the risk factors that occur at each ecological systems level (Effekal & Mahoney 2019; Onwuegbuzie et al 2013:4-5), and the Life Model of Social Work Practice helped to explain why some people become overwhelmed by the stressors and others manage to overcome them (Gitterman & Germain 2008:2; Teater 2010:27). In the instance of this study, oppression of the vulnerable women who lived in Glebelands enabled exploitative forces operating within Glebelands CRU and the eThekweni Municipality to manipulate them, which made it very hard for them to remove themselves from their unhealthy situation, so that eventually they resigned themselves to their negative circumstances (Gitterman & Germain 2008:7; Weick et al 2020:5). During the women’s tenure in Glebelands CRU many had suffered threats of violence, witnessed and suffered painful events committed by people who lived in Glebelands CRU, been exposed to extortion, and had requests denied for basic living conditions in the blocks where they were accommodated (Teater 2010:27). It was concluded that these experiences placed the women living in Glebelands CRU at considerable physical and psychological risk (Gitterman & Germain 2008:2).

The next theoretical perspective used, the feminist perspective, is also associated with systems theory and was chosen for the impetus it gives to correcting structural inequalities to improve women’s position in society (section 2.3). Carter’s definition (cited in Collins et al 2010:334) was used to introduce the feminist perspective, “an attitude, a lens, a body of ideas about gender and hierarchy and its impact on people and society rather than a specific model”. The development of the feminist perspective from the early 1800s to the present, when multiple hybrids of feminism exist, was described briefly to highlight that for centuries men and women have been treated differently, and women in many societies remain submissive (Makama in Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). In contrast, many men worldwide continue to enjoy more privileges than women and hold more power (Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). It was fitting to include a feminist perspective in this study because the women in Glebelands CRU were oppressed. Feminism

challenges any form of psychological oppression of others and upholds multicultural diversity and social justice, so that eventually all societies will achieve democratic egalitarian relationships amongst all people (Corey 2014:353).

The assumptions on which the feminist perspective rests were presented: the personal is political; commitment to social change is needed; female voices and ways of knowing are valued, women must be recognised as the experts of their lives; symptoms of psychological distress are a person's unconscious communications about social factors that threaten their well-being; and feminism is anti-oppressive. The researcher explained the relevance of these assumptions in section 2.3.2. The inclusion of the feminist perspective in the theoretical framework meant that the women's perspectives of living in Glebelands CRU were prized, highlighting the distinctive role that the women were allocated in what remains a patriarchal hostel system as opposed to a community residential unit. In a nutshell, the researcher recognised the value of using the feminist perspective to explore and shape gender-sensitive housing practices for marginalised women.

Next, the three recommendations that Ndinda (2009:322) proposes for empowering women were discussed: (1) understanding the resources women need; (2) promoting women's sense of agency; and (3) achieving both satisfaction of the basic needs of women and the adoption of a political agenda to uphold women's rights. These empowerment measures are reflected upon below in the light of the researcher's experience of this study.

- **Resources** in this study refer to adequate housing in Glebelands CRU for marginalised women and their families. The accommodation the women had been allocated did not fulfil the basic standards of adequate housing. Rules related to the allocation of resources must be fair and transparent. The allocation of spaces to women in Glebelands CRU was not fair. The findings revealed that women participants had to rely upon their male acquaintances to secure their spaces or pay someone to secure their space, or use their political affiliation to access a space. In some instances women were indebted to the person who organised a space for them; the payback could even involve consenting to being a person's mistress (section 5.2.1.1).
- **Promoting the sense of agency of women** would help them to discover the "power within" themselves (Ndinda 2009:320). The "power within" is released when women discover their personal motivation, drive and commitment. This is possible only when opportunities are created for women to be included or to participate in matters that affect them. In the case of the women who lived in Glebelands CRU, their voices were not heard,

and the platforms created for resident participation in addressing the development of housing or general Glebelands CRU issues were neither culturally nor contextually appropriate for women. The women found themselves living amongst many traditional male residents who opposed their inclusion in Glebelands CRU. It was difficult to promote women's participation and inclusion in Glebelands matters using mixed gender meetings. The participants stated that they were excluded from Glebelands discussions and therefore their needs and interests were never represented (section 5.2.5.2).

- **Achievement** is reached when the basic needs of women are satisfied and when political roleplayers are willing to defend the needs of women (Ndinda 2009:322). Glebelands CRU failed to satisfy many of the women's basic needs. For example, they were threatened by ongoing incidents of violence and murders in their blocks; they lived in overcrowded spaces that offered women and their children no privacy; general living spaces such as kitchens, passages and bathrooms doubled up as sleeping spaces; the accommodation was poorly maintained and unhygienic; the women were disrespected by male residents; the environment was not conducive to raising children; the block committees comprised only men who set rules that discriminated against women and children; and no political forces were there to represent the interests of the women living there (sections 5.2.3, 5.2.4 and 5.2.5). The women were sidelined from the planning process of Glebelands housing as individuals and a group (Manomano & Tanga 2018:33; Ndinda 2009:318). In other words, the first principle on which the CRU Programme was meant to rest, which entails communication with potential beneficiaries and their participation throughout the CRU Programme, was not practised (Department of Human Settlements 2006).

The researcher concluded that a strong theoretical framework was created for the study by combining the ecological systems perspective (Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach and Gitterman and Germain's Life Model of Social Work Practice) with the feminist perspective. The combined theories structured the research process and assisted the researcher to present the findings logically (Creswell 2009:15-17). The theoretical framework offered the researcher a lens through which to scrutinise the research issues more closely (Mathibela 2017:14). It advanced the researcher's understanding of the living conditions, challenges and coping resources of the women who lived in Glebelands CRU and contributed to her understanding of the meanings the women associated with living in the converted CRU. The theories were successfully used in conjunction with one another because their respective assumptions and tenets were founded in systems theory (Teater 2010:97).

The marginalisation of women in housing has deleterious consequences for the identity of women, their personal development, and the goals they strive to achieve. When women are marginalised in housing the effects are damaging: it compromises their emotional well-being, restricts their ability to secure decent employment opportunities, and robs them of the basic human right of choosing where they wish to live.

6.1.3 Chapter Three: Literature review

The purpose of Chapter Three was to build a foundation of knowledge about housing, women's position in housing and CRU programmes. Throughout the chapter, housing was positioned as a basic human need and a means of strengthening the functioning of individuals, families and communities (Sobantu et al 2019:4). The provision of housing was considered a positive means of promoting the social development of marginalised people. Literature cited asserted that housing is instrumental in promoting equality, social justice, human rights and human dignity (Noyoo in Sobantu et al 2019:3).

The first section of the literature review presented the South African government's efforts to increase the access of previously disadvantaged low-income earners to affordable rental accommodation. National legislation and policy reforms were tabulated for this purpose (Table 3.1) together with the overall objectives of each policy and Act. The documents included were the White Paper on Housing (1994), Constitution of South Africa (1996), Housing Act 107 (1997), Rental Housing Act 50 (1999), Social Housing Act 16 (2008) and Integrated Residential Development Programme (2009). Collectively, these documents reflected the government's plan to achieve its constitutional obligation to deliver basic housing services to all citizens by adopting a developmental approach (Ndinda 2009:317). It was evident that the government had positioned housing as the right of every citizen and wanted to ensure that adequate accommodation would be available to all (Lee in Sobantu et al 2019:4; Manomano 2018:1; Ndinda 2009:317; Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216; Sobantu & Nel 2019:284; Ubisi 2013:29). The researcher concluded that the government's plan was a positive one, because by increasing the access of previously disadvantaged people to housing, the people would be assisted to regain their dignity, their social inclusion would be promoted, their access to services and employment opportunities would improve, and they would be able to uplift themselves from poverty. The government's plan on paper was good.

However, as time progressed the South African government was criticised. It was accused of not being able to keep up with the demand for affordable housing (Ndinda et al 2011:780-782). The housing delivered was substandard, particularly in the low-cost housing sector. Ongoing

complaints were received about the lack of services and the poor sanitation and unhygienic conditions that beneficiaries of low-cost housing had to endure. Reported criticisms of housing were presented. For example, Manomano (2018:20) stated that the management of housing allocations was poor; money allocated for housing improvements could not be accounted for; and the housing developments had not included social amenities for housing beneficiaries in the new developments. The criticisms of other authors were mentioned. Madzivhandila and Asha (2012:370) highlighted poor local government leadership, the lack of collaboration amongst housing delivery stakeholders, and the exclusion of housing beneficiaries in the planning, execution and evaluation phases of the housing projects. Sobantu and Nel (2019:284) accused housing authorities of adopting a top-down approach in setting up the new housing schemes. The high incidence of housing-related civil protests confirmed the failure of the government's housing plan (Ndinda et al 2011:780-782; Neocosomos 2010:535; Pithouse 2014: i43).

Next, the researcher tracked the status of women in South Africa through the colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid eras (section 3.2). The government's agenda to reverse the oppression of women commenced during the 1990s, but the process of change has been slow. Patriarchy, sexism, violence and discrimination continue to undermine women's development and advancement (Loliwe in Unrevised Hansard 2017; South African History Online 2011). Next, the researcher consolidated information about the oppression of women in housing. It was noted that, generally, disadvantaged women are exposed to housing that is unsafe and does not have sanitation, electricity or communications (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:12). The researcher's conclusion was that women's right to adequate low-cost housing had been undermined despite the South Africa government having been party to the United Nation's Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women agreement (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:12).

In the third part of Chapter Three, consideration was given to the deleterious consequences of colonial and apartheid laws (Pillay et al 2002:7), societal patriarchal norms and values (Ndinda 2001:62; Pillay et al 2002:8), and customary and religious laws and practices (Pillay et al 2002:9) that had impacted on women's access to housing (section 3.3). A few examples were mentioned of housing injustices that the many South African women had suffered. For instance, government assisted housing initiatives did not recognise women-headed households as families, and therefore they did not qualify for housing subsidies (Ndinda 2001:62; Pillay et al 2002:8). Customary law practices such as patrilineal succession, the minority legal status of

women, and formal and informal polygamy had restricted women from accessing housing in their own names (Pillay et al 2002:8). When the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 was abolished, the common law wives of migrant labourers were evicted from the hostels in 1997 to make way for their partners' rural wives and children. Currently, the legal registration of houses is mostly done in the male partner's name on the assumption that men are the main breadwinners (Khosla 2014:13). This confirms that the pervading patriarchal legacy remains and is difficult to dismantle even with the legal reforms introduced to protect women. The researcher concluded that women's right to housing had remained largely linked to their relationships with men (partners or male relatives).

It was acknowledged that certain socio-economic realities had exacerbated women's vulnerability. The examples provided were poverty, poor access to and control over personal assets, marital status, exposure to gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS. It was noted that women living in disadvantage experienced these realities more intensely than men. The disadvantaged women's dependence on the informal economy to support themselves and their children left them with little financial security or protection (Govender 2019:153-154; Khosla 2014:15; Kotwal & Prabhakar 2017:199; Pillay et al 2002:8). Being dependent upon social grants meant that, without adequate financial means, the women had no choice about where they lived. It was a struggle for them to find affordable accommodation.

It was at this stage that the researcher introduced the CRU Programme, its objectives, and the principles upon which it was founded. It was noted that the CRU Programme was introduced to replace the National Hostel Redevelopment Programme and the Affordable Rental Housing Programme (Thani et al 2018:670; Xulu 2012:8), and it was intended to run parallel to the National Housing Programme, which catered for people in the income bracket of R3 500 or more a month. The CRU Programme was expected to increase the supply of high-density low-income rental stock for the disadvantaged people who did not qualify for social housing because they earned less than R3 500 per month. The objectives of the CRU Programme suggested that it would offer the following benefits: improved maintenance and upkeep of the converted housing; better integration of its beneficiaries with the broader community where the housing establishments were situated; an increase in the state's public housing assets; the rescuing and renovation of problematic and dysfunctional buildings in the inner city; and, most importantly, qualification for adequate and affordable housing by those whose monthly income was R3 500 per month or less. The plan was for the government to fund the conversions on a one-off basis and recoup the operational costs of the CRU from monthly rental collections from

the beneficiaries. The five distinct principles of the CRU Policy Framework were outlined. The principles were meant to achieve the following: enhance the participation and inclusion of housing beneficiaries during the development, execution and maintenance of the programme; offer families and households adequate space and housing designs to suit their needs; ensure that the application process would be fair for all and be properly managed; and protect low-income persons by reducing their risk of forced eviction because they would have stable housing tenure (Department of Human Settlements 2006:5).

The researcher concluded that the CRU Programme, if well executed, would improve the access of disadvantaged women to low-cost housing and contribute favourably to their well-being (section 3.4) (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216).

The researcher interrogated the principle of the inclusion and participation of CRU beneficiaries more closely. The inclusion and participation of CRU housing beneficiaries was the first principle of the CRU Programme.

The benefits of participation and inclusion that were given included the following: participation and inclusion are processes that advance the social inclusion of previously disadvantaged people (Madzivhandila & Asha 2012:370); consultation promotes unbiased service delivery within municipalities (Department of Public Service and Administration 1997); housing beneficiaries are best informed about how their well-being can be improved through housing, so their involvement in the planning, implementation and administration of housing development projects is essential; people need to come together to express their ideas and concerns, because this advances individual and collective action and leads to the attainment of mutual goals (Todes et al 2010:72-75); and consultations establish a transparent platform where the authorities can address the beneficiaries' fears and misgivings about housing conversions (Kabajuni in Ncube 2017:7). The researcher concluded that the exclusion of beneficiaries from the planning processes would result in distrust and accusations of corruption and mismanagement in state departments (Lemanski & Levenson in Manomano 2018:2).

The researcher's curiosity had been ignited. Given the significance of adequate housing in the lives of women and the historical oppression of women in housing, it was important to establish the extent to which the participation and consultation of women CRU beneficiaries had been advanced through the CRU Programme. The researcher was drawn strongly to the position held by Khumalo (2013:13-14) that women have special housing needs that must be taken into consideration when housing is developed for their benefit. However, the reality was that the CRU projects had failed to acknowledge the value of engaging women during the planning and

implementation phases of the projects (Khumalo 2013:13-14). The researcher investigated more closely the position held by Khumalo (2013:13-14) but could not find additional evidence apart from a few newspaper articles. Three articles were found that reported on dissatisfaction about the general lack of inclusion and participation of housing beneficiaries during the CRU conversions (Table 3.2).

The general living conditions in CRUs in South Africa were carefully studied to establish if information relating to the physical environment and social milieu in CRUs supported the participants' perspectives. Generally, the CRUs were reported as starkly different from what the government had intended them to be (Elder in Xulu 2014:144). Seven main areas of discontent mentioned in the publications included the following: overcrowding (Ntuli 2017; Thani et al 2018:674; Xulu 2012:8); poor maintenance of the buildings and CRU grounds (Dlamini in Ubisi 2013:11; Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:227; Thani et al 2018:671); inadequate family-centred housing opportunities (Ntuli 2017; Thani et al 2018:674; Xulu 2014:150); the resentment felt by traditional male residents who objected to the inclusion of women in spaces that had originally been allocated to men only (Thuli et al 2018:674; Xulu 2014:142); poor administration and management of the CRUs (Fenyane 2016:11; Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216; Ubisi 2013:11-12; Xulu 2014:142); ongoing safety and security issues (Burger 2019c:10; Smit 2014:65; Ubisi 2013:11-12; Xulu 2012:8); and the existence of block committees that disregarded the eThekweni officials (Dlamini in Ubisi 2013:11; Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:227; Thani et al 2018:671). These all contributed to unhealthy and unsafe living conditions (Thani et al 2018:671).

The last section of the literature review provided the background of Glebelands CRU (section 3.5). The multi-storey buildings were built to accommodate migrant workers in the 1960s (Clark 2018). Between 200 and 300 men were housed in each of the blocks in dormitory-style accommodation (Burger 2019c:1; McKinley 2020:39). It was stated at the outset that the Glebelands hostel was administered by the provincial government. Over time, residents established themselves in social groups on the basis of their places of origin and ethnicity (Zulu in McKinley 2020:39). The residents in the blocks organised themselves into grassroots spokespersons and structures that became known as block committees (McKinley 2020:45). Block committees eventually fulfilled administrative duties, intervened in conflicts between residents and oversaw the room allocations (McKinley 2020:44). During the late 1990s the eThekweni Municipality took over the administration of Glebelands hostel from the KwaZulu-Natal province (Burger 2019b). The eThekweni Municipality introduced policies that excluded

the roles and functions of the block committees (McKinley 2020:45). Violent clashes between residents occurred, which resulted in the hundreds of evictions, murders and attempted murders that Glebelands had become notorious for. It was noted that uncertainty remained about what had been fuelling the violence. The potential sources implicated were given as the following: ethnic rivalry; political jealousy; undemocratic ANC leadership; corruption and criminality; poor management by the eThekweni Municipality; eThekweni's decision to dismantle the block structures; and non-consultation of residents in proposed intervention programmes (Burger 2019c:2, 10; Burger 2019a; McKinley 2020:46; Silekwa 2019; Zulu in McKinley 2020:39).

The researcher discovered that considerable contention surrounded the allocation of the newly built family units. It was alleged that affluent families from other areas were allocated the new family units, whilst the women and their children continued to live in the overcrowded rooms (Burger 2019c:3).

The problems related to the poor administration of Glebelands, and the unprecedented violence led to an investigation by the Public Protector, who found the eThekweni Municipality guilty of failing to coordinate interventions to quell the violence (De Haas 2016:43). Money was set aside to address the problems, but people remained sceptical about whether the money allocated was being used for the intended purposes.

The literature review confirmed that residents in Glebelands lived in fear (Zungu 2021). It was further acknowledged that the CRU conversion of Glebelands hostel was marred by irregularities that prejudiced the women who lived there, and the female-headed households did not get to benefit from the family units (Burger 2019b).

Conclusion

The researcher was satisfied that the literature consulted provided a valuable tapestry of information that she could use as the backdrop of her study. The researcher was able to compare the participants' descriptions with existent information. Mostly her research findings supported the documented literature, but there were instances where the women's perspectives were more descriptive and their meanings different, which satisfied the researcher that this study was a locally specific one, and the voices and perspectives of the participants were upheld throughout.

6.1.4 Chapter Four: Applied research methodology and methods

This subsection of the chapter offers a summary and conclusions reached concerning the application of the research methodologies and methods of this study, as discussed in Chapter Four.

To achieve the study's purpose and objectives and to answer the research questions, a qualitative research approach was chosen to increase the depth of knowledge about a human experience, in this case about women's experience of living in Glebelands CRU (section 1.5.1) (Creswell 2014:31; Du Plooy-Cilliers et al 2018:29; Hammarsberg et al 2016:498, 501; Maree 2020:66; Yin 2011:8). The study was conducted in Glebelands CRU, in its natural location, where the women lived and interacted with other residents (Creswell & Creswell 2018:183; Damon & Holloway 2011:7). The researcher observed the women throughout the study, which gave her a sense of what it was like to be a woman living in Glebelands CRU. As face-to-face contact with the women was the primary research instrument, prolonged contact was maintained to make it comfortable for them to share their experiences (Creswell & Poth 2018:43-44). The researcher stayed close to the meanings that the participants ascribed to their experiences; these were documented verbatim, with excerpts from the verbatim transcriptions being used to illustrate and support the findings (Creswell & Creswell 2018:182; Daymon & Holloway 2011:7). Inductive and deductive reasoning uncovered the themes that inhered in the gathered data (Creswell & Creswell 2018:182; Daymon & Holloway 2011:7; Neuman 2014:209). The participants verified the findings. The researcher's personal and professional experiences were bracketed out through using the researcher's research journal, supervision and peer supervision. The researcher is satisfied that, as a result, neutrality was maintained throughout the research process (Beinhocker 2013:330; Flick 2014:15-17). The multiple sources of data that the researcher consulted – namely the ten research participants, the literature review and control, including existing documents about women and housing and the conversion of the Glebelands CRU, and the field notes captured during interviews or straight after – strengthened the researcher's interpretations and upheld the trustworthiness of the study (Creswell & Poth 2018:43-44).

The researcher's reflections about the study confirm that the decision to use a qualitative approach was beneficial. This is the first holistic account of the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of the women who lived in Glebelands CRU that has been empirically validated (Creswell & Creswell 2018:182; Daymon & Holloway 2011:8). Several pertinent insights were uncovered (Chapter Five) in respect of the following: the women's relationships

with the people they shared their living spaces with; their experiences of the broader social milieu in Glebelands CRU; the power structures that existed in Glebelands and the control they wielded over the women's lives; the resources the women benefited from by living in Glebelands CRU as well as their needs that remained unmet; the broader socio-structural factors that restricted the women's access to adequate housing; and finally the historical factors that kept the women trapped in poverty. The research process positioned the women participants as the key informants in the study, which proved to be the empowering experience that the researcher had intended for them. A culturally sensitive and contextually relevant platform was created to raise awareness about the realities of women living in Glebelands CRU, their challenging living conditions, and the coping strategies they had used to adapt. The participants' recommendations about what must be done to improve the living conditions of the women in Glebelands CRU are discussed later, in section 6.3 of this chapter, because their recommendations informed the researcher's own recommendations.

The case study research design that was selected for the study integrated the phenomenological approach with exploratory, descriptive and contextual research designs. The researcher concluded that the assumptions of both the phenomenological approach and the case study were similar and consistent with the purpose of the study. The research design kept the researcher's focus on the experiences of the women residents in Glebelands CRU, so that their "insider" perspectives of what it was like to live in Glebelands CRU as a woman could be explored, described and contextualised. The phenomenological approach and case study endorsed what the researcher believed, namely that there was no single, unified truth about the experiences of the women living in Glebelands CRU. The researcher is satisfied that by consulting several women and combining their individual perspectives, she had achieved a comprehensive understanding of the research topic that was as close to the "truth" she could get (Bouma et al 2012:49; Creswell & Poth 2018:75).

After reflecting on the research design chosen for the study, the researcher is satisfied that the essence of the women's experiences of living in Glebelands CRU has been portrayed in accordance with the phenomenological approach (Creswell & Creswell 2018:13; Creswell & Poth 2018:75) and at the same time that the broad range of the women's experiences uncovered is consistent with case studies (Daymon & Holloway 2011:115; Mason 2018:209) (see the findings in Chapter Five). Using the case study as the main research design proved advantageous because, as is typical in case studies (Creswell & Poth 2018:67, 96; Flick 2014:121), it was possible to obtain a precise description and analysis of the experiences of a

small group of women who lived in the same place, Glebelands CRU, at the same time, December 2018 to December 2021, as presented in Chapter Five. The ten different participants, and the different data collection methods outlined in section 4.4.2, contributed to the detail gathered about women living in Glebelands CRU. This confirmed that the multiple sources of information used in case studies were necessary to achieve the depth of information needed in this study (Creswell & Creswell 2018:247). The case study research design created a clear and structured research plan, as outlined in section 4.2.1, that kept the research process focused and contributed to the study's scientific integrity (Creswell & Poth 2018:122). The final product was a contextualised explanation of the women's real-life situations of living in a converted CRU (Baskarada 2014:3; Boblin et al 2013:1267; Ryan 2012:545). Commonalities and differences amongst the ten participants were uncovered and presented. Verbatim excerpts of participants interviews were compared and contrasted with the literature review (Creswell in Khoza 2014:301). The findings, as presented in Chapter Five, confirmed that multiple layers of detail were available; and the rich, authentic descriptions provided by the women, supported by and compared with relevant literature, revealed the answers to the research question and sub-questions (Neuman 2014:39).

Upon reflection, and by way of conclusion, the integration of the exploratory, descriptive and contextual research designs was a fitting research decision. These research designs were consistent with the phenomenological approach. The exploratory research design brought the researcher into the life worlds of the women who lived in the converted Glebelands CRU. The researcher could explain participants' daily and context-situated routines in Glebelands CRU, pinpoint the challenges they faced in undergoing those activities, and report on the coping strategies the women used to adapt to their harsh living conditions in the converted Glebelands hostel. The descriptive research design facilitated comprehensive and detailed answers to the research question and sub-questions (Neuman 2014:39), while the contextual research design enabled the researcher to position the participants' experiences within their political and social realities (Carey 2012:229). The combined research designs resulted in a comprehensive explanation of the women's unique experiences and created a much needed opportunity to elevate the voices of this group of marginalised women (Creswell 2014:29).

The researcher's experiences and insights associated with the research methods were unpacked in section 4.3. The population group (section 4.3.1) for the study was defined, on the basis of the research questions (section 1.4), as being women residents living in Glebelands CRU. The purposely selected sample of ten participants comprised permanent residents, both

formal and informal, of Glebelands CRU, who were selected using criterion and snowball sampling (section 4.3.3). The participants clearly chose to share their valuable experiences and the meanings they associated with living in Glebelands (Creswell & Poth 2018:159). The voluminous information presented as the findings in Chapter Five confirms that the sample size was big enough (as per the discussion in section 4.3.2) and offered a range of valuable experiences that were analysed and interpreted (Flick 2014:122). This chapter confirms that decisive conclusions were achieved in the study on the basis of information shared by the participants (Flick 2014:122).

With reference to the method of data collection employed, the individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews – facilitated by an interview guide, the interview skills applied (section 1.7.3) and the prolonged time spent with each participant (on average three hours split over two interviews) – collectively achieved the desired outcome. Although the process of data collection was protracted, it remained orderly and did not thwart the participants' right to determine the pace of their interviews, the order in which they answered the questions, and the amount of information they chose to share. The data collection methods made a significant contribution to the study. The participants were at ease when they shared their personal experiences, and their answers were spontaneous and conversation-like (Creswell & Poth 2018:150). The researcher's probing generated specific detailed answers (Babbie & Mouton in Strydom 2013:152). Because participants were given adequate liberty and control during the interviews, they relaxed and offered rich and complex information (Mason 2018:115) that provided the answers to the research question and sub-questions (Khan 2014:306). It was concluded that the relationship between the researcher and participants was an egalitarian one, which was important because the research process was intended to be enabling and empowering, given the oppression that the women had suffered while living in Glebelands CRU. Finally, the data collection methods contributed significantly to the holistic understanding of the participants' complex experiences of living in Glebelands CRU, as portrayed in Chapter Five (De Vos et al 2011:351).

The research process was delayed in response to the uprising of violence in Glebelands CRU and of COVID-19, and it resumed only when time could be set aside for the participants to weigh up the benefits and risks of their involvement in the study. This increased their sense of safety.

The seven steps of coding devised by Colaizzi (1978:48-59), as presented by Paré (2015:1) (see section 4.4.5), were used to compress the voluminous data into a meaningful practical

format that the researcher could make sense of (Jebreen 2012:170; Kumar 2014:44). The seven steps enabled the researcher to immerse herself in the data. By using inductive and deductive reasoning, she could uncover the twelve important themes embedded in the participants' common experiences, as well as a few individual differences of opinion, in the stories that had been collected (Anfara & Mertz 2015:30; Creswell & Creswell 2018:182; Daymon & Holloway 2011:7; Neuman 2014:209). The services of the independent coder confirmed that the researcher had identified the main themes without bias (Farina 2014:50). A decision was taken to collapse the twelve themes into eight themes to avoid being repetitive in the research report. It was concluded that the participants' experiences, challenges and coping strategies as women living in Glebelands CRU were comprehensively encapsulated.

Lincoln and Guba's notion of trustworthiness, as outlined by Creswell and Creswell (2018:200), Creswell and Poth (2018:255) and Flick (2014:487-488), was used to uphold the integrity and trustworthiness of the study. The elements that were given consideration included: credibility (section 4.5.1), dependability and consistency (section 4.5.2), applicability and transferability (section 4.5.3) and objectivity and confirmability (section 4.5.4). After examining the research actions taken during the study, the researcher is confident that this research report is accurate and honest (Shenton 2004:64), has detailed all the research actions taken throughout the study (Daymon & Holloway 2011:86) and offers sufficient description about both the participants and the research process to enable others to assess the relevance of applying the findings and research methods of this study to their own research situations (Thomas & Magilvy 2011:153) and to indicate that the findings are free of bias and were corroborated (Nieuwenhuis 2016:95; Shenton 2004:72).

Five ethical principles (section 4.6) were upheld during the study: social justice; respect for persons and their autonomy; beneficence and non-maleficence towards participants; trust of participants; and scientific integrity, as presented by Polit and Beck (2010:121-125).

The conclusions reached were firstly that the research process was an empowering one for the women participants. The study had created a safe platform for them to share their concerns and recommendations about how Glebelands CRU could be improved for the benefit of women residents (section 4.6.1). It is now the researcher's responsibility to enlighten relevant stakeholders about the specific needs of the vulnerable women living in Glebelands CRU and to promote discourse about how the oppression and discrimination they suffer could be addressed. On reflection, measures implemented during the study to uphold the participants' rights were adequate. Participants were well informed about the

study at the outset, understood the notion of voluntary consent, understood what was to be expected of them during the study, and were reassured that they could withdraw from the study at any time should they wish (section 4.6.2). Processes were followed to safeguard participants' confidentiality and anonymity and protect them from harm as a result of their involvement in the study (section 4.6.2). Whilst debriefing was available to participants during the research process, none of them required it, which supports the researcher's view that the research process had not threatened participants' emotional, psychological or physical safety. The research process was delayed in response to the uprising of violence in Glebelands CRU and COVID-19 and resumed only when time could be set aside for the participants to weigh up the benefits and risks of their involvement in the study. These research activities increased their sense of safety. On reflection, there were several indicators that the research activities had respected the autonomy of participants. For example, time was spent on encouraging participants to consider the benefits and risks of their participation in the study; participants were given opportunities to make their own choices, such as where their second interviews would be conducted; and they decided how much or how little they wanted to share when answering the interview schedule questions. Naturally, the researcher's social work training prepared her well for honouring the diversity amongst participants. Participants' identities and anonymity were also protected. Adhering to these adopted ethical principles helped to satisfy the researcher that the research was legitimate and that she was trusted by the Glebelands CRU participants, who freely shared their thoughts and feelings about their experiences, challenges, coping strategies and suggestions for improving the living conditions of women in their low-cost subsidised housing.

Conclusions

The researcher was able to implement most of the research plan developed at the outset of the study. Because qualitative studies are flexible, several adjustments to the original research plan were permitted so that unexpected events or outcomes encountered as the study progressed could be addressed or accommodated. The research process was delayed in response to the uprising of violence in Glebelands CRU and of COVID-19, the locations of the interviews were changed, the interviews took longer than expected, the original list of interview questions was amended by the eThekweni Department of Housing, and the ward councillor and superintendent were not involved in recruiting participants for the study. The changes made were mostly in the interests of participants. It was concluded that the research goals and

objectives for this research were achieved because of the qualitative approach and research methodology and methods used.

6.1.5 Chapter Five: Research findings

The research findings were presented in two parts: the participants' biographical information (section 5.1) and the themes identified once the data had been analysed (section 5.2).

6.1.5.1 Summary and conclusion of the biographical information about the research participants

The overall summary was that the participants were mostly middle-aged women who were single. All but one of the women had their children or grandchildren or adult children and grandchildren living with them. Most (three-quarters) of the women were dependent upon state grants to survive because they lacked support from their children's fathers and had no fixed income of their own. Six women described themselves as unemployed, three were part of eThekweni's Expanded Public Works Programme and earned a monthly stipend of R3 500 per month, and one had a small self-start business, a tuckshop, that provided her with an inconsistent income. The women were poorly educated, which made their chances of finding employment poor. Only two had completed their secondary school education. Nine of the women had lived in Glebelands for over ten years; and the tenth participant had lived there for two years. The majority of the women had moved to Glebelands from lower South Coast rural areas and the Eastern Cape, and one from Zululand, to seek better fortunes for themselves and their children. The participants were all fluent in isiZulu, even though it was not the mother tongue of seven of the women (six were Xhosa and one was Bhaca). Because the women were the heads of their households, and their incomes were below R3 500 per month, they did not qualify to live in the family units, which would have improved the quality of their lives. The family units, according to the women, were reserved for more affluent, nuclear families.

It was concluded that the women struggled to support themselves and their families. Their prospects of finding employment so that they could be financially independent and be able to afford adequate accommodation for themselves and their children were limited. The researcher recognised the importance of questioning how disadvantaged female-headed households could be assisted to access adequate housing, such as the family units, to enable them to uplift themselves out of poverty and address the basic needs of their families. It was evident that this vulnerable group of women would not be able to achieve such improvements without additional support from the housing authorities. It was clear that the women in this study had resigned

themselves to staying in Glebelands CRU, despite their challenging conditions, because there was nowhere else for them to live.

6.1.5.2 Summaries and conclusions of the findings for each theme

The twelve themes initially identified during the data analysis were collapsed into eight themes (section 4.4.5). The present section offers a summary and conclusion for each of the eight themes that emerged from the participants' responses and were presented in Chapter Five, covering the following eight aspects: how they accessed accommodation in Glebelands CRU; their previous living conditions that motivated them to move to Glebelands CRU; the challenges they faced when they first moved into the Glebelands CRU; their general living conditions in the Glebelands CRU; the living conditions there from a woman's perspective; the positive contribution that Glebelands CRU had made to the quality of their lives; the strategies women residents used to adapt to living in the Glebelands CRU; and their recommendations for improving the living conditions of Glebelands CRU for female residents.

Theme 1: Participants' accounts of how they came to live at Glebelands CRU – summary and conclusion

Under this theme it was noted that the women had gained access to accommodation in Glebelands CRU in one of the following two ways: (1) using the assistance of a personal connection in Glebelands CRU to persuade the block committees to allocate a bed space to them and their children; or (2) moving into Glebelands, whether legally or illegally, to join a male partner or parent who was already there.

- **Sub-theme 1.1: Assistance by someone in Glebelands CRU to secure a space.** For some, the allocation of bed spaces in Glebelands was facilitated directly or indirectly by their personal contacts. This group of women used the assistance of men who bargained with the block committees on their behalf to allocate them bed spaces. These allocations often came at a cost. The women either had to pay a fee when they were allocated a space or had to pay in kind. One participant acknowledged that to secure her allocated bed space in Glebelands she had to agree to be a male resident's concubine.
- **Sub-theme 1.2: Coming to Glebelands CRU to join a partner/parent.** Some of the women moved into Glebelands to join their significant others, either partners or parents who were residents of Glebelands CRU. Xulu (2012:192) confirms that moving in with other hostel residents is a common means of securing accommodation in hostels in the city. When the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 was revoked on 30 June 1991, the number of women who moved into the hostels illegally increased significantly (Silekwa 2019). It is

asserted that this contributed to the overcrowding of hostels generally (Fenyane 2016:11). Depending on a partner or parent to obtain accommodation in Glebelands placed the women at risk. Women were forcibly evicted when their relationships ended or when their partner's rural wives and children were allowed to join the partner in the city. Similarly, those who lived with a parent had to vacate the rooms where they had lived when their parent died. Mostly, the women who experienced these evictions turned to their connections in Glebelands CRU to secure them bed spaces, so that they could continue to live there, but usually this meant they had to share with other families.

Conclusion: It was clear that the women in Glebelands CRU were victims of housing discrimination, and the stories they related suggested they were affected by both patriarchy and sexism (Zulu quoted in McKinley 2020:39). Their stories related to how the access they had gained to accommodation in Glebelands reflected their dependence upon men. The men who assisted them in this regard did not always have the interests of the women at heart, and they were exploited in the process. In the absence of the formal application process for low-cost subsidised rental accommodation in Glebelands CRU, the women were at risk. It was concluded that without formal tenure the women would continue to suffer forcible evictions and exploitation. In the absence of carefully monitored application processes for low-cost subsidised housing for vulnerable groups such those in this study, disadvantaged women needing affordable accommodation could be manipulated by people who sold them bed spaces, which according to some participants contributed to the ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU (Ubisi 2013:11-12; Xulu 2012:8).

Theme 2: Participants' descriptions of their previous living conditions before moving to Glebelands CRU – summary and conclusion

When the participants described their previous living conditions before they moved into Glebelands CRU, the following four motivating factors emerged: (1) lack of resources; (2) political violence; (3) relationship issues; and (4) the scarcity of affordable accommodation.

- **Sub-theme 2.1: Lack of resources**

Participants who came from rural areas were motivated to live in the city because they wanted access to the basic resources that they anticipated the city would offer them, such as electricity, water and sanitation. For the participant who depended upon her small self-start-up business enterprise, being close to retail outlets was a necessity. Those who moved from the informal settlements in the city into Glebelands wanted to escape from unhealthy living conditions such as the lack of solid waste disposal and of piped water. The

needs of the participants were basic but critical for their well-being (Sobantu et al 2019:4). As noted by Kleinhans et al (2010:382), such basic services enable people to live dignified, peaceful and healthy lives and therefore must be afforded to every citizen.

- **Sub-theme 2.2: Political violence in hometown area**

Ongoing political violence in the areas from which several participants came had prompted them to relocate to Glebelands CRU. After 1994, political tensions between freedom movements became pronounced in KwaZulu-Natal when the ANC, United Democratic Front (UDF), Inkatha, the Zulu nationalist cultural movement and forerunner of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and the Congress of the People (COPE) competed for political support (Burger 2019c:3, 9). Party politics divided communities, which, as described by the participants, was unsettling. Feeling safe is a significant indicator of a person's well-being, which explains why the women had chosen to leave their homes and move to Glebelands (Kleinhans et al 2010:382; Ntuli 2017; Sobantu et al 2019:5; Xulu 2014:150). This was ironic given that findings presented in section 5.2.3.1 indicate that the violence in Glebelands CRU was linked to party politics.

- **Sub-theme 2.3: Relationship issues**

For some participants, intimate partner relationships were a push or pull factor in their decision to move to Glebelands. Housing trajectories are commonly influenced by such dynamics in relationships with intimate partners (Skobba 2016:50).

- ***Leaving to escape or resolve relationship issues.*** Some women relocated to Glebelands to escape unhappy relationships with their intimate partners in their home towns. Glebelands CRU was the most affordable place they could find, as destitute low-income earners, in and around the peripheries of Durban (Congress 2013:129).
- ***Choosing to be with an intimate partner.*** Some women tried to improve their relationships with intimate partners living in Glebelands CRU by joining them there. Some who had relocated to be with their intimate partners in Glebelands joined them when influx control was revoked in 1986, which was a common occurrence according to Xulu (2014:151) and Vosloo (2020:32). These women regarded their intimate partners living in Glebelands as valuable because they increased their access to resources such as healthcare and offered them support.

- **Sub-theme 2.4: Scarcity of affordable accommodation**

Participants needed affordable accommodation close to the resources they required to enjoy a better life than the one they had experienced before moving. Glebelands CRU was

well situated, being close to transport networks, retail outlets, social services, healthcare facilities and the industrial areas, which, as confirmed by Sobantu et al (2019:4), would benefit not only the women, but their children too. Being poor and being female meant that the participants had limited affordable options concerning where they could stay, which was why they chose to settle in Glebelands CRU.

Conclusion: It was concluded that multiple factors motivated participants to choose to live in Glebelands CRU, affordability being the most significant. The researcher agreed with the view that the marginalisation of women in the allocation of housing negatively impacted on their self-esteem, personal development and sense of worthiness and reinforced their inferior status (Watson 1986:1). Therefore, increasing reasonable housing for disadvantaged low-income earners, especially in and around the peripheries of cities, is a necessity (Sobantu & Nel 2019:284). Increasing the availability of low-cost housing for disadvantaged women would empower them to protect themselves and their children from the harmful consequences of ongoing domestic violence. When women can access adequate shelter for themselves and their children, they can depend less on abusive intimate partners for a place for them to live (Govender 2019:153-154).

Theme 3: Participants' accounts of the challenges they faced when they first moved into Glebelands CRU – summary and conclusion

The participants' accounts of the challenges they faced when they first moved into Glebelands CRU revealed the following three main problems: (1) violence and murders; (2) overcrowding and lack of privacy; and (3) the bad behaviour of other residents.

- **Sub-theme 3.1: Violence and murders**

Several women mentioned how difficult it was for them to accept and adjust to the high level of violence they experienced in Glebelands when they first moved in. They noted that they had still not become accustomed to the violence, which remained a significant stressor in their lives after many years of living there. According to Xulu (2014:150), prior to 1994 the violence and killings in Glebelands CRU had been motivated by cultural and ethnic conflict and factionalism. After 1994, it appears that party politics fuelled the violence and killings there (Burger 2019c:3). According to the participants, causes of the violence and killings were the extortion of residents, revenge killings related to forced evictions in Glebelands, and corruption associated with the sale of bed spaces, in some instances implicating the block committees. The women were poorly prepared for the extent and nature of the violence they had to contend with (Ettetal & Mahoney 2017:240) and they

felt unsafe much of the time, as discussed by Ngongo and Mtshali (2006:232). The women referred to the murders of other women as revenge killings; and they mentioned women whose intimate partners had been murdered, which meant they lost the only shelter that they and their children had. Women who had children living with them commented on the difficulties of supporting and caring for their children in such a violent context. Firstly, the mothers could do little to shield their young children from the serious acts of violence in Glebelands CRU, and they worried about the long-term consequences of their young children's exposure to violence in the blocks where they lived. Mothers with older children, particularly adolescent boys or young adult men, realised that they could do little to prevent them from being caught in the crossfire of perpetrators of the violence. One mother feared for the safety of her adolescent sons, who had witnessed an execution-style killing, and worried that they would be targeted by the perpetrators to silence them.

- **Sub-theme 3.2: Overcrowding and lack of privacy**

As a result of overcrowding in Glebelands CRU, it was not uncommon for participants and their partners to share a room or unit with other people, including other families. Thani et al (2018:673) acknowledge that the overcrowded living conditions in eThekweni CRUs are harmful for human habitation. Being forced to live so close to others robbed the women of their privacy, negatively impacted on their sexual relationships, and ultimately stole their dignity. According to African culture and religious perspectives, acts of intimacy such as kissing or other forms of sexual expression are meant to be private acts that the young and people outside the couple relationship never get to witness (Macozoma 2019:95-96).

- **Sub-theme 3.3: Bad behaviour of other residents**

Several participants shared that when they first moved into Glebelands CRU they were offended by the socially improper behaviour of some residents with whom they shared their living spaces. Participants said it was challenging to live close to others whose personal values were different from their own. The socially improper behaviour of fellow residents generated stress. Examples given of socially improper behaviour by male residents included the following: discriminatory behaviour towards women; drunkenness; urination on the floors in the shared ablution facilities and their failure to clean it up; noisy disruption of other residents; and failure to take responsibility for any routine cleaning of the shared functional spaces (kitchens, bathrooms and toilets). Several participants were also concerned that the toilet and shower doors in the bathroom areas that they shared with men did not lock, which increased their risk of sexual assault.

Conclusion: The researcher concluded that disadvantaged women suffered discrimination in housing and were expected to resign themselves to living in poor, overcrowded accommodation (Pillay 2017:2). The women had been ill prepared for the stressors they would encounter when living in Glebelands CRU (Ettekal & Mahoney 2017:240). The violence that occurred in Glebelands shocked the women when they moved in, and their shock worsened over time when women whom they knew of lost their intimate partners to the violence and were forcibly evicted as a result. They also learned that some women had been murdered to avenge the deaths of other residents. The lack of safety the women experienced was exacerbated because, as mothers, they realised that raising their children in that violent context could affect the life transitions and development of their children, which is confirmed by Onwuegbuzie et al (2013:6). The women felt powerless because they could not prevent this. The stressful factors that affected the women when they first moved into Glebelands had troubled them throughout their stay there because the housing administrators had not taken into account the unique housing needs of the women. The introduction of the CRU Programme 2006 had not transformed low-cost subsidised housing to cater for the unique housing needs of women. This meant that, over time, the women had had to adapt to the unfavourable living conditions they were exposed to in the converted CRU. As noted by Murphy (2014), minimal consideration had been given to the challenges that women experienced in housing, because the housing solutions for vulnerable groups were developed by and for men.

Theme 4: Participants' accounts of the general living conditions in Glebelands CRU – summary and conclusion

Under this theme the participants' accounts of the prevailing general living conditions in the Glebelands CRU were discussed. The challenges participants faced when they first moved into Glebelands continued to trouble them, and over time they struggled with additional issues that undermined their well-being and that of their families. The participants identified the following six issues that undermined the quality of life of women living in Glebelands CRU: (1) overcrowding and lack of privacy; (2) unsatisfactory sleeping arrangements; (3) lack of security and ongoing violence; (4) concerns about raising children in that violent context; (5) the inconsistent and often unfair rules that block chairmen/committees set for residents; and (6) the lack of maintenance and cleanliness.

- **Sub-theme 4.1: Overcrowding and lack of privacy**

Like most of the old, converted hostels, Glebelands CRU was typically overcrowded, and the occupancy of rooms or units exceeded the number of people they were designed to

accommodate (Xulu 2014:151-152). The functional spaces such as bathrooms and kitchen areas were difficult for residents to access because of the overcrowding, which impacted on their daily routines. Residents could not access the functional spaces when they wanted to, especially the bathrooms, and had to wait for their turn. The unisex bathrooms had no locks on the doors, which made the women feel vulnerable, and they complained that men sometimes, without knocking, walked into the bathrooms where women were bathing. Several women complained about the unwanted advances that residents or visitors made towards female residents in the bathroom areas, particularly men under the influence of alcohol. The overcrowding presented other privacy problems for the women who shared rooms or units with other families, particularly when they wanted to address their own family matters. Firstly, the women found that often their family norms and practices differed from those of the other families they had to share their spaces with. For example, standards of cleanliness varied amongst the different families, which generated tension among the women. The second issue was that those responsible for the room or unit allocations did not pay attention to the family sizes and constellations of the families who were expected to live together. It was uncomfortable when the women were allocated a space where they had to share with adult males or had adolescent daughters and had to share a room with another family with adult sons. Finally, it was stated by some that they felt most uncomfortable when they had to discipline their children or address family issues in the presence of the other families with whom they shared their living spaces. The extent of overcrowding as described by participants placed them at risk. Overcrowding such as this, according to Thani et al (2018:674), creates health problems, social problems, and the abuse of housing resources.

- **Sub-theme 4.2: Unsatisfactory sleeping arrangements**

The women explained that it was difficult to separate the allocated spaces into different living areas for the different families who shared a room or unit because there were too many people sharing that space. In most instances children did not have fixed sleeping areas, and makeshift beds were set up for them on the kitchen floor or in passage areas, or on the floor next to their parents' bed, which was in violation of Glebelands Block Rules. The housing allocated to female-headed households in Glebelands CRU overlooked the cultural identity of its beneficiaries and therefore was inadequate (OHCHR/UN-Habitat 2012:4). Such female-headed families needed to have been accommodated in the family units, as the design and additional privacy that these units provided would have addressed the problems that the women experienced.

- **Sub-theme 4.3: Lack of security and ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU**

The ongoing violence in Glebelands CRU was a social reality that disturbed the well-being of the women who lived there. The consensus was that the measures taken to address the violence and murders were inappropriate, given the extent of the violence in the blocks where the participants lived and the nature of the killings. The women described the violence as sick and pathological. The peace talks, police patrols around the peripheries of the Glebelands CRU, and the government's call for prayers had not quelled the violence. The investigation of the Public Protector had also failed to address the source of the problem. It was felt that the authorities were not committed to addressing the sources of the conflict and chose to overlook the suffering it caused. As a result of living in constant fear of becoming the next victim, most of the women did not trust anyone, not even their neighbours. They kept their experiences or opinions related to the violence and murders to themselves.

- **Sub-theme 4.4: Concerns about raising children in Glebelands CRU amidst ongoing violence**

Participants described the Glebelands CRU environment as a hostile place for them to raise their children in. The women feared both for their children's safety and for their emotional well-being. As some participants stated, there was a risk that their children's exposure to the ongoing violence in Glebelands could cause them to start normalising violence. Those whose children had witnessed killings had to live with the fear that their children could be targeted in order to prevent them from testifying. In some parts of Glebelands CRU, residents resented children being allowed to live in the blocks. The newly developed family units and the blocks that were managed by progressive block committees permitted children to live with their parents. However, the "old school" block committees enforced stringent rules that either forbade children from staying with their parents or imposed rules that were contrary to meeting children's needs. In some blocks children were prohibited from playing in any open communal spaces or making any form of noise. To prevent the children from breaking the rules, several mothers shared that they had adapted their parenting style to keep their children's behaviour in check. The mothers described themselves as being more authoritarian, vigilant about monitoring their children's whereabouts, and rigid about the curfews they imposed on their children. The younger children were restricted to playing in the family unit rooms, which contributed to overcrowded living. The mothers prohibited their children from going to play outdoors. The parental concerns mentioned by the participants are well supported by scholarly sources,

which state that because much of the socialisation, skills development and identity formation of children occurs in the home, housing must provide children with a healthy and safe place to live (Sobantu 2020:63; Solari & Mare 2012:465-466). As stated by Chenwi and McLean (2009:539), when housing is inadequate for the healthy development of children, the burden is placed on the parents to protect their children and keep them healthy. As noted by one mother, it was better to raise her child in Glebelands CRU, while living with her, rather than to send her child away. She tried to use her relationship with her child as a buffer against the violence that affected them all.

- **Sub-theme 4.5: Rules set for residents by the block chairmen/committees**

One of the purposes of the 1998 eThekweni Hostels Policy was to disband block structures and prevent the self-appointed block chairmen and committees from setting rules and fighting over municipal property (Asmal 2014). The eThekweni Municipality failed to do this in Glebelands CRU. The block structures continued, and some of the block chairmen/committees in the older blocks made living conditions for women and their children in Glebelands CRU challenging. It was also stated that the rules imposed by block chairmen were block specific. Thus in different blocks the room allocations could be done differently; and in some blocks both male and female residents could have partners to sleep over in their rooms, which differed from the rule in other blocks. Those living under the authority of the old school block chairmen raised several complaints. One of the women's concerns related to the forced eviction of children when their parents died. Even though this was unlawful, the children had to vacate the rooms immediately. It was also mentioned that the old school block chairmen regulated the movements of the women and made it obligatory for them to report to the block chairmen when they received any visitors. In certain blocks women were not allowed to have any non-resident male partners in their rooms, whilst the male residents could and were even permitted to have them sleep over. These different rules for women and their children were used by the block chairmen/committees to dominate and control the women residents in order to retain the patriarchal structures of power in Glebelands CRU (Saugeres 2009:194).

- **Sub-theme 4.6: Poor maintenance of Glebelands CRU by the municipality**

The neglected maintenance of Glebelands CRU was described by the participants as a negative living condition that left them frustrated and disillusioned. The municipality was slow to investigate participants' reported complaints. Usually a lodged complaint was inspected only after long periods of waiting but was never actually addressed. The

municipality's failure to address the reported complaints compromised the health of the residents, because in most instances, as reported by Ubisi (2013:11), the maintenance issues involved broken doors and windows, burst pipes, sewage running into residents' units, dripping water taps, and residents using undeveloped areas as ablution facilities. The women described their living conditions in Glebelands CRU as untidy and unclean, and they were frustrated by the poor hygiene of other occupants, which sparked conflict between residents. The municipality made no effort as the landlord to resolve these conflicts. One of the women stated that the poor maintenance and lack of cleanliness in Glebelands CRU were responsible for the ongoing rental boycotts there. The women complained that male residents in Glebelands had a gendered bias concerning the cleaning of the shared spaces and waited for the women residents to clean up after them. One participant complained that some residents performed cultural rituals that involved steaming and vomiting, which were performed in the toilet areas; this was unhygienic for others who had to use the toilets afterwards, because these had not been cleaned after the rituals. Lastly, participants focused on how other residents negatively impacted on the quality of living in Glebelands CRU. Their comments were arranged in two parts. The first part included participants' statements about the socially inappropriate behaviour of other residents, particularly males, which involved drunkenness and swearing, which was disruptive and set a bad example for their children. The second part outlined the women's experiences of personality clashes between residents who shared their living spaces. Their complaints included their having to deal with intolerance, inconsideration and disrespect from their non-relative household members. They were frequently reminded that they did not own their living spaces and therefore did not have any right to complain or expect others to accommodate their needs. As noted by Skobba (2016:50), when residents have to share overcrowded living spaces with others, especially with people they are not related to, clashes over issues are inevitable.

Conclusion: The researcher concluded that the overcrowded Glebelands CRU denied the participants their right to privacy. The conditions the women described were consistent with the assertion by Thani et al (2018:673) and Xulu (2012:8) that the women lived in a hostile living environment. The spaces allocated to predominantly female-headed households in this study were impractical for the typical South African extended family system, which on average consists of six members in rural households and four in urban households (Revised White Paper on Families in South Africa 2021:7). The spaces allocated to these families were totally insufficient. Rooms in Glebelands CRU that were designed to accommodate four people ended

up accommodating up to fifteen. Whilst Xulu (2014:151-152) asserts that lack of space and privacy affects both men and women equally in the hostels (Xulu 2014:151-152), the women in Glebelands CRU suffered an additional threat, that of being sexually molested or harassed by male residents, particularly in the bathroom areas that offered women no privacy nor safety. It is confirmed that overcrowded living spaces contributes to gender-based violence (Chenwi & McLean 2009:518). The sexual harassment deserves to receive attention, as stated by Pricer (2020:558), because women should feel safest where they live. The ongoing violence in Glebelands undermined the safety and security of the women further. It was difficult for women to trust anyone, and therefore they kept to themselves and had to deal with the emotional stress of these episodes of violence on their own. Communal living is stressful, but given the overcrowding in Glebelands CRU, the relationships between residents were tenuous. Patriarchal attitudes held by the old school block chairmen/committees as well as ordinary male residents continued to control and oppress women residents. Compounding the intersection of poverty, race, unemployment and lack of education, the women living in Glebelands CRU also experienced housing discrimination. In the absence of affordable housing options for these disadvantaged women, they had no other option but to adapt to the hostile environment they found themselves in. If the goal is to develop better housing for such women, then housing authorities need to initiate greater consultation with them when designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating housing that is suitably gender sensitive, particularly for disadvantaged women (Sobantu 2020:63).

The women's descriptions of the living conditions in Glebelands CRU from a woman's perspective will be presented next.

Theme 5: Descriptions of the living conditions in Glebelands CRU from a woman's perspective – summary and conclusion

Under this theme, the women spoke about the following five issues: (1) the challenges of being a woman living in a male-dominated environment; (2) the sidelining of women residents in Glebelands CRU matters; (3) the stigmatisation of Glebelands CRU women residents by the outside community; (4) the disrespect that male residents demonstrated towards female residents; and (5) the lack of employment opportunities in and around Glebelands CRU for women.

- **Sub-theme 5.1: Challenges of living in a male-dominated environment**

The women agreed that living in a male-dominated environment such as Glebelands CRU was restrictive for women in several ways. Some of the block chairmen/committees created

rules in their blocks that treated women and children differently from the men (examples of such discriminatory rules were presented in the summary and conclusions for theme 4). The block chairmen/committees took advantage of newly bereaved women who had lost their partners by forcing them to leave the rooms they had occupied with their Glebelands CRU partners to make way for new residents who had paid the block committee/chairman for their bed spaces or rooms. The women would be offered another space in the block that they would have to share with one or more families and was considerably smaller than the room or space they had shared with their late partner. In most instances the women had nowhere else to live and accepted the spaces they were offered, which exacerbated the overcrowding in the blocks. At face value the block chairmen/committees were compliant with the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act 19 of 1998 (PIE Act), because they offered the widowed women alternative accommodation, but in reality they took advantage of the widowed women's vulnerability and allocated them smaller, less desirable spaces than the men. The composition of the block committees in Glebelands CRU excluded women, who thus had no one to represent their interests and needs as residents, and therefore the interests of male residents were prioritised.

- **Sub-theme 5.2: Sidelineing of women residents in Glebelands CRU matters**

Because of the patriarchal system that prevailed in Glebelands, women who asserted themselves or actively involved themselves in politics were considered a threat by the conservative male residents. In one instance a female political activist living in Glebelands was assassinated there, which left women residents shocked and afraid. The block chairmen/committees were dismissive of women and, as explained by some of the participants, would speak to women only when they needed the women to convey a message to the women's partners. It was taboo for the women to raise their concerns about matters that affected them in Glebelands CRU or to make suggestions about how the place could be improved. The women were expected to be present only as silent spectators during the general meetings that were convened in Glebelands. Discouraging women from influencing decisions in public meetings is common practice within traditional African cultures (Khumalo 2013:3; Todes et al 2010:73). The outcome of the women's silence was that the challenges they experienced in Glebelands CRU were never addressed; and according to Manomano (2018:33), over time this would erode the women's self-esteem, their sense of identity and belonging, and their involvement. It was difficult for them as women not to have a say about matters that affected them directly, and some indicated

that it was frustrating that their partners were expected to make decisions on their behalf. One of the injustices participants raised was that the law of succession was not applied at Glebelands CRU in the event of a male resident's death. When adult children lost the parent with whom they were living, they were not protected by the PIE Act 19 of 1998. They were forcibly evicted without being offered alternative accommodation in Glebelands or being given the three-month grace period to find alternative accommodation.

- **Sub-theme 5.3: Stigmatising of Glebelands CRU women by the outside community**

The women living in Glebelands CRU believed that the outside community denigrated them because they lived there. The women indicated two things that outsiders inferred about them. The first was that women living in Glebelands were violent, and the second was that they were immoral because they relied on their liaisons with male residents in Glebelands in order to survive (Blokland 2008:33). Defamatory terms were used by the outside community to refer to the Glebelands women; these terms included "imidlwembe" (uncontrollable women), "iziqhwaga" (violent women) and "izigebengu" (criminals). Over time, derogatory labels such as these undermined the self-worth of the women (Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). The women experienced the following three negative outcomes through being stigmatised: low status within the broader neighbourhood; social exclusion and the consequent loss of opportunities that others benefited from; and reduced prospects of work that they desperately needed.

- **Sub-theme 5.4: Disrespecting of female residents by the male residents**

Several women stated that the men who shared their living spaces treated the women in Glebelands disrespectfully. The house rules made by the block committees were often disregarded by male residents without the non-compliant men suffering any penalties. One of the examples given was the noisy behaviour of male residents late at night, which disrupted the children who were studying or trying to sleep. Another example was men's refusal to clean up the shared living spaces. It was concluded that the men perceived themselves to be superior to the women who lived in Glebelands. Some participants suggested that in a way women got what they deserved, because they did not stand up for one other in Glebelands. The perception was that single women living in Glebelands suffered more disrespect from male residents because such women had no one to support and defend their interests.

- **Sub-theme 5.5: Lack of employment opportunities for women in and around Glebelands CRU**

One of the reasons women chose to live in Glebelands was its closeness to an industrial area where they had hoped to access employment opportunities so as to support themselves and their children. However, the women and the adult children who lived with them found it more challenging to find work than they expected. Those who did so worked either as government volunteers who received small stipends or as domestic workers in the surrounding areas (Khoza 2014:69). These opportunities did little to elevate their status, economic security or independence. Whilst the CRU Programme was meant to create work opportunities for housing beneficiaries by expanding the public works projects, it was generally the men who benefited, and the women were overlooked because they did not have adequate job skills. The women felt that unless work opportunities were created for women living in Glebelands, they would fail to elevate themselves and their children out of the poverty they were trapped in (Kotwal & Prabhakar 2017:199; Skobba 2016:45).

Conclusion: Several insights were gained in respect of theme 5. The participants shared experiences that highlighted their challenges as women living in a male-dominated environment. The patriarchal system that prevailed in Glebelands CRU reinforced the subordinate roles that women were assigned within the CRU, which entailed that they be silent and invisible and abide by the rules made by men for the benefit of men. The women were discouraged from participating in issues of concern because their involvement would upset the status quo. The men in Glebelands CRU did not want the women to realise their potential because that would usurp their power. The women's unique needs as residents of Glebelands CRU were overlooked to favour men (Burger 2019c:18). Those women who lived permanently with their partners were to some extent protected by their partners against some of the unfair treatment they received from male residents and the block committees. Single women with children suffered most because there was no one to stand up for their rights. The women experienced discrimination not only from the men and block chairmen/committees in Glebelands but also, as mentioned, from people in the broader community in which Glebelands was situated. Being stigmatised at this level eroded the women's dignity and feelings of self-worth, exacerbated their social exclusion and reduced their access to the opportunities and resources they needed, which made it more difficult for them to find employment. In the absence of other affordable housing options, the women were trapped and had to adapt to living in a male-dominant environment.

Theme 6: How the Glebelands CRU improves the quality of women's lives – summary and conclusion

Two sub-themes emerged in relation to this theme: (1) the positive factors that improved the quality of the women's lives in Glebelands CRU; and in contrast, (2) the factors that had a negative impact on their lives. Most participants expressed the view that living in Glebelands CRU offered women the following five benefits that improved the quality of their lives: (1) women and their children had shelter; (2) the family units were spacious and conducive for family living; (3) women had access to affordable low-rental accommodation; (4) women received support from other women residents living in Glebelands CRU; and (5) the Glebelands CRU was conveniently situated to resources and services that women residents needed, including the Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room (OSS). The factors associated with the negative impact of the Glebelands CRU on the lives of women living there are presented after discussion below of the five benefits.

- **Sub-theme 6.1: Positive contributions**

Accommodation is one of the most basic human needs (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19; Sobantu & Nel 2019:284) but is a scarce resource for women who are socio-economically disadvantaged. One of the purposes of the CRU Programme, as outlined in section 3.4.2 (Principles of the CRU Programme), was to create adequate low-cost housing rental options for the growing number of disadvantaged women and children who needed accommodation in urban and peri-urban areas (Ngcongco & Mtshali 2006:216). The participants acknowledged that women benefited in several ways from the accommodation that Glebelands CRU provided them with, as summarised below.

- **Shelter.** Glebelands CRU offered women and their children shelter, which was not until recently an acknowledged priority in South Africa. Providing women and their children with shelter was considered an important step taken by the local government to improve the lives of women who wanted to live in the Umlazi area. For some participants in Glebelands CRU, it was a blessing that their children were permitted to stay with them. As asserted by Ndinda (2009:328), the allocation of low-cost rental housing to women and their children, irrespective of their marital or employment status, is a lifetime achievement for South Africa (Ndinda 2009:328).
- **Functional accommodation.** The introduction of the family unit accommodation provided families with appropriate, affordable, spacious accommodation that was a great improvement upon the original Glebelands rooms and units built before the CRU

conversions. Unfortunately, single women and their children did not qualify for family unit accommodation. The family units were reserved for families who earned a joint income of between R2 500 and R15 000 per month before deductions. The family units offered the following benefits to women who were fortunate enough to live there.

- The family units provided better **safety and security** so that the families did not have to live behind locked doors. The members of the family units could come and go as they pleased without being affected by the violence in Glebelands, and incidents of crime in the new blocks were scarce.
- The family units offered **facilities for families** and this allowed them to live collectively undisturbed lives (Paglione cited in Sobantu et al 2019:6). The families had fewer conflicts with other families and residents because they did not share their living spaces with them. The families in the units were also not troubled by the socially inappropriate behaviour of the single male residents that the participants in the study had frequently encountered in their shared living spaces, such as noise, uncleanliness and drunkenness. Similarly, unsolicited sexual advances from single men under the influence of alcohol did not affect women living in the family units.
- The units were well designed in that they had **designated spaces** for different family activities, bedrooms, bathrooms, a kitchen and a social area where the family could congregate. Each family unit offered separate bedrooms for parents and the children. The units were also new and in good repair.

Whilst the views of the participants were that the beneficiaries of the family units accommodation were better off than those like themselves, who lived in the single-unit blocks, they realised that the accommodation they had been allocated had benefited them in the ways explained below.

- **Affordable accommodation.** Glebelands CRU provided women with affordable rental accommodation. As socially and economically disadvantaged women, they had struggled to find affordable rental accommodation on the peripheries of Durban because it was scarce (Pricer 2020:552-553). Whilst the women did enjoy the benefits that family units offered, they conceded that the old blocks had provided women with affordable single room or unit accommodation having free municipal services such as electricity and water. Without the low rental accommodation and services, they would not have been able to survive. Some women shared that they had not paid any rental at all since the rental boycotts began. The rental boycotts had started in 2006 before the CRU conversion of hostels was being done, for reasons that remained unresolved at the time

of the research (Burger 2019a). On a further positive note, by not paying rentals the women were able to pay for other necessities such as food and healthcare (SJ Newman 2008:904).

- **Support and guidance.** Women living in the Glebelands CRU received support and guidance from fellow women residents. Their conversations with fellow residents enabled them to process their experiences of the issues around them. The women had to be discerning about whom they shared their experiences with, given the ongoing Glebelands violence (Burger 2019c:27). The women kept one another entertained, which was a positive distraction from the harsh realities they faced while living in Glebelands CRU (Congress 2013:129). The support women received from one another also included practical support such as child minding, financial assistance and donations of food when they were cash-strapped. Burger (2019c:27), in her investigation, confirmed that women of Glebelands were supportive of one another and provided practical assistance to those in need, even assistance with burial costs for those who had lost a family member or been forcibly evicted.
- **Convenient location.** The central location of Glebelands CRU increased the women's access to resources and the Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room. By living there, the women could access municipal services such as electricity and water, the transport system, a variety of retail outlets, schools for their children that were within walking distance, a clinic and a hospital, the Department of Home Affairs, SASSA, places of worship, and pension pay points at retail outlets. The Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room meetings were convened at Glebelands CRU. The benefits of these meetings entailed that the issues brought to the War Room by community members received the attention of multiple stakeholders, who worked together to offer the community integrated services, especially from the DSD, DoH and SASSA. Volunteers serving the War Room helped to profile the community members, which fast-tracked services for those who needed them. The stakeholders offered valuable educational programmes for residents on topics such as health issues, gender-based violence, and crime. The Operation Sukuma Sakhe War Room also ran a soup kitchen at Glebelands CRU to ensure that indigent people received adequate nutrition, particularly those who were HIV positive and taking ARVs. An important purpose of housing, particularly for disadvantaged people, is to increase their access to economic opportunities, health and educational and social amenities (Jacobs 2011:47), as advocated in the White Paper on Housing (South Africa 1994a), because this is the start of helping them to uplift

themselves out of poverty (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19). When people can access the resources mentioned, they become encouraged to lead a balanced life and improve their health and socio-economic status (Chenwi & McLean 2009:520). The women confirmed that, to a large extent, this is what Glebelands CRU had done for them.

- **Sub-theme 6.2: Negative impacts**

Three participants stated strongly that Glebelands CRU had not improved the lives of women who lived there. They highlighted the following three negative indicators: (1) the exclusion of single women with children from the family units; (2) the loss of pride that women in Glebelands CRU suffered; and (3) the lack of deserved attention to the needs of older women living in Glebelands CRU.

- **Exclusion from the family units.** A concern raised by the first participant was that single women with children were excluded from the allocation of family units. It became clear that the participants distrusted how the allocation of the family units had been managed, because the housing officials had not been open and transparent. Participants were not properly informed about the qualifying criteria and application procedures and had been excluded from the planning consultations. They suspected that housing officials responsible for the allocation of family units had been corrupt and or had mismanaged the application process. External sources concluded that the family unit allocations had been irregular. The investigation by Burger (2019a) mentioned allegations that relatively affluent people from other areas had secured family units, whilst existing residents living in the overcrowded rooms were excluded. Female-headed households would have benefited considerably from the family unit accommodation because the spatial designs were better suited to family living than the old block rooms and units they occupied, and they offered families more privacy.
- **Loss of pride.** The concern raised by the second participant was that the loss of pride women suffered in Glebelands CRU undid any positive contributions that the CRU had initiated in the lives of women. Issues such as having to sleep in a room with non-relatives of mixed genders, having to adapt to the ongoing violence, and having to tolerate the unjust rules that block chairmen/committees imposed on women residents had robbed this participant of her dignity and well-being. These factors, when experienced, are known to undermine the dignity of women in housing (Khumalo 2013:10).

- **Overlooking of needs.** The concern expressed by the third participant, an older resident, was that the needs of older women residents were overlooked in Glebelands CRU. The participant stated that the quality of her life was negatively affected by having to share her room with younger women. She expected the housing authorities to consider the needs of older women and separate the older women from the younger ones because their housing needs were completely different. The participant recommended that special places be created for elderly people within Glebelands CRU to house them. The researcher realised the truth of the assertion of Darab and Hartman (2013:355) that the focus in housing had mostly been on women with children and ignored the housing needs of single older women. Ngcongo and Mtshali (2006:216) confirm that older women do not appreciate living with younger women, and therefore different low-cost, subsidised rental accommodation options need to be created for them.

Conclusion: The development of family units was a positive step in housing. Unfortunately, the households headed by single parents or females, which needed the improved designs for families because they offered more space, privacy, safety, and less exposure to residents who exhibited socially inappropriate behaviour, did not qualify for the family units. The women recognised the positive contributions that the family units would have made to their lives, but they also acknowledged the value of the housing that had been allocated to them, offering shelter for themselves and their children, affordable accommodation that included free services, supportive relationships, and access to resources they needed. These benefits were unrelated to the CRU conversion.

The housing benefits mentioned were not appreciated by all the participants. For some, because their more pressing needs were overlooked, these benefits were insignificant. Three negative factors were relevant: the injustice of excluding the female-headed families from the family unit allocations; the lack of dignity that women who lived in Glebelands suffered; and the overlooking of the housing needs of older women. Some of these needs could have been addressed if the development of the Glebelands CRU conversion had been more participatory and if women residents of the old hostel accommodation had been consulted before the conversions about their specific housing needs. The conversion of hostels did not ease the overpopulation of residents in the old blocks of Glebelands, and the democratic government's plan to transform the hostels did not yield the results that were envisaged (Elder cited in Xulu 2014:144). The needs of the most vulnerable housing beneficiaries were overlooked. The

researcher concluded that the Glebelands CRU conversions had not improved the quality of the women's lives. If anything, the conversions had excluded them socially even more. This is supported by Xulu (2012:13), whose study found that after the KwaMashu CRU conversion had been effected, participants could not identify any positive contributions that the changes had made to their lives. The researcher realised that housing that fails to uphold the dignity of its beneficiaries is not truly housing but will always be considered nothing more than a shelter.

Theme 7: Strategies women residents used to adapt to living in Glebelands CRU – summary and conclusion

Three strategies enabled the women to adapt to the unstable and oppressive atmosphere in Glebelands CRU. The strategies were (1) remaining submissive; (2) avoiding getting involved in or discussing Glebelands CRU issues; and (3) abiding by the rules.

- **Sub-theme 7.1: Remaining submissive**

The women used this coping strategy to adapt to the patriarchal structure that still prevailed within Glebelands CRU (Jacobs 2011:51). The male residents and block chairmen/committees continued to dominate and control the women residents as was the norm before the CRU conversion (Saugeres 2009:194). Several participants realised that it was best never to question the orders they were given by the male residents or the men-only block committees, even when they recognised that the orders were in contravention of their rights. They simply did what they were ordered to do. Compliance avoided unpleasant consequences, the worst being that they would be labelled and ostracised as someone who did not know her place as an African woman (Blokland 2008:42). The women realised that they had to be cautious about what they did or said so as not to offend those in power, because doing so could place them or their family members at risk (Asmal 2014; Thobejane cited in Yesufu & Nkomo 2018:3). As mentioned by one of the women, remaining submissive was something that African women had been socialised to do. Whilst some may consider submission as weakness on the part of women, Boes and Van Wormer (1997:410) reframe this to show that in situations such as those the women described, their submission was in fact a judicious response under those circumstances, indicating strength in electing to behave in ways that would ensure the best outcome for themselves and their families. The mission of the women in this study was to promote the well-being of their families, and they knew what they had to do to fit in and stay in control of their situation with due regard for the adversities (Littlefield 2003:5; Teater 2010:24). It was

concluded that the women had learned how to survive in a dangerous context and that, despite the odds, they remained focused on their life purpose.

- **Sub-theme 7.2: Avoiding getting involved in or discussing Glebelands CRU issues**

The second strategy the women used to cope in an environment where their rights and needs came second to those of men was to avoid getting involved in or discussing Glebelands CRU issues. The participants recognised that social sharing of any kind in a volatile context such as Glebelands CRU was risky (Slepian & Moulton-Tetlock 2019:477), so they consciously limited their associations with others and kept to themselves to avoid being implicated in the volatile tensions behind the Glebelands CRU killings.

The lack of trust amongst Glebelands CRU residents was high, and it was difficult for the women to know whom they could or could not trust. They therefore excluded themselves from discussions and activities within Glebelands as much as they could. They stayed in their rooms and kept to themselves. They avoided letting their curiosity get the better of them and refrained from asking any questions about the violence or sharing any of their opinions about the matter. Being in possession of any information could place themselves and their children at risk. Anything they said to others could be distorted or misconstrued, so it was easier to pretend that they did not know or understand anything about the happenings in Glebelands CRU. It was stated that even if they had a traumatic response to the killings, whether or not they witnessed them, they would not consult a professional counsellor but would keep their experiences to themselves. By excluding or isolating themselves from social sharing, the women managed the stresses associated with the killings on their own. African culture had prepared the women to keep their personal matters and experiences to themselves. They accepted that the violence and criminal acts were beyond their control (Littlefield 2003:3) and went about their daily business as if nothing was wrong. This is referred to as disengagement, a common coping strategy according to the feminist approach (Watson et al 2018:291).

There was one exception to staying silent and pretending that nothing was wrong. In this case the participant shared a unit with men, and over the years she and the men who shared the unit had come to regard one another as family. The trust in one another was high, and therefore they felt free to call on one another for assistance and were willing to share their concerns when they were unhappy. In this case, the participant believed that the relationship she had formed with the men with whom she shared the unit had helped to strengthen her resilience (Sippel et al 2015:13).

- **Sub-theme 7.3: Abiding by the rules**

The final strategy the women mentioned that enabled them to adapt to the patriarchal values prevalent in Glebelands CRU was to abide by the rules without question, particularly without confronting those who held the power, the block committees. There was no uniformity in the house rules amongst the different blocks. As discussed in the findings related to the block chairmen/committees (section 5.2.4.5), in some blocks the rules for men and for women differed. The example given included matters such as the different rules followed by men and women when they received visits by people from outside Glebelands CRU or when they had partners come to stay over. Some blocks accepted children and others did not. The rules set by some block chairmen/committees about children living in their blocks were harsh. In several blocks the children had to be kept indoors at all times because they were not allowed to disturb the other residents. In the past, some of the women living in Glebelands CRU had reported that their units had been broken into and their children physically assaulted and verbally threatened because male residents resented their presence in the public housing that had originally been intended for them (Saugeres 2009:204).

The women obeyed the block rules despite their inconsistency. Their compliance was a way of keeping the peace and ensuring that they and their children would be treated well and would not suffer reprisals. The cultural ideologies they had internalised from early childhood had prepared them to accept their lesser position as women in the blocks, their exclusion from decision-making processes in block committees, and the subservient roles they were expected to fulfil in Glebelands CRU.

Conclusion: The researcher realised what Germain and Gitterman (1995:819) meant when asserting that people acquired distinct behaviours to manage stressful life situations. The coping mechanisms used by the women in this study were to submit to the men and the block committees, restrict their discussions and activities with others, and unquestioningly obey the rules in Glebelands CRU. Reprisals for those who challenged those in power could be severe, such as being killed or forcibly evicted. Even lesser punishments made their lives most uncomfortable as a result of harassment or ostracism by other residents. The women had clearly assessed the options available to them for dealing with the patriarchal system that characterised Glebelands CRU, which they could never change on their own. The strategies

they chose meant that their lives and those of their children would not become unbearable (Gitterman & Germain 1976:602; Teater 2010:24). As a result of the strategies they used, they could go about their daily routines and work towards their primary goal, which was to care for their families (Littlefield 2003:3). Submissiveness to maintain long-term security is an example of women's strategic agency in negative situations created by patriarchal prejudices (Kawarazuka et al 2019:384). The women's coping strategies should therefore be acknowledged as a sign of their personal agency in securing their accommodation and protecting their families rather than of mere compliance with traditional gender norms (Kawarazuka et al 2019:387).

**Theme 8: Recommendations for improving the lives of women living in Glebelands
CRU – summary and conclusion**

The participants' recommendations for improving the quality of life for women living in Glebelands CRU were presented under theme 8 (section 5.2.8). They made five main recommendations: (1) to provide family unit accommodation for female-headed households; (2) to resolve the issues of governance in Glebelands CRU; (3) to address the violence; (4) to address the unemployment of women; and (5) to increase the representation of women in CRU issues.

- **Sub-theme 8.1: Providing family unit accommodation for woman-headed households**

The women recommended that more family unit accommodation be built for female-headed households as their living spaces were far too crowded. The overcrowding impacted negatively on their family life. It was difficult for them to raise their children in the limited spaces that they shared with other families. The single women and their children lived in the most overcrowded rooms and units, and no other housing options were available to them in Glebelands CRU. Female-headed households did not qualify to access the family units built as part of the Glebelands CRU conversions, and their living spaces had not been upgraded. The family units would have improved the quality of their lives significantly because it was difficult to live with other people in the hostel-like accommodation when their children lived with them. Challenges they faced daily in the old blocks were personality clashes, differences in the ways their roommates chose to do things, sharing of spaces such as the bathroom, toilet and kitchen, lack of privacy, and using makeshift sleeping areas in inappropriate places when not enough bed spaces were available. To avoid conflict, they accommodated the needs of their roommates at the

expense of their children's needs. The family units would have offered them and their children a healthier family environment with privacy and proper, designated spaces for sleeping, eating and cooking. Some of the women stated that for such increased well-being they were willing to pay a higher rental to live in the family units.

It was suggested that if the government could not afford to build new family units in Glebelands CRU for the female-headed households, they should build family units for them elsewhere or convert the old single-room units where they were currently living into family units. If that could not be done, then single mothers living with their children or adult children in rooms or units should be allocated additional rooms or units in the old hostel blocks.

The researcher realised that the Glebelands CRU conversions had done nothing to address the housing needs of low-income single-headed families. The women continued to live with their children in the overcrowded single units with their roommates and their children. The functional areas they could access such as bathrooms, toilets and kitchen areas were insufficient for the number of people who used them. Clearly, the lack of social transformation in housing had kept this group of women and their children trapped in their unfavourable living conditions (Kubheka 2021).

- **Sub-theme 8.2: Resolving the issues of governance**

The second recommendation made by the women was that Glebelands CRU governance issues had to be resolved. Prior to 1998, when the eThekweni Hostels Policy was introduced, the bed allocations were the responsibility of block committees. After the introduction of the eThekweni Hostels Policy the responsibility for bed allocations was shifted to the ward councillors. There was confusion about who was authorised to oversee the bed allocations in Glebelands – the superintendent and ward councillor, or the self-appointed block committees. The two sources of power were in conflict about this. Some complained that once the ward councillor had taken office in Glebelands and assumed duties in accordance with the eThekweni Hostels Policy, the allocations were no longer fair. Nepotism, political opportunism and bribes dictated whose applications for accommodation were successful (Burger 2019c:8). Others complained that block committees refused to relinquish their power to allocate bed spaces and ignored the new hostel policy. Some block committees were accused of selling the bed spaces for personal gain (McKinley 2020:46). Residents were affected not only by the lack of transparency about the allocation processes but also by the violent clashes between the supporters of the two sources of

power. Some called for the eThekweni Municipality to resolve the matter, whereas others wanted the government to intervene because housing was a national matter. The women concluded that good governance was sorely needed in Glebelands. In the absence of sound governance, people turned a blind eye to criminal activities and overcrowding, which were responsible for the chaos that the women had to contend with while living in Glebelands (Fenyane 2016:11; Singh 2018). In contrast, good governance would promote accountability, transparency, adherence to the law, responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness, equity, control of corruption, ethical practices, and a shared vision and strategy for how housing should be transformed for the good of all (Prinsloo 2013:12). It was these positive indicators that the women hoped to see in the management of Glebelands CRU.

- **Sub-theme 8.3: Addressing the violence**

The third recommendation the women made was for the authorities to address the violence in Glebelands CRU. They made several proposals about what was needed to quell the violence. The women advocated that the security measures installed after the Public Protector's inquiry be revisited because they were totally ineffective. The perimeter fence erected at great expense was incongruous: it served to keep people out of Glebelands CRU, while the threat that undermined the residents' safety was not outside Glebelands CRU but inside. The crime and violence within Glebelands CRU were instigated by perpetrators who actually lived there. The erected CCTV cameras were ineffective and had not helped to identify any of the perpetrators of violence, mostly because they did not work. One participant suggested it would have been better if the money spent on the new security measures in Glebelands CRU had instead been used for building more family units. The women recommended a more consultative approach to quelling the ongoing violence, one involving women who lived in Glebelands CRU as they had a good understanding of the multifaceted nature of the violence. The women were aggrieved that their perspectives and proposals on what was needed to quell the violence had never been considered, yet their insights could be valuable in developing effective interventions to counter it. Harrison and Rosa (2017:5) maintain that increasing safety and preventing violence are key interventions that improve housing in South Africa. They advocate that the beneficiaries of housing should be included on an ongoing basis in discussions about the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of transformative housing solutions. The violence in Glebelands was a complex phenomenon that, according to the participants, would never be resolved unless the socio-structural and contextual challenges faced by

women living there were tackled, such as unemployment and overcrowding. Kubheka (2021) proposes that vulnerable people need more than a place to live; they need opportunities to develop and uplift themselves from poverty, which matches the suggestion of the participants.

- **Sub-theme 8.4: Addressing unemployment of women**

Several participants highlighted the need to address the unemployment of women. At the outset of the CRU conversions, it was envisaged that the conversions would create job opportunities for unskilled and unemployed men and women living in Glebelands CRU (Wardrip et al 2011:5). Most of the women in the study were unemployed and suffered great hardships because they could not support themselves and their children. The most regular source of income they had was a state grant. Unfortunately, the Glebelands CRU conversion failed to achieve the level of job creation that was originally anticipated. The job appointments were not free and fair. The work opportunities that the EPWP projects created, such as cleaning the roads, sweeping the pavements, cutting the grass and collecting refuse, were general jobs that the women were capable of doing, yet few could secure those positions. Instead, non-Glebelands residents had been given them, or those who had personal connections with the ward councillor, and in most instances the positions were given to men, not women. Participants used the example of the vacancies for cleaners in Glebelands, for which the female residents were overlooked and the positions filled by non-residents from other areas. The investigation by Burger (2019a) reported that the ward councillor's supporters were favoured in the filling of vacancies. The women chose to remain silent about their objections to the unfair job appointments, fearing they would be targeted if they challenged the system. Discrimination contributed to unemployment amongst women in Glebelands CRU. The women residents were sidelined during employment selections. Without these work opportunities it was difficult for them to elevate themselves out of poverty and to support themselves and their children (Gousia et al 2020:168).

- **Sub-theme 8.5: Increasing the representation of women in Glebelands CRU issues**

The women acknowledged that the way forward was to increase the representation of women in Glebelands CRU issues. It was therefore recommended that a women's committee be established to ensure that women residents' opinions would be represented in Glebelands CRU. Another recommendation was that the block committees should include women in their structures, because unless women were included their needs in the

blocks would continue to be overlooked. One participant even suggested that the blocks be separated into those for women and men only, because the mixed-gender accommodation was not safe for women. The women suffered discrimination in Glebelands CRU, which was aggravated by their not having suitable platforms for driving the transformation towards a more gender-sensitive housing scenario. Women in the eThekweni hostels had not been included in the consultations arranged when the hostels were converted into CRUs (Silekwa 2019). Public participation is essential for ensuring that the needs of the specific communities for which services are designed are given consideration (Prinsloo 2013:9). The under-representation of women in Glebelands consultations and power structures, and their exclusion from opportunities intended for all Glebelands CRU residents, as evident throughout the findings, confirmed that little transformation had taken place for ensuring that housing in Glebelands CRU would be gender sensitive.

Conclusion: It was clear that the status of women living in Glebelands CRU had not improved in the eighteen years since the Glebelands CRU programme was initiated (Thani et al 2018:670; Xulu 2012:8). Women's needs in Glebelands CRU continued to be overlooked, and their representation in matters that affected them remained poor. The recommendations made by the participants in terms of this theme warrant the attention of the Glebelands CRU developers and administrators. Each of the recommendations is related to promoting the well-being of the women who live in Glebelands CRU. Clapham (cited in Clapham et al 2018:266) notes that housing policies and their implementation should be judged according to the extent to which they improve the well-being of beneficiaries. Making family units accessible to female-headed households in Glebelands CRU would contribute favourably to the well-being of the women and of the children who lived with them. So, too, would a consolidated intervention involving multiple stakeholders at local and national levels to strengthen the governance of Glebelands CRU and develop a leadership structure that could secure the safety and well-being of residents. The socio-structural elements that kept the women residents living in abject poverty would have to be addressed. The introduction of more socio-economic interventions for the women residents to enable them to improve their circumstances is indicated. Housing must be more gender sensitive, and such transformation warrants much more attention than it has received to date.

The next section presents the recommendations developed from the findings of this study.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations for this study are based on participants' inputs as reported in the research findings (Chapter Five) and the researcher's conclusions about each of the chapters presented, particularly in section 6.1.5. The recommendations are separated into three parts: recommendations for social work, for housing development and policies, and for future research. It must be borne in mind that the recommendations presented in this Chapter deserve further investigation given that they are based on the voices of only ten women living in Glebelands CRU.

6.2.1 Social work practice, education and training

The recommendations for social work include recommendations for social work practice, education and training, which are presented in no order of importance.

- The findings in the study have confirmed that housing is a basic human need and an appropriate means of uplifting disadvantaged populations, particularly women and their children. However, the provision of housing for this group of vulnerable women and their children is insufficient on its own to elevate them out of poverty. Women who depend upon low-cost subsidised rental accommodation need a holistic intervention to enhance their social capital. As recommended by Manomano and Tanga (2018:30), social workers who render services to women in low-cost housing need to adopt a social development approach to advance the level of support the women receive and extend their knowledge and skills to enable them to lift themselves out of poverty and improve their self-esteem, personal agency and socio-economic status. Social workers should make themselves available to offer programmes in CRUs that address women's rights in housing, job skilling, sexual abuse, social grants, financial literacy, self-start-up businesses, conflict resolution, culture and women's rights, and women and the law. These could be offered as small group interventions or on a larger scale as comprehensive awareness campaigns.
- Social workers should advocate social justice for vulnerable women and children and blow the whistle on any housing projects or low-cost subsidised housing rentals that undermine their quality of life and that of their children (Dominelli cited in Manomano 2018:3; Ndinda 2001:65). Social workers should convey the message that disadvantaged women and their children need more than shelter to transform their lives, because inadequate housing harms them and their children in many ways.

- The leadership skills of women residents should be developed to increase their involvement in matters related to the housing they are allocated. Social workers should establish appropriate platforms for disadvantaged women to represent their specific housing needs (Ndinda 2009:331). Over time, their participation in discussions about housing for women would serve to uplift them and their children by increasing their access to resources and opportunities allowing them to take control of their lives.
- Social workers have an obligation to tackle systemic forces that threaten women's rights to housing, such as patriarchy (Sobantu et al 2019:18). Raising awareness amongst traditional leaders, political figures and housing officials of the inequities that women suffer in housing would help to fast-track the transformation of low-cost subsidised housing rentals into accommodation that is more gender sensitive and relevant to the needs of disadvantaged women.
- Social workers should advocate for and deliver gender-sensitivity programmes within all human settlement structures that administer or develop low-cost subsidised rental housing as well as for male residents who live amongst women in such housing programmes. It is important that social workers raise awareness about the importance of increasing women's inclusion and participation in housing matters that affect them.
- Given that housing is one of the most basic human needs (Manomano & Tanga 2018:19) and can play a leading role in the socio-economic upliftment of disadvantaged people, particularly women and children, it is important to include housing policies and legislation in the undergraduate training of social workers. All social workers should be knowledgeable about the different housing options available for different income groups and understand what the objectives are of each housing option, what determines whether housing and housing allocations are adequate or inadequate, and how social workers can advocate on behalf of those who suffer because of their poor access to adequate housing.
- Given the range of socio-economic needs of disadvantaged women and children living in CRUs, it is recommended that social work posts be created for each CRU programme to ensure that residents receive integrated services (case work, group work and community work) to enable them to uplift themselves, establish stronger social networks of support, access resources and opportunities they need to support themselves and their children, and receive educational programmes to assist them to become more self-sufficient.

The second category of recommendations pertains to housing programmes, policies, governance and restoring peace in Glebelands CRU.

6.2.2 Housing programmes, policies, governance and restoring peace in Glebelands CRU

Four recommendations are made towards improving housing for women living in Glebelands CRU, respectively by increasing the adequacy of low-cost subsidised rental accommodation for disadvantaged women and children living in converted CRUs, by dismantling housing practices that discriminate against women, by improving the governance of the Glebelands CRU, and by restoring peace in Glebelands CRU.

Recommendations related to improving the adequacy of housing offered to women and children in Glebelands CRU include improving the protection and safety of women who live there, redesigning the old hostel blocks, and addressing the housing needs of vulnerable groups such as women and children and also older persons who have lived in Glebelands for most of their adult lives.

- The protection and safety of women in Glebelands CRU should be prioritised. The following protective measures are recommended to uphold the safety of women residents in the Glebelands CRU: bathroom and toilet doors in the shared ablution areas should have locks, communal areas should be well lit, security guards should be employed to monitor the security of residents, and those found guilty of harming or sexually harassing women should be disciplined. Women residents should be included in any forthcoming discussions about what safety measures are needed to protect women in Glebelands CRU.
- The goal of low-cost subsidised rental accommodation should be to provide women and their children with adequate housing, not just a shelter. Adequate housing includes protection against harm (which has been discussed), healthy and sanitary conditions, adequate facilities such as places to wash clothes, store belongings, cook food, wash dishes, entertain visitors, and offer children suitable spaces to play or study. The size of the house and the number of rooms (bedrooms, functional spaces and bathrooms) should be in accordance with the number of people allocated to live in that space, so that residents have privacy and safety. It is therefore recommended that national, provincial and local government housing programmes be regularly audited to monitor the adequacy of the housing they provide to vulnerable groups such as women living in Glebelands CRU, as recommended in section 5.2.8.1.
- The lack of maintenance of Glebelands CRU requires urgent attention. In accordance with the Rental Housing Act 50 of 1999, the eThekweni Municipality, as the landlord, has a responsibility to do the following: ensure that residents are protected from overcrowding,

uphold sanitary conditions in Glebelands CRU, conduct routine maintenance and renovations on the buildings, and act against residents whose behaviour is offensive to others. The rental boycotts will end only when the general maintenance of Glebelands CRU improves.

- The population of women living in Glebelands has been steadily aging. For some women residents, Glebelands has been their home for more than thirty-six years. It is important that consideration be given to long-term planning for the aging group of women, because the current housing at Glebelands CRU is not suitable for older persons as their health declines.

Several policy amendments related to the allocation of housing for women are recommended next. These concern regularised tenures and application processes that should be monitored, careful review of all housing policies to identify indicators of discrimination against women, and the education of women about their housing rights and the establishment of advocacy groups and organisations to support women's rights to housing.

- Women's occupation of informal housing places them at risk of forced evictions, substandard living conditions, poor service delivery, exploitation and corruption. National, provincial and local government housing developments should ensure that regularised tenures are in place to protect women and their children, that the allocation of housing is done in accordance with carefully crafted policy regulations and is carefully monitored, and that the records of residents are regularly updated. Many of the women living in Glebelands currently do not have legal tenures and do not appear on the eThekweni Municipality database as residents, which exposes them to multiple risks. The recommended measures should help to control the influx of unregistered residents in CRUs.
- All housing policies and social practices that discriminate against women and restrict their access to housing opportunities should be revisited. It is therefore recommended that female-headed households be deemed eligible for family units in the CRUs. The feasibility should be investigated of converting the old block units into family units or even allocating separate rooms or units in the old blocks to female-headed households, as the findings of the study indicate that family units would improve the living conditions of women and children. Additionally, women residents in Glebelands CRU should be given opportunities to be included in job creation projects of the Expanded Public Works Programme to enable them to support their families and uplift themselves.

- Whilst the rights of women in housing are legislated, the realisation of these rights remains questionable. It is therefore suggested that a more comprehensive strategy is needed to educate women about their rights to housing and ensure that their interests in housing are adequately protected. Recommended interventions to achieve the realisation of women's rights in housing should include the following: broad-scale awareness campaigns that include radio and television presentations and printed materials about policies and legislation that protect women's rights to housing; access to free legal services that would represent disadvantaged women who are forcibly evicted or discriminated against when applying for housing; and greater collaboration amongst organisations and specialists in housing to establish support networks for women in housing.
- The Department of Human Settlements should establish a set of gender indices that could be used to monitor the improvement of women's status in housing.

The recommendation for resolving the poor governance of Glebelands CRU is stated next.

- Through intersectoral collaboration with multiple stakeholders at provincial and local government levels, a new policy for the management of Glebelands CRU and a new operational structure for Glebelands CRU should be established to replace the eThekweni Hostels Policy introduced in 1998 (Burger 2019c:8). Stakeholders to be represented in the deliberations should include representatives from the following groups: Department of Human Settlements, Department of Community Safety and Liaison, South African Police Services, human rights organisations, welfare organisations, KZN violence monitors, Department of Social Development, Treasury, eThekweni Municipality (including the councillor and superintendent), Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, traditional leaders, and representatives of resident groups from Glebelands CRU, which should include the old block committee structures. It is supposed that inclusive collaboration would dismantle political agendas and establish a governance structure that is transparent and accountable. Such a structure, when established, should be visible and easily accessible to the residents irrespective of their gender, status, ethnicity or political alliances.

Recommendations related to the restoration of peace in Glebelands CRU include interventions at multiple levels of the ecological system.

- A network of specialised counselling services should be established and maintained to service residents, particularly women and children living in Glebelands CRU who are affected directly and/or indirectly by the violence in Glebelands. Service providers such as

Lifeline, the Thuthuzela Care Centre at Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital, and the Department of Social Development are locally based services providers that could assist. The community liaison officer should enlighten residents about the available services and ways in which residents could access them anonymously. Residents may need logistical support to access the services, such as assistance with making the appointment and getting to the appointment, because of limited resources such as transport, airtime and internet access.

- As recommended by participants, residents should be included in discussions about the Glebelands violence. Residents of Glebelands CRU best understand their needs, what is important to them, and what action is needed to address the problem (Burger 2019c:10; 2019b).
- Overcrowding and poor living conditions should be alleviated; services and amenities in Glebelands CRU should be improved; women's access to employment, training and recreational opportunities should be increased; and victims of violence and those who wish to reform their lives should be able to access supportive services that would enable them to cultivate personal self-respect and respect for others. These measures would combat the devaluation of life and reduce the number of young people who become involved in crime and violence and would have an overall positive impact on Glebelands CRU (Burger 2019c:5).
- A unique crime prevention strategy should be developed for Umlazi. It is recommended that intersectoral collaborations amongst provincial and local stakeholders be established to inform the crime prevention strategy. Proposed stakeholders that should participate in the collaborative deliberations are the Department of Human Settlements, Department of Community Safety and Liaison, South African Police Services, Umlazi Community Police Forum, Corruption Watch, South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, human rights organisations, welfare organisations, KZN violence monitors, Department of Social Development, NGOs and FBOs, Treasury, eThekweni Municipality (including the councillor and superintendent), Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, traditional leaders, and representatives of resident groups from Glebelands CRU, which should include the old block committee structures. After facilitating informed discussions about how crime should be combated in Umlazi and more specifically within Glebelands CRU, a collective conclusion should be reached about what should be included in the crime prevention strategy. The proposed crime prevention strategy should be presented to

residents in Glebelands CRU to gauge their reactions and obtain their feedback before the strategy is implemented.

The last recommendations, in the next section, relate to suggestions for future research around this topic.

6.2.3 Future research

This study was an exploratory one and there remains much scope for the findings to be expanded upon. To this end, future research should be undertaken using more rigorous research designs and having the following characteristics.

- It could involve a larger randomised sample of registered and unregistered women living in Glebelands CRU to confirm the findings related to the benefits and challenges that women encounter while living in Glebelands CRU and to recommendations on changes that would enable their low-cost subsidised rental accommodation to contribute positively to the quality of their and their children's lives.
- It could investigate how the stigma that women suffer as female residents of Glebelands CRU may be dispelled. Being stigmatised on the basis of their place of residence reduces the women's access to opportunities and resources they need to support themselves and their children, exacerbates their social exclusion, and erodes their mental well-being.
- It could explore culturally and contextually relative ways to increase women's participation in housing matters, given the oppression they have suffered through living in male-dominated environments.
- It could develop guidelines about how the socio-economic development of women who live in CRU low-cost subsidised rental accommodation may be facilitated.
- It could establish whether social work in housing should be recognised as a specialised area of social work practice.

This concludes the recommendations that emerged from this study. The conclusion of the chapter follows.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to summarise the study, draw conclusions about each stage of the research process as presented in the five preceding chapters, and make recommendations about what should be done to improve housing for the disadvantaged women and their children living in Glebelands CRU.

The conclusions reached were that the research objectives had been achieved and that the information gathered during the study had answered the research questions, and therefore that the research goal – “*to explore the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in the Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi*” – had been realised.

The summary of the findings and the conclusions led finally to recommendations for social work practice, social work education and training, policy and a potential research agenda.

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ADDENDA

ADDENDUM A: ETHICS CLEARANCE



COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

01 December 2020

Dear KB Mthembu

NHREC Registration # :
Rec-240816-052
CREC Reference # :
2020-CHS -67120806

Decision:
Ethics Approval from 01 December
2020 to 31 November 2023

Researcher(s): KB Mthembu

E-mail address: khanyisile.mthembu@comsafety.gov.za

**Title: THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF WOMEN LIVING IN COMMUNITY
RESIDENTIAL UNITS: GLEBELANDS CRU CASE STUDY.**

Degree Purpose: MSW

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Science Ethics Committee. Ethics approval is granted for three years.

The *Low risk application* was reviewed by College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee, on 01 December 2020 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the College Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.



ADDENDUM B: LETTER OF REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



Request for permission to conduct research at Glebelands CRU

"The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community residential units: Glebelands CRU case study"

04 September 2020

Mr M Sithole

The Head – Office of the Mayor

eThekweni Municipality

Durban

4000

Dear Sir

I, Khanyisile Busisiwe Mthembu, am doing research with Dr Ann Petty, senior lecturer in the Department of Social Work, towards the Master of Social Work degree at the University of South Africa. We are inviting one of your institutions, Glebelands CRU, to participate in a study entitled "The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community residential units: Glebelands CRU case study".

Purpose of the research

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi. It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the housing policies and programmes that are developed for residents as they will be informed by their needs. The study could inform human settlement guidelines on how CRUs can be structured to accommodate the special needs of women. It could also help practitioners to design interventions aimed at women empowerment. More women have moved into CRUs but there is no research with empirical evidence that focuses specifically on the experiences of women in hostels that were changed into CRUs and handed over to Ethekewini Municipality in 2007 and how all the transformation impacts on them.

Why you have been contacted

As the custodian of CRUs, you have invaluable information that will assist me to orientate myself before I conduct the research in this identified area.

What needs to happen

In order that I may commence with this project, I humbly request written permission from eThekweni Municipality to conduct the study with a few women who are residents of Glebelands CRU. The criteria for participation are that the women must have stayed in the CRU for more than three years and be willing to share their experiences. Should you agree, as the municipality, I will meet with the ward councillor and the superintendent and brief them about how to elect suitable participants for the study, as they are both within the identified area of study. I am also requesting space within the Glebelands CRU that will be conducive for the interviews that are to be conducted there if the participants will be comfortable with that arrangement.

The identified women residents will be briefed as well and requested to disclose their contact details to me. The standard letter giving permission for me to put their names forward as potential participants will have to be signed as proof that they agree. The questions to be asked are as follows:

- Can you share your story of how you came to be a resident at Glebelands?
- Please describe what it has been like for you to live in Glebelands since you arrived here.
- How would you describe your experience of being a woman who finds herself living in Glebelands?
- Tell me about the general living conditions that residents put up with when they decide to stay in Glebelands.
- What kinds of challenges affect women residents, specifically those who live in Glebelands?
- Tell me about the issues linked to living in Glebelands that challenge you the most.
- Please explain what helps you to manage the challenges you mentioned in answering the previous question.
- What do you think are some of the advantages women enjoy while living in Glebelands?
- What do you believe can be done to improve the well-being of women who live in Glebelands?

In my formal introduction to them, I will brief potential participants on the purpose of the study and assess their willingness to participate, and arrange a suitable date, time and venue for conducting the semi-structured interviews. The interviews will be held during working hours and will not take more than two hours each. As a qualified social worker, I assure you that the information shared will be kept confidential. This study is not intended to do any harm, but should the interview process remind them of hurtful moments, a social worker will be contacted for counselling services. The Ethekewini Municipality will get the findings and recommendations of the study through the report that will be compiled at the end.

I would greatly appreciate it if permission is granted by the City. My contact numbers are 082 300 5408 and 082 514 7442, and my email address is khanyisile.mthembu@comsafety.gov.za.

This study has been given approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa (UNISA). This committee undertakes to protect research participants from any maltreatment and harm. You are requested to direct your queries regarding this research to my supervisor or the chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee. Their contact details are as follows:

- Supervisor: Dr Ann Petty. Contact number: 082 573 2146.
Email: pettya@unisa.ac.za
- Chairperson, Research Ethics Committee: Professor N Alpaslan, Contact number: 012 429 6739. Email: Alpasah@unisa.ac.za

You are also welcome to contact me directly to clarify any issues pertaining to this study. Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

KB Mthembu (Ms) – Researcher



ADDENDUM C: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

Ethics clearance reference number: 2020-CHS-67120806

Research permission reference number: 04 September 2020

Title: The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community residential units: Glebelands CRU case study

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Khanyisile Busisiwe Mthembu and I am doing research with Dr Ann Petty, senior lecturer in the Department of Social Work, towards a Master of Social Work degree at the University of South Africa. I invite you to participate in a study entitled "The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community residential units: Glebelands CRU case study.

What is the purpose of the study?

I am conducting this research to find out about the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi. It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the housing policies and programmes that are developed for residents as they will be informed by their needs. The study could inform human settlement guidelines on how CRUs can be structured to accommodate the special needs of women. It could also help practitioners to design interventions aimed at women empowerment. More women have moved into CRUs but there is no research with empirical evidence that focuses specifically on the experiences of women in hostels that have been converted into CRUs and handed over to eThekweni Municipality in 2007 and how all the transformation impacts on them.

Why are you being invited to participate?

The researcher is interested in women who have stayed in Glebelands CRU for more than three years. The Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) stakeholders have assisted with the potential participants as they work in the area. The principle of data saturation is intended for the study and the researcher anticipates approximately eight to ten women, above eighteen years being interviewed.

What is the nature of your participation in this study?

The study involves semi-structured interviews, and these will be audio recorded. The interview with you will not be more than two hours long. The questions that have been prepared are as follows:

- Can you share your story of how you came to be a resident at Glebelands?
- Please describe what it has been like for you to live in Glebelands since you arrived here.
- How would you describe your experience of being a woman who finds herself living in Glebelands?
- Tell me about the general living conditions that residents put up with when they decide to stay in Glebelands.
- What kinds of challenges affect women residents, specifically those who live in Glebelands?
- Tell me about the issues linked to living in Glebelands that challenge you the most.
- Please explain what helps you to manage the challenges you mentioned in answering the previous question.
- What do you think are some of the advantages that women enjoy while living in Glebelands?
- What do you believe can be done to improve the well-being of women who live in Glebelands?

Can you withdraw from this study even after having agreed to participate?

You should not feel forced to take part in this research project. Participation is voluntary and there is no penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation. You are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

What are the potential benefits of taking part in this study?

Your participation in this research project will help other women, as the study could provide human settlements officials with guidelines on how CRUs can be structured to accommodate the special needs of women.

Are there any negative consequences for you if you participate in the research project?

There is some possibility that participants may experience some emotional discomfort when they share their perceptions and experiences of witnessing some of the violence or fractious incidents. A qualified professional person has been recruited to debrief any participant in the study who has been emotionally distressed by their involvement in the study.

Will the information that you convey to the researcher and your identity be kept confidential?

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research or your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

The researcher and her supervisor will have access to the data; should there be a transcriber and an external coder, they will sign confidentiality agreement. Your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

How will the researcher protect the security of data?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to

further research ethics review and approval if applicable. The information will be destroyed after five years. Hard copies will be shredded, and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software program.

Will you receive payment or any incentives for participating in this study?

It is regretted that no monetary compensation will be available for any participants in this research.

Has the study received ethics approval?

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

How will you be informed of the findings/results of the research?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact me, Khanyisile Busisiwe Mthembu – contact number 082 514 7442; email address khanyisile.mthembu@comsafety.gov.za. The findings will be accessible after the research project has been completed. Please contact me if you require any further information about any aspect of this study.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact the researcher's supervisor, Dr Ann Petty – contact number 082 573 2146; email address: pettya@unisa.ac.za. If you have any ethical concerns, you may also contact the chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee, Professor N Alpaslan – contact number 012 429 6739; email address Alpasah@unisa.ac.za.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

.....

KB Mthembu (Ms) – Researcher



ADDENDUM D: INFORMED CONSENT OF POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the interview session.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname..... (please print)

Participant Signature..... Date.....

Researcher's Name & Surname..... (please print)

Researcher's signature.....Date.....



ADDENDUM E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE****Biographical data**

Name of participant:

Age:

Marital status:

Number and ages of children living with you in the CRU:

Type of CRU accommodation you are renting:

Are you classified as a registered or unregistered resident of Glebelands?

Employment status / sources of income:

Level of education:

Ethnicity and religion:

Date that you moved into Glebelands:

Interview questions

- Can you share your story of how you came to be a resident at Glebelands?
- What were the living conditions like where you came from?
- What was the hardest thing for you when you moved into Glebelands?
- What is it like living in Glebelands now?
- Has anything changed since you first moved in? Please explain when you noticed the changes and whether these changes have been good or bad.
- Please explain if the CRU programme has had any effect on the quality of life for women who live in Glebelands.
- Tell me about the general living conditions residents must put up with here.
- What are some advantages that women enjoy because of being a resident in Glebelands now?
- What are the things that worry you the most about living in Glebelands?
- What do you do to overcome the worries you have as a woman living in Glebelands?
- What do you believe should be done to improve the well-being of women who live here?

UHLA LWEMIBUZO EVULEKILE

Imininingwane yakho

Igama Nesibongo:

Iminyaka:

Ushadile noma cha:

Isibalo neminyaka yezingane ohlala nazo eCRU:

Uhlobo lweCRU oluqashile:

Ungumhlali obhalisiwe noma ongabhalisiwe eGlebelands:

Uyasebenza/Uziphilisa ngani:

Izinga lemfundo:

Ubuhlanga bakho nenkolo yakho:

Wafika nini eGlebelands:

Imibuzo ngeCRU

- Ungachaza ukuthi kwenzeka kanjani ukuthi ube wumhlali waseGlebelands?
- Sasinjani isimo senhlalo yalapho wawuhlala khona ngaphambilini?
- Yini eyayinzima kakhulu ukuthi uyijwayele ngesikhathi ufika eGlebelands?
- Kunjani manje ukuhlala eGlebelands manje?
- Kukhona okushintshile enhlalweni selokhu wafika? Uma kukhona, kuwushintsho oluhle noma olumbi.
- Ngokwakho ubona ukuthi uhlelo lwe CRU (izindlu zeminden) libe nomthelela onjani empilweni yomuntu wesifazane ohlala eGlebelands.
- Yiziphi izimo zenhlalo nempilo abesifazane abamelana nazo usuku nokusuku njengabahlali noma zingahambisani nabo.
- Yikuphi okuhle nokujabulelayo ekubeni wumhlali waseGlebelands wesifazane njengamanje?
- Yiziphi izinto ezithinta ukuhlala eGlebelands, eziyinselelo nezikukhathaza kakhulu?
- Ukwazi kanjani njengomuntu wesifazane ukubhekana uphinde umelane nezinselelo ozibalule ngenhla?
- Ukholwa wukuthi kungenziwanjani ukwenza ngocono inhlalo yabantu besifazane abahlala khona, nabo bazizwe bekhululekile emoyeni.

ULUHLU LWEMIBUZO EVULEKILEYO

Inkcukacha zakho

Igama Nefani:

Iminyaka:

Utshatile okanye hayi:

Inamba neminyaka yabantwana ohlala nabo eCRU:

Uhlobo lweCRU oyiqashile:

Ungumhlali obhalisiweyo okanye ongabhaliswanga eGlebelands:

Uyasebenza/Uphila nganto:

Izinga lemfundo:

Loluphi uhlobo lomntu nenkolo yakho:

Wafika nini eGlebelands:

Imibuzo ngeCRU

- Ungachaza ukuba kwenzeka kanjani ukuba ube ngumhlali waseGlebelands?
- Yayinjani imeko yentlalo yalapho wawuhlala khona ngaphambili?
- Yintoni eyayinzima kakhulu ukuba uyiqhele ngexeshai ufika eGlebelands?
- Kunjani ukuhlala eGlebelands ngoku?
- Kukhona okutshintshileyo entlalweni ukusukela wafika? Xa kukhona, lutshintsho oluhle okanye olubi.
- Ngokwakho ubona ukuba uhlelo lwe CRU (izindlu zosapho) lube negalelo elinjani empilweni yomntu ongumama/wasetyhini ohlala eGlebelands.
- Ziziphi imeko zentlalo nezempilo omama/abasetyhini abamelana nazo usuku nosuku njengabahlali okanye zingahambelani nabo.
- Yintoni entle noyonwabelayo ekubeni ngumhlali waseGlebelands ongumama/ongowasetyini njengangoku?
- Ziziphi izinto ezichaphazela ukuhlala eGlebelands, eziyimicelimngeni nezikukhathaza kakhulu?
- Ukwazi kanjani njengomntu ongumama/wasetyhini ukujongana uphinde umelane nemicelimngeni oyibalule ngasentla?

- Ubona ukuba kungenziwa ntoni ukwenza ngcono intlalo yabantu abangomama/abasetyhini abahlala khona, nabo bazive bekhululekile emoyeni.

ADDENDUM F: CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT



Confidentiality agreement for the research study on the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community residential units: Glebelands CRU case study

I,, fully agree to the terms of the confidentiality agreement that I will not disclose the information of the participants of the study or share the findings of it with another person who was not part of it or any other person, except for the researcher and her supervisor. I also confirm that this confidentiality agreement is binding on my conscience and my integrity.

Signature of the participant Date

Researcher's name

Researcher's signature and date



ADDENDUM G: REQUEST LETTER FOR DEBRIEFING SERVICES WITH AGREEMENT



18 Whiptail Avenue
Newlands East
4037
29 June 2020

P452
KwaMashu Township
4360

Attention: MT Pitso

RE: REQUEST FOR DEBRIEFING SERVICES FOR WOMEN IN GLEBELANDS COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL UNIT (CRU) DURING THE RESEARCH PROJECT ON THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF WOMEN LIVING IN CRUs

Introduction

My name is Khanyisile Busisiwe Mthembu and I am a registered student at the University of South Africa (UNISA) for the Master of Social Work degree. I am conducting a research study on the experiences, challenges and coping resources of women living in community residential units (CRUs).

Purpose of the research

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in Glebelands CRU in the municipal area of Umlazi. It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the housing policies and programmes that are developed for residents, as they will be informed by their needs. The study could inform human settlement guidelines on how CRUs can be structured to accommodate the special needs of women. It could also help practitioners to design interventions aimed at women empowerment.

More women have moved into CRUs but there is no research with empirical evidence that focuses specifically on the experiences of women in hostels that were changed to CRUs and

handed over to eThekweni Municipality in 2007 and how all the transformation impacts on them.

Why you have been contacted

There could be a small risk of some participants becoming upset when recalling their experiences after being interviewed, so an arrangement is being made for a professional social worker to provide debriefing services should the need arise. However, the researcher believes that the risk to the women residents participating in this study will be no greater than the risks they encounter while living as women in the Glebelands CRU.

What needs to happen?

In order that I may commence with this project, I humbly request your written acceptance of and agreement with the proposal to provide debriefing services. The criteria for participation are that the women must have stayed in the CRU for more than three years and be willing to share their experiences. I have requested permission from the eThekweni Municipality, and should they agree, as the municipality, I will meet with the ward councillor and superintendent and brief them about how suitable participants for the study will be selected, as they are both within the identified area of study. I have also requested space within the Glebelands CRU that will be conducive to interviewing the participants, if they will be comfortable with that arrangement. The identified women residents will be briefed as well and their permission sought to have their contact details. The standard letter giving permission to put their names forward as potential participants will have to be signed as proof that they agree. The questions to be asked are as follows:

- Can you share your story of how you came to be a resident at Glebelands?
- Please describe what it has been like for you to live in Glebelands since you arrived here.
- How would you describe your experience of being a woman who finds herself living in Glebelands?
- Tell me about the general living conditions that residents put up with when they decide to stay in Glebelands.
- What kinds of challenges affect women residents, specifically those who live in Glebelands?
- Tell me about the issues linked to living in Glebelands that challenge you the most.
- Please explain what helps you to manage the challenges you mentioned in answering the previous question.

- What do you think are some of the advantages women enjoy living in Glebelands?
- What do you believe can be done to improve the well-being of women who live in Glebelands?

In my formal introduction to them, I will brief potential participants on the purpose of the study, assess their willingness to participate, and arrange a suitable date, time and venue for conducting the semi-structured interviews. The interviews will be held during working hours and will not take more than two hours each. As a qualified social worker, I assure you that the information shared will be kept confidential. This study is not intended to do any harm, but should the interview process remind them of them of hurtful moments, your organisation will be contacted for debriefing services. I would greatly appreciate if a meeting could be set up to discuss the relevance of this study to your profession, as you prioritise the needs of women. My contact numbers are 082 300 5408 or 082 514 7442, and my email address is khanyisile.mthembu@comsafety.gov.za.

This study has been given approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa (UNISA). This committee undertakes to protect research participants from any maltreatment and harm. You are requested to direct your enquiries regarding this research to my supervisor or the chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee. Their contact details are as follows:

- Supervisor: Dr Ann Petty. Contact number: 082 573 2146. Email: pettya@unisa.ac.za
- Chairperson, Research Ethics Committee: Professor N Alpaslan.
Contact number: 012 429 6739. Email: Alpasah@unisa.ac.za

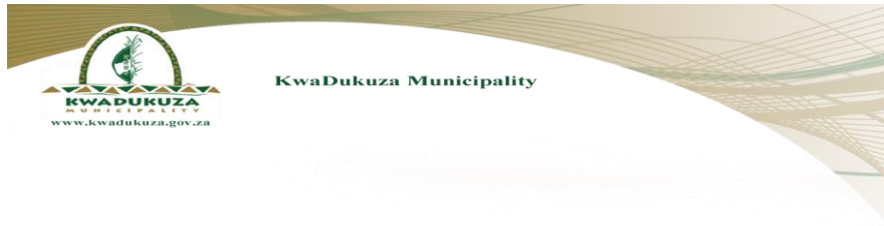
You are also welcome to contact me directly to clarify any issues pertaining to this study before you arrange an appointment to meet with me. Your assistance in this regard will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

KB Mthembu (Ms)



ADDENDUM H: ACCEPTANCE LETTER AND RÉSUMÉ OF THE SOCIAL WORKER



Date: 03/07/2020

To: Khanyisile Busisiwe Mthembu

RE: LETTER OF AGREEMENT TO OFFER COUNSELLING TO WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT ON THE EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF WOMEN LIVING IN GLEBELANDS CRU.

This letter serves to confirm that Michael Thanduxolo Pitso agrees to provide counselling to women who have participated in the above-mentioned study and he is a qualified social worker to carry out this undertaking.

It is acknowledged that the researcher will continuously assess the risks of participation to prevent participants from being distressed as a result of being part of the study. However, it is acknowledged that this may not always be required and this letter serves as an indication of this social worker's willingness to provide supportive services for debriefing when such situations arise.

In accordance with the University's Research and Ethics Committee's request, we have attached the social worker's curriculum vitae confirming he is qualified to carry out this undertaking.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MT Pitso', is written over a small vertical line.

MT Pitso

Title: Head OSS, HIV/AIDS, BATHO PELE & Complaints

Contact details: Mobile No. 078 456 4342 / 082 711 3733

RÉSUMÉ OF THE SOCIAL WORKER

PERSONAL DETAILS	
Surname:	Pitso
Names:	Michael Thanduxolo
Date of birth:	13 February 1958
Identity number:	5802135780082
Residential address:	P452 KwaMashu 4360
Driver's licence	Code 08
Work telephone number:	032 552 5246
Cell number:	078 456 4342
SACSSP registration number:	10-07345
EDUCATION AND TRAINING	
Name of school:	Umzuvele High School, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal
Year:	1978-1979
POSTGRADUATE TRAINING CERTIFICATES	
➤ Human Resource and Development	➤ Group Facilitation Course
➤ Batho Pele Principles implementation for Middle Managers	➤ Conflict Management Course
➤ Leadership and Management Course	➤ Child Abuse Counselling Course
➤ Employee Assistance Programme	➤ HIV/AIDS Capacity Building
	➤ Disaster Management Strategy Course
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY	
2016 to date:	Head of Intergovernmental Relations and Operation Sukuma Sakhe – KwaDukuza Municipality
2002 to 2016:	Service Officer Manager; Deputy Director – KwaDukuza Municipality
1996 to 2002:	Chief Probation Officer in Ndwedwe
Duties:	Compiling pre-sentence reports; probation supervision; diversion programmes; youth empowerment programmes
1988-1996:	Industrial Social Worker – Beacon Sweets and Chocolates; also Employee Assistance Programme Co-ordinator
Duties:	Liaison with NGOs; FBO for funding and facilitation of corporate social responsibility
1983-1988	Social Worker, KwaMashu Family and Child Welfare Society
Duties:	Rendering social welfare services in the form of casework, group work and community work; engaging youth development and community mobilisation for transformation of welfare services
WORK EXPERIENCE RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED STUDY	
➤ Rendering effective and efficient welfare and social services to families, children, older persons, youth, people with disabilities and people affected by HIV/AIDS	
➤ Overseeing community development and research projects	
➤ Facilitating community-based programmes	
➤ Facilitating capacity building and institutional support	
➤ Initiating sustainable livelihood programmes	
➤ Monitoring and evaluation of welfare services	

ADDENDUM I: PERMISSION GRANTED BY ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY



*HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, ENGINEERING, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE*

20th Floor, Embassy Building
199 Anton Lembede Street, Durban
PO Box 3858, Durban, 4000
Tel: 031 311 3395
10 December 2020

To whom it may concern:


**The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community
residential units: Glebelands CRU case study**

On behalf of the eThekweni Municipality Human Settlements Unit, I hereby approve that Khanyisile Busisiwe Mthembu may conduct her research on the above-mentioned topic.

We are satisfied with the research aim and method to collect data; however, this is subject to the respective community members agreeing to being interviewed. All analysis, results, conclusions, recommendations, etc to be submitted to eThekweni Human Settlement Unit for comments, and response prior to being submitted. Lastly, we look forward to the analysis and final product of the research.

Permission to collect and use data granted by:

Name: Bulelwa Magudu

Signature: 

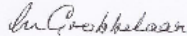
Position in eThekweni Municipality: Researcher: Research and Policy

ADDENDUM J: INDEPENDENT CODER

*Margaret Grobbelaar
589 Opstal Street
The Willows Pretoria 0041
Tel: (012) 807 1249
E Mail: mwmrg@africa.com*

I, Margaret Roberta Grobbelaar, hereby declare that I undertook the independent coding of the interviews Khanyisele Mthembu conducted for her research entitled: *The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community residential units: Glebelands CRU case study.*

I analysed each transcript of the 10 interviews, drafted a table of themes and sub-themes, held a consensus discussion with Khanyisele and her supervisor and then compiled a report on the independent coding I had undertaken. The report contained the themes and sub-themes together with the relevant story lines from the transcripts.



4 October 2022

M R Grobbelaar

Date

ADDENDUM K: EDITOR'S LETTER

Keith Richmond
Editor

Tel: +27 (0)33 347 2093
Cell: +27 (0)73 518 5376
Email: diris@sai.co.za

2 Glen Eden Park
520 Town Bush Road
Montrose
Pietermaritzburg 3201
KwaZulu-Natal

17 January 2023

EDITING OF THIS THESIS

I hereby record that I have edited the master's thesis of Ms Khanyisile Busisiwe Mthembu titled "The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in community residential units: Glebelands CRU case study".

My editing covered the following:

- conventions of acceptable English syntax and idiom to improve clarity of meaning and expression while retaining the authors' individuality of style;
- norms of spelling, punctuation and abbreviation; and
- compliance with Unisa guidelines in respect of Social Work theses, specifically those on referencing, both in the text and in the list of references, and on technical aspects of layout and formatting, including correlation between the table of contents and the body of the work.

My editing changes were tracked electronically in the document for the author's consideration, and where necessary I inserted marginal comments and queries for particular attention. I did not alter the transcribed interview comments of research participants in any way.



Keith Richmond

MA (English Literature), University of Natal
MPhil (Adult Education), University of Cape Town
BA Hons (Applied Linguistics), University of South Africa
Higher Diploma in Library Science, University of Natal

ADDENDUM L: TURNITIN REPORT

Turnitin Originality Report

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