

**SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD ASSESSMENT OF THE FREEDOM
PARK INFORMAL SETTLEMENT**

November 2006

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1. Section One: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 2002 the Urban Sector Network decided to introduce a livelihoods approach to all its projects. The decision was taken after it became evident that focusing on housing only would not bring about the desired developmental changes the network envisioned.

Livelihood frameworks seek to reflect the diversity and complexity of ways in which different groups make a living. Livelihood analysis is based on the perception that households aim at secure livelihoods. It assumes that even though people may not have money or savings, they do have assets. Assets are both tangible and non-tangible, namely: physical capital (house), human capital (education and health), social capital (friends and family), financial capital (income or money) and natural capital (water/clean air).

It highlights how policies, institutions and programmes must build on the existing strengths of different people's livelihood strategies because it is related to their access to the labour market, employment, education, security, justice, networks, and mobility in order to expand their options and choices. To strengthen the equity in society, public policy needs to create stronger public, civil and community institutions, which help to enhance the capability of the poorest groups along with other groups for sustainable development.

Gender relations and household members' access to resources are central to livelihood analysis. Who have access and control over resources within a household and at community level is also studied (access versus control).

The following principles are key to livelihood research

Murray¹ has derived four principles, which should frame livelihoods research

1. Livelihoods research is essentially carried out at the micro-level: that of households and communities. It involves empirical investigation of combinations of modes of livelihood and the relations between them and how they have changed over time

¹ Murray, C. 2001

2. It is essential to define the structural, historical, and institutional elements of the macro-context that shapes people's changing livelihoods, identify a time frame, key variables and trends of change
3. Where livelihoods research is to assist in identifying causes of chronic poverty, the circumstances of poverty and reasons for poverty should be understood through detailed analysis of social relations and inequalities of power within a particular social context
4. The linkage between livelihoods research and policy-making needs to examine the policy-making process itself – Who makes policy? How is it made? For whose benefit? With what outcomes?
5. At the core of the livelihoods approach and meaningful understandings of poverty is the concept of differentiation. Differentiation also takes place within households between men and women and there are also differences of entitlement between people of different ages.

Livelihoods frameworks

A number of frameworks² (CARE and DFID) have been developed which attempt to conceptualise the relationship between households, their assets, capabilities and activities and the factors in the local and external environment, which either enhance or undermine their livelihoods over time.

The DFID framework and the CARE framework are the two most known frameworks.

These frameworks have their origin in the rural development paradigm but have been adapted to suit the needs of urban livelihood analysis.

The DFID framework

One of the most widely used livelihood frameworks is the one used by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The DFID framework sets out how to conceptualise:

² See de Satgé et al. 2002 for a summary of different livelihood frameworks

- How people operate within a vulnerability context that is shaped by different factors including shocks, stresses and seasonal or longer term trends,
- How they draw on different categories of livelihood asset or capital access to which is influenced by the vulnerability context and a range of local and external structures and processes,
- How they use their asset base to develop a range of livelihood activities to achieve desired livelihood outcomes.

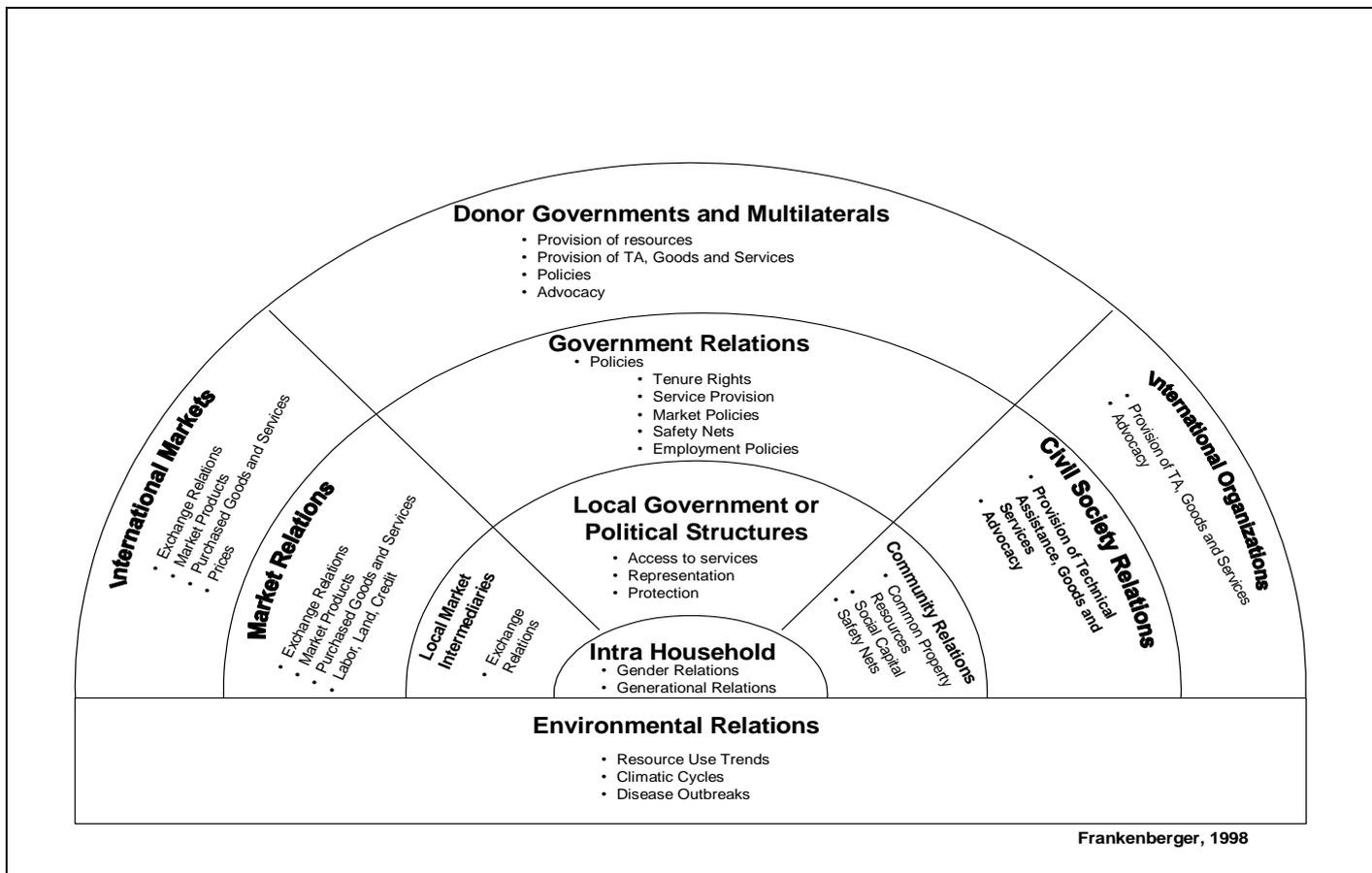
The Care framework

CARE is an international NGO that uses the livelihoods approach as its primary planning framework. CARE uses the Chambers and Conway livelihoods definition and identifies three fundamental attributes of livelihoods:

- The possession of human capabilities,
- Access to tangible and intangible assets,

The current CARE framework was used to collect and assess the livelihood strategies and vulnerability status of households in this study. The CARE model emphasises three fundamental attributes: the possession of human capabilities (such as education, skills, health, psychological orientation); access to tangible and intangible assets; and the existence of economic activities. The interaction between these attributes defines what livelihood strategy a household pursues and is thus central to CARE Livelihood Model as outlined in the diagram below:

Fig. 1 Internal and External Factors That Influence Household Livelihood Security (Social, Economic, Political and Environmental Context)



2. Section Two: METHODOLOGY

The following paragraphs describe the process followed in doing the Freedom Park Livelihood survey. The process is described according to four different phases:

2.1 Phase I: Community level analysis

2.1.1 Rapport building and focus group discussions

The first step was to set up meetings (rapport building) with the Freedom Park committee members to discuss the overall plan and livelihood methodology and framework with the committee. The initial introductions were done by the DAG project coordinator responsible for Freedom Park. DAG project files were also scrutinized to obtain an insight into the area and its inhabitants.

and livelihood activities. It became evident during the course of the study that many households depend on external organizational support to meet their basic needs such as food, clothes and building material. Others do piecemeal work, beg, work as security guards, etc. Voluntary work is seen as another potential source of income. A case in point is that all but one committee member is currently employed.

2.2 Phase II: Household analysis

Phase II involved the characterisation of the different household types based on the income-generating, household formation and sources of energy, preferred transport options, access to social security grants or livelihood activities undertaken by the different groups. Focus group discussions with residents were the main method used to collect data in Phase II. The selection or identification over household types and description occurred over several meetings due to disagreement among group participants as to what constitutes a well-off household in the Freedom Park context.

Four different household types were identified based on these discussions (see Box I). Categories of households were according to the different activities, (use four generic categories termed by CARE)³

- 1) Poor: households who cannot manage without external support
- 2) Vulnerable: those without assets but struggle on a daily basis to make ends meet
- 3) Better Off: those who have something and have an opportunity for development
- 4) Well Off: those who manage without external support or help

Box 1 lists the characteristics of each of the four household categories in relation to type of structure, household structure, employment status, and source of energy, mode of transport preferred, place of employment, food sources and the presence of a grant recipient.

Box 1: Four household types identified – characteristics (wealth ranking)

	Well-off	Better-off	Vulnerable	Poor
Type of structure	Wendy house	Wendy house	Shack built with materials from donations	Shack built with materials from donations
Household structure	Husband and wife	Husband and wife	Women-headed	Women-headed
Employment status	Employed and self-employed	One adult (husband) formally employed	Several adults informally or self-employed (beg)	<i>Beg</i>
Source of energy	Electricity from surrounding community	Electricity from surrounding community	Electricity from municipal poles Gas/paraffin	Electricity from municipal poles Wood
Mode of transport	Train/taxi	Train/taxi	Hitchhike to work	Walk or hitchhike to work
Place of employment	Employed outside area(factory worker) and own spaza shop	Employed outside area (factory worker)	Char outside area (regular work)	Wash clothes in Freedom Park for food or cash (irregular work - search for work on a daily basis)
Food sources	Able to buy own food supply	Able to buy own food supply	Get food from donating organizations	Get food from donating organisations
Type of grant	Grants	Grants	Grants	Grants

2.3 Phase Three: Participatory livelihood survey

A ninety-five out of the three hundred households living on the settlement were surveyed. To ensure representativity, fifty percent of the interviews were conducted in the top side of the settlement and another fifty percent in the bottom side of the settlement. The purpose of the survey was to:

- Establish the representativity of the findings emanating from the household interviews

- To create awareness of the issues facing the community as a whole and to
- Investigate the kind of developmental projects people would be interested in.
- To involve the entire community in the planning process towards improving their quality of life

The Netreg Livelihood questionnaire and focus groups informed the Freedom Park livelihood questionnaire (see Appendix 1). Even though few amendments were made to the questionnaire initially, it was revised after the first fifty households were interviewed. A second questionnaire was designed to incorporate additional questions identified by the committee.

Several sessions were held pre-and post-data collection to clarify questions and adequate responses. It became evident that the fieldworkers and respondents were interpreting questions differently. The questionnaire was then amended three times to accommodate these differences.

Who should be involved in the data collection phase was left to the committee. During the initial discussion with the committee it became evident that given the high unemployment levels on the settlement, some of the members felt that those without any employment should be involved in the data collection phase. Each completed questionnaire could earn the fieldworker R20. After some discussion it was agreed that everyone, irrespective of employment status, would be involved in the data collection phase.

The data collection phase took more than three months to complete. This can be attributed to the fact that some fieldworkers were employed and others were tied up in workshops, hence the committee took a long time to complete the questionnaires.

2.4 Phase Four: Policy analysis

During this phase legislation relating to informal settlements at national, provincial and local government level was scrutinized. Attention was also given to other pro-poor policies aimed at promoting vulnerable people's livelihoods and at those policies that have a negative impact on the poor people's livelihood.

3. Section Three: Historical overview of Freedom Park

This phase consists of two parts. Part I describes the legislation promoting adequate housing for all adopted since democracy in South Africa. Several legislation have been passed post 1994 protecting people living in informal settlements from being evicted and extending the right to adequate housing. Part two gives a historical overview of the area.

3.1Part I: Legislative overview post-1994 and its impact on the lives of Freedom Park residents

Section 26(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that everyone has the right to adequate housing and Section 26 (3) further states that no one may be evicted from their homes, or have their homes demolished, without an Order of Court made, after considering all the relevant circumstances.

The Housing Act No 107 of 1997 requires government to ensure “the establishment and maintenance of habitable, stable and sustainable public and private residential environments to ensure viable households and communities” in areas allowing convenient access to economic opportunities, and to health, educational and social amenities in which all citizens and permanent residents of South Africa will have, on a progressive basis, access to: permanent residential structures with secure tenure, ensuring internal and external privacy and providing adequate protection against the elements; and potable water, adequate sanitary facilities and domestic energy supply.

But the most relevant legislation with specific impact for the residents of Freedom Park is the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from an Unlawful Occupation of Land Act No 19 of 1998. This Act provides for the prohibition of unlawful eviction. Section (4) (6) of the Act states that a court may grant an order for eviction only after considering all the relevant circumstances, including the rights and needs of the elderly, children, disabled persons and households headed by women

These progressive legislations and other initiatives introduced since 1994, increasing rural and urban poverty and the lack of public sector housing for low income households have lead to the growth in the number of households residing in informal settlements since 1994. Box two shows that the number of households residing in informal settlements grew between 1995 and 2002 from 424 000 in 1995 to 945 000 households in 2001 (Census, 2001).

Box 2: The percentage of women-headed households 1995 to 2002

Total Accommodation	Owned	Formal rental	Informal rental	Informal
Number of households (h/h)	3900000	3200000	773000	424000
% of female headed-households	29	24	29	31
Number of household members	4.4	3.8	4.1	4.2
2002				
Number of household members	5626000	3194000	874 000	945000
% of female headed-households	39	30	33	34
Number of household members	4.3	2.6	2.5	3.3

Source: Census 2001

The invasion of Freedom Park was therefore preceded by significant political and legislative changes in favour of the homeless and especially women and children who are poorly housed. Pre-1994 legislation was extremely hostile to any land invasion. The passing of the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from an Unlawful Occupation of Land Act No 19 of 1998 was significant as it is the same year in which Freedom Park was founded.

3.2 Part II: Historical overview of the development of Freedom Park

Freedom Park or “the veld” as the residents and the surrounding community know it, used to be a vacant piece of land. It was zoned by the Provincial Government of the Western Cape for a high school building. Gangsters used it as a hiding place and a base from which to organise themselves. Several murders and rapes took place on the veld over a period of time and the surrounding community was very unhappy with the situation.

A woman lived in the backyard of a house next to the settlement and her shack was partly situated on the settlement. Her landlord insisted that she obtain permission from the City (Cape Town) for the position of her shack. After her initial enquiry, the City approved the location of her shack. Based on the City’s approval, a group of people organised themselves into a group and occupied “the settlement” on Freedom Day, 27 April 1998.

Initial leaders of the land invasion were women-headed households living in crowded and unhappy conditions. Many rented rooms and backyard shacks from the surrounding community, and most could not afford the rent. Some were also people who had lost their homes to the banks because they could not continue paying their mortgage loans. Others were from the Ark (a place for homeless people) and a few were from Silver City⁴ and whose names were too low on the City's waiting list to benefit from the housing programme in the near future.

A day after the occupation, the residents went to the City to place their names on the City's housing waiting list. They were advised that if they did that they could not be evicted from the settlement. At the same time someone started recording all the names of the people on the settlement and issued each shack with a number.

The very next day, the Sheriff of the Court issued eviction notices on behalf of the City that all shack dwellers must leave by the next Monday (two days after putting up shacks). The notices were put on the poles and delivered to each household individually. A Mitchell's Plain resident and a member of the Pan African Congress, offered to help the residents organise themselves in response to the eviction notice. He also called in the assistance of Patrica de Lille, also a Mitchell's Plain resident and a then leader in the Pan African Congress⁵.

On the Monday morning people gathered from all over the Western Cape to form a human chain around the settlement as bulldozers started congregating at the Town Centre ready to demolish the hastily built shacks. The Taxi Associations, People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) and schools in the area supported the residents' action. The invasion attracted a lot of media attention, based on the huge support and media attention, the City decided not to proceed with evictions.

⁴ Silver City and Lost City are former informal settlements that developed when shack dwellers from Khayelitsha decided to invade houses meant for the residents of Tafelsig but who refused to accept occupancy of the houses because of the size of the dwellings. This created a lot of animosity and tension between the community of Tafelsig and the invaders. After long negotiations with the City of Cape Town, those who invaded the houses moved out of them and set up shacks on an adjacent piece of vacant land. In exchange the City provided the residents with metallic sheets to construct their new dwellings with and from the name: Silver City.

⁵ This organization has been instrumental in arguing for land to be returned to the ownership of the previously disposed masses.

The City instituted legal action against the residents. A committee of 11 residents was elected and the Legal Resource Centre (LRC) was approached to assist the residents. The LRC, a Section 21 Company, provides legal assistance and support to poor individuals, groups and communities. The community convened a meeting and at this meeting it was decided to rename “the veld” Freedom Park.

The University of Cape Town was called in by the court to mediate the process between the City and the community.

The coordinator of the District Six land claims was also approached by the LRC to assist Freedom Park residents. He conducted several workshops in that year on land claim processes and broader community development processes.

Since it was close to South Africa’s second democratic elections, many other political leaders, including Nelson Mandela, Mangosuthu Buthelezi and others, visited the area. Residents started to group themselves into political parties in the settlement. Different areas on the settlement were named after different political parties. Political party flags were posted on the shacks indicating alliances. People who wanted to live on the settlement had to declare their political allegiance first and then were allocated plots accordingly. In some instances imposters forced people to pay R50 for a plot. Other households were prevented from registering their names on the Freedom Park residents list.

Rampant crime combined with winter made life miserable for the inhabitants of Freedom Park that year. Freedom Park is situated in the middle of two gang zones fighting for drug turf and the gangs terrorized the inhabitants and surrounding community on a daily basis. In response to gang fighting, the community decided to organise themselves into marshals (neighborhood watch). The marshals instituted curfews (people were not allowed outside their shacks after nine at night), this proved to be very successful. Drinking alcohol in shebeens and smoking of dagga in open places at night was prohibited on Freedom Park. If the marshals came across any person consuming alcohol or smoking illegal substances during the curfew times, then they would confiscate and destroy those substances.

The neighborhood watch took on a much wider role with time. It became the distributing mechanism through which organisations could donate candles, blankets, food and blankets to the residents. Both men and women joined the initial neighborhood watch. Other residents began to join the marshals to benefit from the distribution of resources.

The neighborhood watch was disbanded after some time due to internal disagreements and accusations of corruption. This saw the re-emergence of crime and shebeens on the topside of the settlement. Initially the majority of the neighborhood watch members were from the topside of Freedom Park. Today many of the original members are part of the government initiative, Bambanani, and they patrol the settlement at times.

Besides the rampant crime, lack of access to adequate sanitation and water was another problem. A private individual sponsored Freedom Park with toilets for a period of six months. Water supply was obtained from the surrounding community at a cost of R5 for a 25-litre bucket of water. Soon very few households could not afford to pay the R5. The local Mosque provided the residents with free water for a while. But they could not afford to support the inhabitants for long because of the huge water bills they had to pay. In desperation, some members decided to obtain water from a fire hydrant.

Some households obtained their electricity supplies from the electricity poles (residents use these only for lighting purposes as the electrical current is too strong and tends to damage their electrical goods) and others did so from the surrounding community at R50 per week. Some households obtain wood from the adjacent nature reserve for cooking and heating purposes.

Local businesses such as Pick n Pay, Shoprite and Woolworths donated food and clothes to the residents. Residents termed this period the happiest period of their stay on Freedom Park. They had access to food and clothes on a daily basis. They were also often visited by politicians, organizations and had constant media attention.

However, an increasingly unhygienic environment, lack of access to basic services, and the fact that it was winter (most shacks consisted of plastic at the time) resulted in high infant mortality rates. Some households were forced to send their children to live with family members to avoid the bad living conditions on the settlement. Many of the households from Silver City decided to return to Silver City because they could not deal with the rampant crime levels and gangsterism in the area.

Many of the companies, which supported the community via food donations, stopped or scaled down their activities or donations. NGOs started playing a more active role in the provision of food to households.

In 2000 the Freedom Part resident committee split into two separate groups due to infighting. The committee was accused of misappropriating the community's savings. The

conflict also played itself out in religious differences, further dividing the community. The conflict also split the community according to physical location: the topside and the bottom side. The conflict between the two groups interfered with community initiatives and development. The University of Cape Town declared that it was unable to continue with the mediation process and withdrew its services from the community. This created a huge setback in the developmental drive on the settlement.

Then DAG was approached to assist with development initiatives in Freedom Park. At the request of DAG a meeting was held in April 2001 to elect one committee representing all to negotiate on behalf of the community. The committee wrote a code of conduct and constitution at the request of DAG. Meetings were held and a development plan for the area was developed.

Negotiations with the City resumed again in 2002. At the end of a protected mediation process it was agreed that the City would put emergency services in place. The City provided the Freedom Park residents with rudimentary services: 16 toilets and 12 taps servicing more than 300 households in 2003, long after the initially agreed deadline.

Organisations such as Fairest Cape (gardening project), Bake-for-Profit (teaching cooking skills for profit) and Family-in-Focus (educational services) also started operating in Freedom Park. Grassroots, another NGO, trained some of the inhabitants in caring for pre-school children or in educare facilities. As a result many women found employment in the surrounding crèches. More recently other care providers started supporting the inhabitants such as Family-in-Focus, which provided people with parenting skills and others taught them how to care for terminally ill patients and those suffering from HIV/AIDS.

In 2003 some committee members broke away from the democratically elected committee. Those who broke away were from the 'topside' of the settlement. All but two of the nine-committee members are now from Site A. This in itself created much tension among residents. At the Annual General Meeting held in October 2004 four new members from Side A were elected onto the committee. Until then the majority of committee members were females, but the four new ones were all males.

4. Section Four: INCOME-GENERATING AND LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES

4.1 Natural and physical resources (making a living out of other people's waste)

The findings of the research suggest that the majority of people make use of the natural and physical resources within the area to make a living or to support their livelihoods. Employment and income-generating activities evolved from the availability of and access to the natural and physical resource assets such as a national road, proximity to affluent suburbs, etc.

4.1.1 Baden Powell Drive

This is an important source of employment and also provides access to employment. Residents (especially men) would congregate on this road which runs past Mitchell's Plain from early in the morning hoping to be picked up for a job. Others hitch hike to more affluent suburbs such as Muizenberg where they would search for casual jobs. Because they hitchhike they do not have to pay transport fares.

The settlement is also 5 km from the N2 freeway, another national road. This road leads directly to the City centre, which is approximately 25 kilometers away.

4.1.2 Swartklip Municipal Refuse Dump

Some residents collect old electrical appliances from the municipal dump at the back of Tafelsig and fix them and re-sell them to the residents. Others furnish their homes and those of their friends out of the dump.

4.1.3 Kapteinsklip Mitchell's Plain Train Station

A few residents search trains (before Metrorail cleaners enter them), which pull into the station. They search these trains for lost articles, which they sell, but they mostly search for empty beer bottles, which they exchange in the local shebeens for money, making up to 20 cents per bottle.

4.1.4 Nature reserve and beach

The nature reserve is to the back of Freedom Park. Some residents collect firewood from the nature reserve and sell the wood to people camping on the beach or those who go there for "braais". They mostly sell to beachgoers over weekend and especially on Sundays. The residents of Freedom Park also buy wood from the wood collectors to

prepare their meals and to keep them warm with. Others collect plants and trees from the nature reserve and sell the plants to shoppers at the local shopping centre.

4.1.5 Municipal electricity poles

Residents connect households with electricity illegally by connecting households with the municipal electricity poles meant to provide street lighting.

4.1.6 Promenade shopping centre

The Promenade is a shopping centre, which was erected 3 years ago. Many Freedom Park inhabitants work at the shopping centre as car park attendants, car washers and security guards. They also sell things such as trees and plants here. It is also a good place for begging or '*skarrel*'.

4.1.7 Rental accommodation

In 2003 it was decided that no other people would be allowed to put up shacks on Freedom Park when the housing committee was established and negotiations resumed with the City of Cape Town. However, the need for cheap accommodation did not diminish. Many people now reside as lodgers in Freedom Park. Rentals vary from R50 per week to R100 per month, depending on the services offered and the condition of the shack.

4.1.8 Proximity to affluent suburbs in Mitchell's Plain

The relatively easy access to two suburbs in Mitchell's Plain allows for some access to employment as chars and for the cleaning of gardens. These are also areas where Freedom Park residence can get access to food if they *skarrel* (beg). They visit these areas on garbage collection days to rummage through the bins in search of food or objects for recycling.

4.1.9 Harbour

Some people work as sex workers at the harbour in Cape Town.

4.2 Working on the settlement

4.2.1 Small businesses

Shebeens (*smokkelhuise*), spaza shops and households selling single items are also major sources of income and employment opportunities. A few women are involved in hairdressing-related activities.

Many sell paraffin and wood because of the lack of access to electricity; very few households have refrigerators to store meat, milk and other perishable goods.

4.2.2 Chars and child minders

Some take in washing as their sole means of an income. Women often leave their children in the care of their neighbours when they are working, who are then compensated with food or money for taking care of the children, even though it is done as a favour.

4.3 Other places of work for Freedom Park residents

A few people work as machinists in clothing factories or as tradesmen. Others work as child- minders in the local crèches. Most of them were previous homeowners but lost their homes and jobs at the same time. Taxi- drivers and sliding-door operators (fare collector) also live in the area, given the proximity of Freedom Park to the Promenade shopping centre.

4.4 The role of Government and Non-governmental organisations in job creation

Non-governmental organisations provide residents with skills such as gardening to help them provide their own immediate food needs and make an income from selling the vegetables they grow. Others use their newly acquired gardening skills and work as gardeners.

Box three below outlines the number of individuals employed by organisations working on the settlement (Bambanani and Sisonke are both government financed initiatives as part of the Public Private Partnership initiatives).

Box 3: Non-governmental organisations and employment opportunities

Organisations	No. employed
Family in Focus	2
Bambanani	7
Fairest Cape	1
Sisonke	2

4.5 The role of institutions in shelter and food provision

Several organisations provide the residents with some level of food support on a daily basis. The activities are dominated by religious organisations and societies.

The school feeding or nutritional programme is another secure source of food. Families include this meal as part of their daily diet when they plan their food supplies. The food programmes on the settlement provide primarily food to pre-school children. Very few of the donations target adults. Many of the organisations and local businesses also donate clothes and blankets to the residents of Freedom Park.

Fairest Cape supports the creation and maintenance of a food garden on the settlement. To date mostly lettuce are grown which they plan to sell at a local market as organic products.

Some residents use their connections such as in the fishing industry to provide people with access to food and others use their employers who are able to organize donations e.g. Timber City.

The City's Disaster Management Programme provides sails to cover the roofs of shacks during the winter months. Timber City donates wood cut-offs for firewood and to reinforce the shacks with.

Several other organisations provide emotional and psychological support to the community of Freedom Park. Others such as the 21 Households initiatives inform people on correct and safe energy use.

Box 4: Donations from non-governmental organizations

Organisation	What kind of help	When	Who
ANC	Fish	Once a week	All
Grace Revival	Porridge	Once a week	Children
City Mission	Food	Every day	Children
Moslem Ladies	Bread	Wednesday	All
Nutrition Clinic	Porridge	Monday to Friday	Under- weight children
AIDS project	Food	Every day	Affected families
Family in Focus	Pre-school education and food	Monday to Friday	Pre-school children
Timber City	Wood off cuts for the fire	Once a week	All
Fairest Cape	Gardening and recycling skills	Every day	All
Tafelsig Community	Soup	Once a week	All
School feeding schemes	Bread and milkshakes	Monday to Friday	All
City of Cape Town Disaster management	Provide sails to cover roofs of shack	Winter	All
21 Households	Energy		
Circle of Friends	Clean and care for frail and disabled people		
Parenting workshop			
Moslem food foundation	Blankets, food	Once a week	All

4.6 Location of Freedom Park in relation to services

The location of Freedom Park is also ideal in the following ways:

4.6.1 Social grant payout point

The social grant payout point is situated five meters from Freedom Park. This centre also registers and assesses new applicants. On pension payout days moneylenders and small vendors congregate here.

4.6.2 Primary Care Clinic

The primary care clinic borders Freedom Park as well. Residents receive free health care and malnourished children are provided with limited nutrition when so required. On national health or immunisation campaigns, the health care providers visit the shacks door to door to ensure the immunisation of children.

4.6.3 Railway Station

The railway station is within walking distance from freedom Park. Taxi's and buss routes are also within walking distance.

4.6.4 Town Centre and Pavillion

The residents have a variety of options to choose from and the ability to shop for cheaper options, since the establishment of the new shopping centres. They therefore do not have to spend vast amounts of money on transport costs.

4.6.5 Churches, Primary and High Schools

The schools are within walking distance of the settlement. Several churches and mosques are located on the settlement and in the immediate vicinity of Freedom Park. A few of the churches or religious organizations located off the settlement regularly collect their members to attend services.

In the case of Freedom Park access to services does not automatically imply that the quality of the services delivered to the residents are of a satisfactory level or have the desired impact and outcomes. Many individuals still prefer to seek private medical care while others choose to send their children to schools in other areas because they are dissatisfied with the quality of schooling available.

5. Section Five: HOUSEHOLD CASE STUDIES

The next step was to approach households fitting the descriptions outlined in Box 1. Once permission was granted the identified households were interviewed. Several sessions followed in the focus group prior to the actual interviews with the household to get a deeper understanding of those households' livelihood activities. This helped the process significantly and helped to guide the interviews. A committee member was always present during the interviews. The presence of the member helped to clarify questions and responses on both sides

5.1 Brief Overview of Different Household Characteristics

The following provides brief overview of the different household characteristics:

5.1.1 Household composition

Poor households are characterised by absence of male partners. Women in these households are more likely to mention the absence of a male partner as a source of their vulnerability than any other household type. Well-off and Better-off households tend to have male partners (mostly married) as head of households. The relatively more affluent households have fewer children in the household than the other categories of households.

5.1.2 Social stability

Household relations, especially where male partners are present, are characterised by domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse. However, less vulnerable households appear to have more stability than the other households, even if a male partner is present. However, they too suffer from episodes of domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse.

5.1.3 Social capital

Poor households are characterized by social instability and have tense relationships with family members. Women-headed households' relationships with the fathers of their children and their in-laws are often hostile. Yet, during crises periods they remain the most important sources of support.

Well-off and better-off households on the other hand, have stronger ties with the surrounding community. The more affluent household's stronger ties with the

surrounding community gives them access to electricity from neighbours living in electrified houses. These households are able to negotiate with organizations or their external networks to access resources for the community and themselves.

They are often able to sustain their livelihoods independently from other households living on the settlement.

5.1.4 Income generating activities

The women from poor households often work on the settlement as washerwomen for the more affluent households or *skarrel* (beg) to make ends meet. Children from these households often end up working as well. Better-off households have access to varied sources of income and through their stronger social capital networks they are able to access employment opportunities and income better than the other households

Normally the 'better-off' households would have a factory worker present (or one employed individual with a steady income) and one or two children. In the 'well-off' households both partners are normally employed, and one would run a small business or spaza shop from his or her home. Poorer households tend to sell one or two items (cigarettes, chips or bread). They make minimal profit and tend to spend all their profit on food or other basic needs. They do not have the necessary capital or means to extend their businesses.

In desperate times they can also rely on the income they obtain from their lodgers.

The Child Support Grant is often the most stable and only source of income. This grant allows households access to credit from moneylenders during difficult times. But saddles them with continues debt.

Poorer households approach the more affluent households during bad times for support.

5.1.5 Education

There is very little correlation between educational achievement and the different wealth groups residing in Freedom Park. However, relative better educational status allows better access to factory employment.

Children from the poor households have tense relationships with the educational institutions. Their parents are often unable to meet the demands of the school (i.e. text

books, class fees, donations, proper school uniform etc.). Parents, due to their own lack of schooling, are unable to support their children academically, central to the new educational system introduced post-1994.

All these factors combined with a lack of electricity, poor nutrition, privacy and the rampant crime and violence in the area lead to poor educational outcomes for the children on the settlement, but particularly for those from the poorest households. Most of the children from poorer households also have to work (beg) to support family members.

However, all the households realize the importance of education for the future mobility of their children.

5.1.6 Method of transport

Members of poor and vulnerable households tend to walk to and from their places of work. In cases where they have to use public transport they would do it after hours so that they do not have to pay train fares. When the authorities do check they often end up being locked up for not having valid tickets. This has caused some households to lose jobs. They are often forced to hitchhike, with the dangerous consequences that accompany it.

5.1.7 Sources of energy

Well-off and better-off households obtain their electricity from households in the Tafelsig neighborhood, while vulnerable and poor household get theirs from the municipal electricity poles. Those with very poor social capital exclusively use wood to prepare their meals on and as a source of heat. Households tend to use a variety of energy source: wood, paraffin etc.

5.1.8 Physical structures

Well-off and better-off households would often live in “wendy” houses or their shacks would be more spacious and better protected against the weather than other households; while poor and vulnerable households live in shacks built from material collected from the municipal dump or donations.

The well-off and better-off households used to own property before losing it for various reasons. Whereas the poor and vulnerable households lived in backyard shacks or with family and friends or in rooms in a house before moving in to Freedom Park.

5.2 Case Studies

The next sub-section of the paper focuses on the household level analysis. It compares the different household types from the perspective of the community.

5.2.1 *The well-off household*

Five people live in Sylvia's household. Two of the five are boarders: John (32) and Andre (37). John is Sylvia's brother-in-law and works as a panel beater. On weekends he goes home to a rural area an hour away from Freedom Park to be with his family. Andre, a "gebouman" (in construction) has been living with them for the past year. He does not have a steady job. He used to live next to Sylvia's household with three other men but the community destroyed their shack when one of the men tried to molest a girl.

Jeff, Sylvia's husband, works for an engineering company as a polisher. He works on average 8 months a year. They have three children. Sylvia's two eldest children live with her sister-in-law.

They started living with their aunt when Jeff was retrenched. They lost their house due to being unable to keep up with mortgage payments. That resulted in Sylvia's family moving from place to place and she did not want to expose their children to that insecurity. When a colleague at work told her about Freedom Park; she immediately resigned from her job as a machinist to access her provident fund so that she could buy a "wendy" house. However, they decided to leave their children with their aunt because of the proximity to their schools and because there were no services (electricity, sanitation, etc.) on the settlement at the time:

"I heard about Freedom Park from my colleagues at work. They told me that there were 'hokkies' on Freedom Park for sale. I was tired of traveling around and staying with family. My husband was initially very opposed to living on the settlement. However, it was too expensive renting a room from someone else. I gave notice at my place of work and used the pension money to buy the "wendy" house. I did not care that we did not have an income, I just wanted a place of my own."

Sylvia started selling chicken to the people on the settlement about a year ago with the one-week's additional salary her husband gets at the end of the year. She buys the chicken from the local butcher. The business was initially only meant to tide them over the Christmas period when her husband had no income. Sylvia is considering selling

giblets as well. By selling giblets she would be able to expand her clientele considerably. Only creditworthy clients are allowed to buy on credit. They make their payments monthly or weekly depending on when they are paid. Most of her clients are grantees.

She pays her neighbour across the road R50 per week for her electricity connection. Without this connection she would not be able to run her business.

She also uses money that she makes working for Bambanani (Neighbourhood Watch) to expand her business. She works every second weekend or when she is asked to work. Sylvia got the job at Bambanani when she was elected onto the Housing Committee. When she goes to work (Bambanani) her neighbour takes care of her youngest child. She would give her neighbour something to cook when she takes care of her child.

She extended their two-roomed “wendy” house by two rooms with the money they made. This has allowed them to take in lodgers.

They own a washing machine, fridge, freezer, television, video machine and music system. The appliances were bought with the money she makes from her business. They buy most of the things they have for cash from a “as good as new store”. Sylvia plans over a period of a year what it is that she wants to get. She prefers to buy everything cash.

Sylvia attributes her household’s well-being to her having stopped drinking three years ago. This has allowed her to use her money more productively:

“I see savings in a bigger light. It is something, which helps me achieve my goals. In the past I used to live from week to week, because I had a weekly income. I had no future plans.”

However, she often experiences negative sentiments towards her from her neighbours. Some even feel that she does not belong there because of her relatively wealthy status. She says that when she arrived on the settlement she had nothing except the “wendy” house. When they started living on the settlement she knew that they had to save for a plot since they had already had a house, disqualifying her for the public sector housing programme. Her neighbours all automatically qualify for the public sector housing grant.

“I am also preparing myself for home ownership by buying all my furniture now. I will not be able to buy a house and pay for furniture simultaneously. Perhaps this would not have been the case if we qualified for a housing subsidy. We came to live here initially to save for a house - preferably a repossessed house.”

She never cooks or prepares food outside on the open fire, like the other households. She also does not make use of the services offered by the NGOs, except for the “bones” provided by one of the priests.

She says that she needs a house so that their children can come and live with them, saying, *“I do not understand my children because we never lived together”*. She feels that she would be able to guide and play a more active role in her children’s lives once they live with her. It has always been her dream that all her children would finish matric and go to university. She currently pays her sister-in-law R100 per week to look after her children and finds this a very expensive arrangement.

Sylvia also wants to look for a permanent job, but cannot leave her house alone because of the gangsters and thieves living in the area. She fears that they might burglar their house when she is at work. A house would make her feel more secure and protected against the criminal elements in the area.

In bad times she asks her mother who lives in Genadendal for support. Her mother gets a Disability Grant from the State and worked as a farm worker previously. When her mother visits them she provides her with a parcel and sometimes furniture. Her mother raised her and her brothers and sisters alone and she feels that she must do everything to make her life comfortable. They also provide support to her husband’s family. Her sister-in-law and her husband are both unemployed. She does this reluctantly since they did not provide them with any support when they were destitute and homeless.

During difficult times they change the way they eat, but they have not experienced bad times for a considerable period:

“When times were difficult we would eat “snoek koppe” but now we do not have bad times anymore. We can keep our heads above water.”

She used to belong to the church. They often provided them with bones and food parcels. The priest obtains the bones from the local butcheries. However, these are only available

during summer. During winter the butcheries sell the bones to clients due to increased demand.

They have no policies or life cover. Her lodgers' income and her savings are a stable source of income in difficult times.

5.2.2 The better-off household

Aunty Sara, Merle, Merle's sister, Fiona, and Fiona's husband, Paul, and their two children live in a spacious four-roomed shack. Merle and Aunty Sara have been living on the settlement for six years. They each had their own shack prior to staying together. Aunty Sara's son, his wife and child live in her house now. Merle's sister and her son whose shack is next to theirs, is an occasional household member of Merle's when she and her husband are involved in domestic squabbles. This happens frequently. She would then live with them for weeks without any support from her husband.

Merle moved onto the settlement on Freedom Day in 1998. Everyone was just putting up shacks, and she decided to do the same. When Aunty Sara divorced her husband, she came to live on the settlement, as she was unable to continue paying the rent on the house they were renting. She was also continuously burgled by the gangsters in the neighbourhood.

Fiona and her family have been living with Merle for the past 6 months. They are saving towards their own house. They are planning to move into their own house in a few weeks time.

Fiona and Paul do not pay any rent money. The two households do not share meals either. Their incomes are not pooled either. The majority of things in the house belong to Fiona and her husband.

Merle lost the use of her left hand a few years ago in an accident. Because of this she has been unable to continue working. Before the accident she was a supervisor in a printing shop. She received the Disability Grant for a few years, but lost it last year when the Department of Social Development reviewed disability beneficiaries. She was declared fit to work by the Department. Her sole income currently is the little money she receives for taking care of her brother and sister's children.

Merle needs help with basic things such as getting dressed, eating and preparing meals. She therefore cannot understand why her grant has been removed. Aunty Sara had a stroke a few years ago and cannot do any strenuous activity herself; but she helps Merle when she can.

Aunty Sara lost her job when she joined the human chain resisting the City's planned eviction of the residents in 1999. Her previous employer felt that she should have prioritized her job, but she feared that her possessions would be destroyed in the process.

Aunty Sara works on the settlement as a home-based crèche supervisor. She is also a member of the housing committee.

Fiona and Paul are both employed. Fiona works as a beauty consultant at a chain store and Paul is a mixer at a paint company. They have been married for the past 4 years.

The non-governmental organization, which pays Aunty Sara's salary, is facing bankruptcy and she will be without an income soon. They do not know where their income will come from once Fiona and her husband move out in few weeks time. Merle has resubmitted her application for the disability grant and is anxiously awaiting the outcome. In the meantime she has started a vegetable garden; she hopes to sell the proceeds from the garden to have an income.

Merle has a mother, but their relationship became strained when she ran away from her mother's house when she was sixteen. Her mother was married to a white man who felt uncomfortable with her presence in their household because she was the only dark-skinned person in the house. She would often be left behind when the family went on outings. She therefore does not feel that she has a strong social support network or comfortable approaching her for assistance.

Merle is a member and leader of a religious organisation. The organisation provides porridge every morning to children not attending school from her house. She is also a member of the Committee. She has through her connections been able to provide the people on the settlement with fish on a regular basis.

5.2.3 The vulnerable household without children

Kathy (26), her husband, Eugene (39), mother, Beverly (48) and brother, Moegsien (29) live in a two-roomed shack. Kathy and her husband have been married for seven years. The shack belongs to her brother, Moegsien. They have been living on the settlement for the past three years. They have one child (7), who lives with Kathy's sister-in-law.

She does not compensate her sister-in-law for taking care of her child. Even though the son qualifies for the Child Support Grant, she has not yet applied for the grant. She cannot afford to be away from her job as a parking attendant for too long. She was forced to leave her baby with her sister-in-law when her husband was imprisoned. He spent five of the seven years they have been married (1998-2002) in prison for armed robbery. She describes that period as the most difficult time in her life. She was only 19 years old then and had to live with friends and sometimes on the street.

When her husband was released from prison they lived in a religious institution for a year. The religious institution provides accommodation to the homeless and destitute. However, she was infected with meningitis while there and they decided to leave and to live with her brother on the settlement.

They experience a lot of violence in their house. Her mother is the main instigator of violence, according to Kathy. The fights often last for hours on week-ends. She and her husband are also often in verbal fights.

Her brother, Moegsien, has been diagnosed with schizophrenia, but refuses treatment. Kathy too has spent time in psychiatric care; she tried to commit suicide several times. As a child she often spent time in reformatories. She feels much stressed at times. During one such episode she burnt her husband with a pot of boiling water. As a child she spent considerable time in different reformatories for girls, but managed to escape every time.

Kathy and her brother are both car-park attendants. They start working at 9 am in the morning and finish work at 5 pm. She and her brother walk to and from work, seven days a week. Good days are the 15th, 25th and 30th of each month. She makes on average R40 on a good day. Her brother washes cars in addition to parking. She does not do car washing because it is seen as a man's job.

With the money she makes she buys meat, potatoes and rice and “nippie” fish oil for R2 each afternoon. She buys her oil from a spaza shop on the settlement; she gets the rest of her groceries from Shoprite. Her mother prepares the food. The remaining money is spent on cigarettes and alcohol also bought on the settlement.

Her brother does not contribute towards the food bill, since he is the owner of the shack. Neither do they provide him with rent money. Her brother gives her mother R20 a day from the money he makes. Her mother buys paraffin and candles with the money he gives her and spends the rest on a *papsakkie* (soft bag of wine), which the local shebeens sell for R9. Her brother spends all his money on buttons (Mandrax) after buying his daughter’s baby formula.

Kathy’s husband, Eugene, works occasionally. He searches for work when Kathy complains about him “laying low” for too long. The times when Eugene does actively look for work, he waits on Baden Powell Drive to be picked up for a job (from 3 o’clock in the morning). He also uses the road to hitch hike to Muizenberg where he looks for a job on construction sites. He does not have any “*papiere*” (formal qualifications) which means that he is paid much less than what he should be. Another disadvantage is that he has a lot of tattoos (all over his face from his days in prison). People are reluctant to employ him because of this.

Kathy describes rainy days as the worst period in her household. On those days they do not work. It often means that they also do not have food to eat. This happens regularly during winter. On those days her mother goes to her sister to ask for food. Kathy and her brother would often *skarrel* (“beg”) during difficult times. They also collect bruised food from fruit and vegetable stalls and sometimes collect food from rubbish bins. From the surrounding community they would also collect rejected food, e.g. potato peels and bones from households in the name of a fictitious dog. They do not receive support from her husband’s family. They do not want any contact with him since he was accused of molesting his teenage niece.

The lack of electricity is also experienced as a big negative in their household. Until recently they got their electricity illegally from an electricity pole, which someone connected for them. The person recently disconnected the electricity, and is only prepared to connect their household again after he receives some payment or compensation for doing so.

They are often very cold without the electricity. They therefore consume more alcohol to keep warm. They are also forced to spend more money on paraffin and wood for the fire, which is bad for her mother's asthma and very expensive. Her brother's four-month-old child was living with them until recently, but is now staying with their aunt because the electricity was disconnected:

"We connected electricity to our household so that we could help my brother's baby. It was easier to bath and feed her when there was electricity in our household. She now has to live with our aunt in Tafelsig, because it is too cold and dark for her here, especially when we have to look for things at night. So many babies died on the settlement in the past."

The lack of electricity also presents physical danger to them. Gangsters run across the settlement and often force open the shacks and remove what they want. At other times they would rape and assault the inhabitants.

A good time in their household is when her husband works continuously for one week. This could mean R400 for the week. With the money she buys food to last them a few days. She has to stay home to make sure that her mother does not exchange the food for alcohol. She also takes these days to rest and do household chores like the washing of clothes. She would also buy her son something during this period. She cannot trust her sister-in-law with the money, since she too is an alcoholic, but is at least able to provide her son with a roof over his head.

When her husband works, she would also ask her friend to buy chicken on credit from Sylvia, especially for Sunday lunch. She cannot buy food on credit herself, because she does not have a stable source of income. Her friend will only buy chicken on credit when her husband works. Merle (better-off) and other friends on the settlement would also occasionally provide them with food. A few of her neighbours lived with her in the Ark.

They have no savings and no future plans. She describes her household as vulnerable and not poor. She does so because *"Other people have absolutely nothing. We are able to help other households at times. It does not always go bad in our household."*

She and her husband joined a church at the beginning of this year hoping that it would help their household to become stronger. They used to enjoy going to church in Heideveld and would also receive a small food parcel. However, the church does not fetch

them to church anymore. They miss attending church; it gave them time away from their stressful household.

5.2.4 The vulnerable household with children

Prelene has been living in Freedom Park for the past 5 years. Prior to living there she, her husband and children lived in someone else's backyard. They were evicted by their landlord because of her husband's abusive behaviour. She divorced her husband four years ago when she discovered that he was sexually abusing one of their children.

Her ex-husband was jailed for 5 years for the crime. When her husband was incarcerated, her in-laws took all their possessions, including the "wendy" house they were living in. They were unhappy with her for reporting him to the police. When they took the "wendy" house, she was forced to live in Haven Shelter in Beacon Valley for two months before moving back to Freedom Park. She describes the shelter as a horrible place to have lived in. People were constantly fighting and there were too many children. Her children were constantly ill. She bought the shack she is living in now for R150 with the help of her employer from people who moved off the settlement when they received state housing. She receives no support from her ex-husband or his family for her children and neither does she or the children have any contact with him or his family.

She has six children. Her two eldest children live and grew up with her mother and the four younger children with her. The children living with her are: Karen (12), Nicky (10), Naldo (8), and Carry (2). All the children living with her are still attending school. Her two youngest children, Naldo and Carry, are Child Support Grant recipients.

Prelene has not been able to get to the Department of Social Development to apply for grants for her other two children. She chars in Claremont for a woman on the days that the Department's office is open in Tafelsig.

She also works for a bed and breakfast in Observatory and for a retired woman in Claremont. A neighbour recommended her to the people in Claremont. And her Westridge employer recommended her to the people in Observatory. She is paid R80 by her Westridge employer and R50 by her Observatory employer.

Prelene spends R20 of the R50 on transport to and from Observatory. Of the R400 she receives in wages from her employer in Claremont per month, she spends R160 on

transport. She often borrows taxi or bus fare from her neighbour to go to work. She spends up to three hours travelling to and from work on the days she works in Claremont and Observatory.

Even though the person she works for in Westridge gives her taxi fare, she would walk there. She keeps this money and buys food with it or uses it to travel to Observatory or Claremont. She is often forced to hitch hike to Observatory and Claremont. She is very scared when she does this, but feels that she has no other option.

While she works, her children are cared for by “Oumatjie” her neighbour. She gives Oumatjie something to eat or R20 for taking care of her children while she works. Other times she buys Oumatjie food or tobacco since Oumatjie does not accept money easily.

Before working in Westridge they lived from the children’s grant money and from the food the different organisations donated. On difficult days or when things are very tough, she would often “*gaan stap*” (go and walk) where she would ask people in Portlands and Westridge if she could wash their windows in exchange for food or money. Other times she would clean people’s yards and gardens for food. She mostly did it when there is no food in the house or the children needed something for the school. She would “*gaan stap*” at least three to four times a month. She would often be paid R20 per day and be given food as well. She would walk from house to house until someone would give her something or some work.

She is very concerned about her children’s education. She received a letter from the school threatening legal action if she did not pay school fees. She owed the school R180. She was so scared when she received a letter from the school; she decided to use food money to pay off school fees. The Principal of the school was aware of the family’s circumstances, but still issued the letter:

“The adults marched to different schools about the school fees. Many children were not issued last year with school reports because their parents could not pay the fees. They saw on the television that it was illegal to withhold reports. However, principals are continuing to withhold the reports. I sometimes do odd work at schools to pay off school fees.”

She says that children feel ashamed if the other kids know about their circumstances, and prefers the mother to pay school fees. Her children are becoming teenagers and do

not want to wear the clothes donated to them. She lay byes her children's clothes at Pep Stores.

She is also saving towards her own house. She is part of the Freedom Park savings group and has her own savings as well. Her employer in Westridge knows the owner of Timber City and promised to organise timber for her to build her rooms with. She also gave her R1000 towards her own house.

They use a gas stove to prepare family meals and candles for lighting. She cannot wait for when she will be connected to an electricity supply on her house because then she will be able to buy a television. She believes that owning a television will keep her children indoors. She is worried that they play outside all night or prefer to sit next to the fire to keep warm:

“They would sit outside around the fire all night and in the summer they would play outside. A house would be more comfortable than a shack. It would afford them more privacy with their own toilet and bathroom facilities. The children want their own rooms.”

Gas is more expensive than electricity and candles are very dangerous in winter and when the wind blows. She is constantly worried when her children are alone at home and have to use gas by themselves to prepare meals

Her mother helps her at times with money (her mother is a pensioner). At other times she helps her mother. She also helps her sister who is an unemployed single mother and receives no help from the father of her child. Her sister used to take care of her children when she had to go and work.

She has no debts or loans. She does not belong to a funeral scheme or any policies.

5.2.5 The poor household

Elain (33) lives with her two children Marinda (5) and Sheldon (12) and a lodger (Russel, 34). They have been living on the settlement for 5 years. They all live in a four-roomed shack. Both children are still attending school and living with her. Her deceased husband deserted her and their children years ago. She stayed with a partner for a number of years but was jailed two years ago for five years. The lack of a partner has made their household very vulnerable, but at the same time introduced a level of

stability. Her partner often used to beat her and leave her and the children outside in the cold. During those violent episodes she would often have to rely on neighbours for support.

Before living on the settlement she and her now deceased husband rented a room from her in-laws, but when her husband deserted them and she lost her job as a public cleaner at a local hotel, they were forced to move. She has no living family or relatives of her own in Cape Town.

She receives the Child Support Grant for her youngest child. Russel receives a Disability Grant. He pays for boarding and lodging from his grant money. With the money she buys a bag of potatoes, sugar and flour. This must last them the entire month.

They own no electrical appliances and do all their cooking on the fire. At night they bring the coals into the shack to warm the place. They also make use of paraffin when they can afford it to provide lighting so that the children can do their schoolwork at night.

She also works as a char (washing lady) for the people on the settlement. They mostly pay her with food for a single meal or a little money to buy paraffin with. She works once every second week for Merle (see better-off household) on the settlement, who pays her R50 for washing and ironing clothes. This is her most consistent source of income after the Child Support Grant.

Every Thursday she hitch-hikes to Muizenberg on Baden Powell Drive where she asks around for a char job for the day. She has regular households she visits on those days, but she has no formal arrangement with them. She sometimes works for food or money, depending on the household.

On Wednesdays and Fridays she goes to a club with her neighbour where they would pickpocket people. She mostly takes cell phones from her "friends" and sells them since they are easy to dispose of and guarantee at least R100 in income. Because they frequent the same club every weekend they dope their "friends" with psychiatric drugs she gets from her neighbours on the settlement. The pills lead to short-term memory loss.

They do not pay train fares when they go to the club. They have made friends with the security guards working at the station. The guards do not inspect them for train tickets. In return, they provide the guards with cigarettes and sometimes with money.

On the evenings she goes to the club, she asks her neighbour (Oumatjie) to take care of her children. She would then provide her with something to eat or R20, depending on how much she makes.

When she goes on these trips she often prays to God for guidance and forgiveness. She fears for her life every time she goes on these trips, but sees no other alternative. She has no family to turn to in Cape Town for help. Her mother and father passed away years ago, and her brothers live in Kimberly.

She also occasionally has a variety of male “friends” who stay over and that provide her with a little money to at least buy a loaf of bread with.

They go to bed without a meal at least once a week. She says that the children receive one meal at school and crèche at least. Wintertime is the period in which their household is most vulnerable. It is very difficult for her to find washing jobs and the rain and wetness makes it difficult to live on the settlement.

She sees grant days as the best days in their household. This is the one night that she provides her family with fried chicken, which she prepares on the open fire. The rest of the time they have soup and a sandwich for lunch or other times only coffee and bread.

Elain fears the constant shooting and looting on the settlement. She also fears attacks by gangsters since they know that an adult male does not reside in the household.

However, she believes that God will pull them through.

5.3 Key Strategies Applied by the different Household Types in Freedom Park

5.3.1 Income expansion

In the absence of formally provided services such as crèche facilities many women on the settlement make a living by taking care of those children whose parents are employed. Households with access to electricity and electrical appliances are also able to expand their income by selling perishable goods to the same neighbours such as meat and milk. They often allow their neighbours to buy food from them on credit, given that they have a secure source of income or are considered credit worthy. Poor household work for better and well-off households in exchange for food and sometimes for money. Members from

poor households would often offer to clean the schoolyards and classrooms instead of paying school fees. Some keep the school gardens through the training and garden tools provided to them by Fairest Cape.

Other households expand their income during difficult times by accessing credit from moneylenders who often charge exorbitant interest rates. However, these are the only sources of credit that they have access to. Another important source of income is government grants. The majority of households have grants. Lodgers are also an important source of income in Freedom Park.

Many households look for work on a daily basis from the surrounding community and other more affluent areas as chars or gardeners. However, a large number of households resort to begging as a strategy. In the poor households, the entire family would be involved in begging activities. Some households work for multiple employers while others run their spaza shops and are formally employed.

5.3.2 Expenditure reduction

Very few households in Freedom Park have means to reduce their household expenditure. Some would go without food as a desperate expenditure reduction strategy, while others would change the composition of their diet.

The school feeding nutritional programme ensures that children have access to at least one meal a day. And the meal obtained from the scheme is included in the family's weekly diet. While others would search the surrounding households and shop's refuse for left over food. Children are sent to family members as a means of reducing expenditures and others would hitchhike, walk or board trains during off peak times to escape paying transport fees.

Wood instead of paraffin and electricity is used during difficult times. Soup bones replace fresh meat and tinned meat (fish in a can).

5.3.3 Shack formation

In all but a few instances, not more than one family lives per shack. A number of siblings or relatives tend to have their shacks located next to one another in an almost circular format. Households who new each other prior to living in Freedom Park tend to

live in close proximity. These households would operate as an extended family living in separate structures.

5.3.4 Social networks

Children are left with family members off the settlement to ensure that they have access to electricity, clean water and sanitation so that they are able to study and prepare themselves for school and examinations. Relatives and friends are able to provide very limited support to these households and most of the family or relatives tend to have similar socio-economic status and are thus unable to support themselves. Households with strong relations/network with the surrounding community share their electricity, which they obtain from those households with their neighbours who do not have access to surrounding households. In return they have to share the electricity bill, which could be as high as R80 per week.

Several households on the settlement share the cost of the electricity. Each household has a specific time that they must cook their meals at.

5.3.5 Building social credit

Social support for those in need is seen as social credit. That is households have the right to claim or expect help from other households in times of great need.

5.3.6 Joining religious organizations, voluntary associations

Many households join the different organizations with the hope of obtaining essential services such as food and at times employment opportunities.

Section Six: Survey Results

6.1 Demographic Information

Five hundred and sixty eight people reside in the ninety-five households surveyed on Freedom Park.

Figure 3: Percent of men and women residents from interviewed households

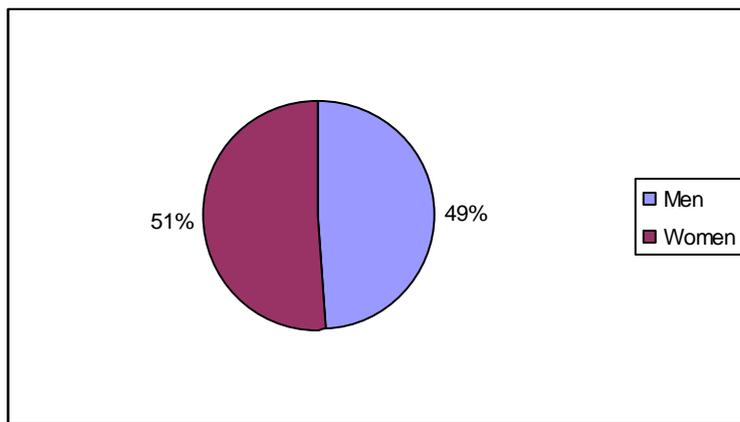
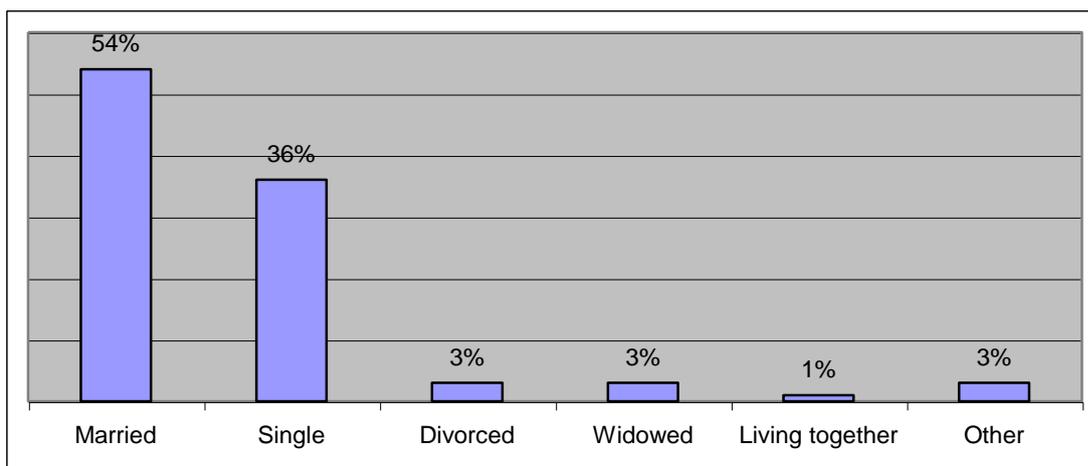


Figure three shows that from the 95 households that were surveyed, fifty one percent of the people interviewed were women and forty nine percent were men.

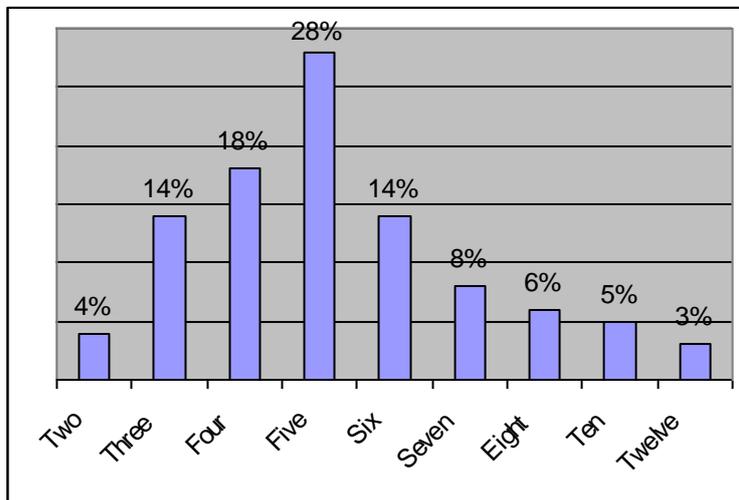
Figure 4: Marital status in percentage



The majority of households consist of married people. From the ninety-five households surveyed thirty six percent are single and three percent are divorcees. According to the informants, women-headed households were in the majority during the initial invasion.

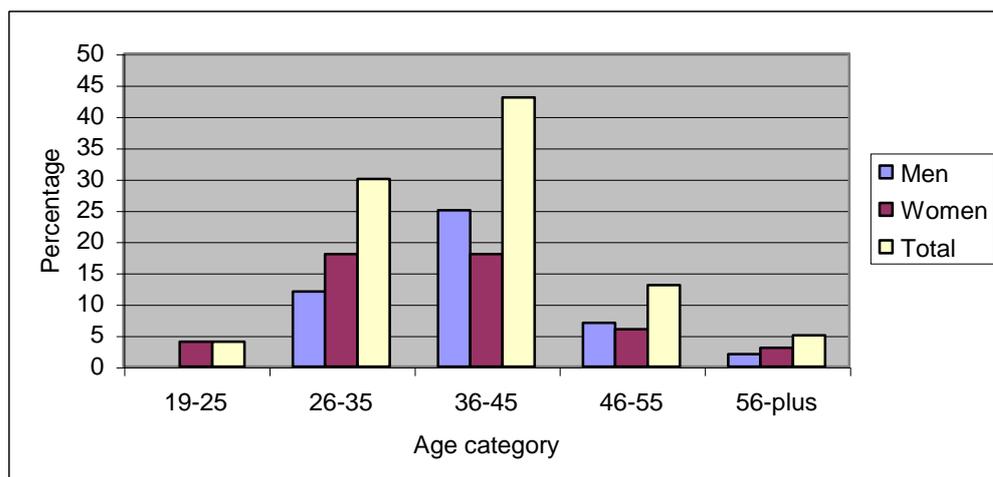
Husbands or partners were either in prison or abandoned them. Absent male partners were identified as one of the main causes of their vulnerabilities. High levels of gang activity in the area and additional source of income contribute to women’s perception of the importance of a man in the household.

Figure 5: Household size



The majority of households consist of between four to six members. A mere four percent of households have two members, only.

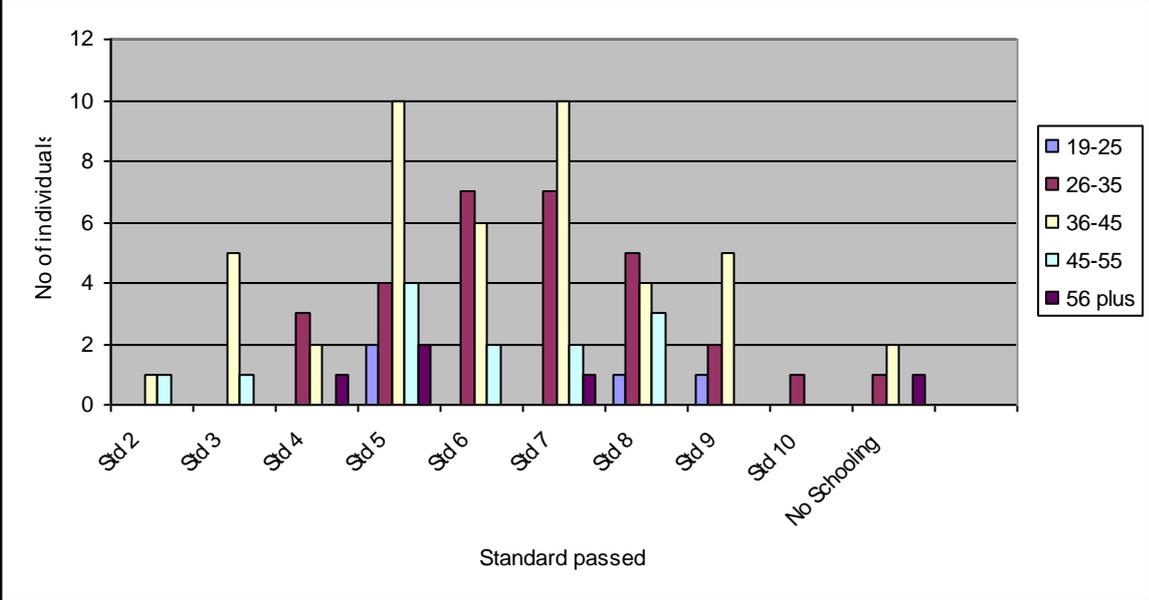
Figure 6: Total population distribution across age cohorts



The overwhelming majority of people are in the thirty six to forty five age cohorts. Thirty percent of the respondents are in the twenty six to thirty five age cohorts at the time of the survey. Pensioners constitute less than six percent of the respondents. Women outnumber men in the twenty five to thirty five age cohorts while men outnumber women in the thirty

six to forty five age cohorts. The sex distribution pattern continues in the Forty six to fifty five age cohorts whereby men slightly outnumber women. Women exceed the number of men in the fifty-six years of age and older cohort.

Figure 7: Adult education status per age cohort

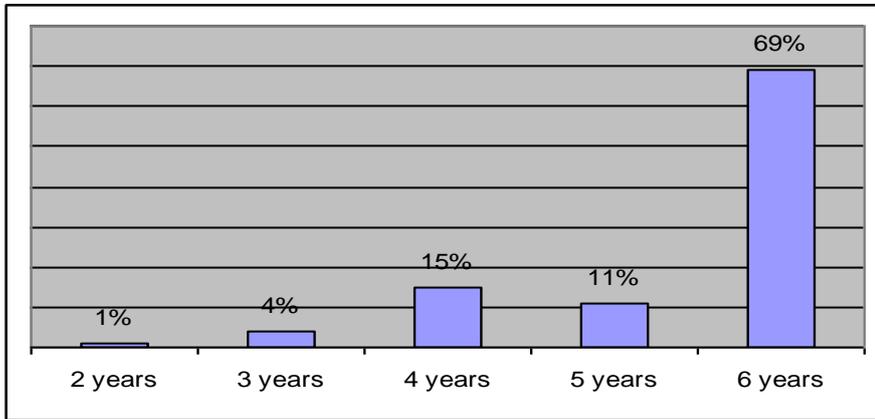


Only one adult from the ninety-five adults surveyed from twenty six to thirty five age cohort matriculated. Twenty three percent of adults surveyed from all age cohorts had passed standard five at the time of the survey, while twenty one percent of the adults from all age cohorts had passed standard seven. Surprisingly, only two adults from the age cohort nineteen to twenty five had passed standard seven and eight respectively. Four percent of the adults surveyed in all the age cohorts reported not having received any formal education.

6.2 MOVEMENT HISTORY

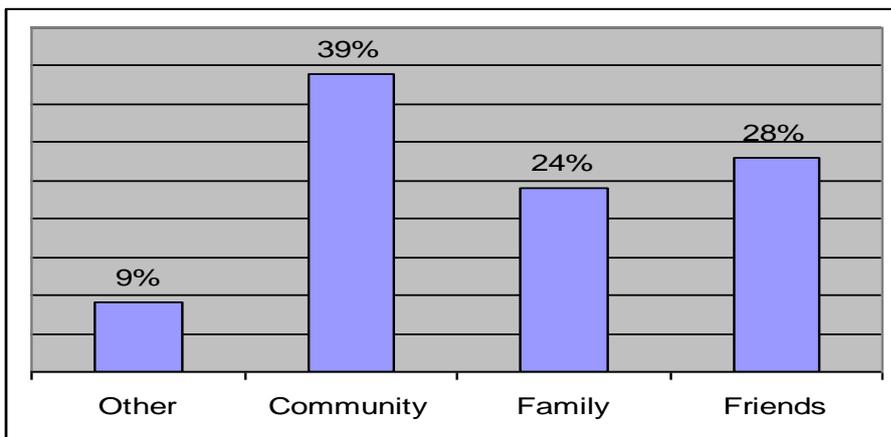
Most people started moving into Freedom Park from surrounding communities especially Tafelsig during 1998 when first occupants occupied the vacant state land earmarked for development by the City of Cape Town.

Figure 8: Number of years lived on Freedom Park



Majority [sixty nine percent] of people moved into Freedom Park in 1998. Only a few households have been living there for less than three years. Most people saw other people putting up shacks on the field and decided to do so themselves. Those who joined later had to obtain the permission from the then residence committee. Mitchell's Plain, and in particular Tafelsig were the main areas of origin for the inhabitants of Freedom Park.

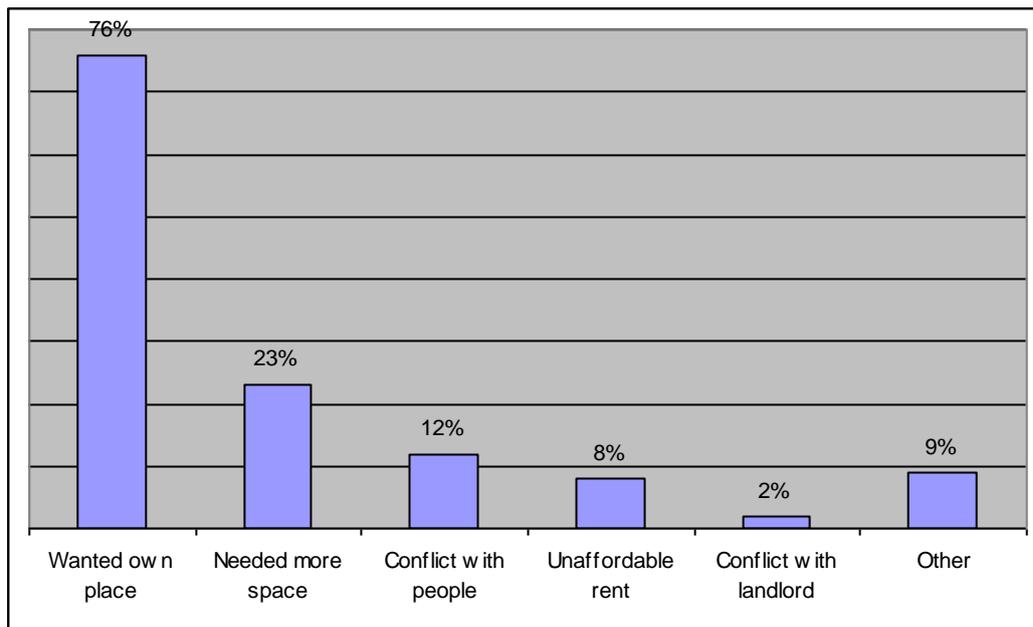
Figure 9: How did you find out about Freedom Park?



From the ninety-five households that were part of the survey only forty-six responded on how they found out about Freedom Park. Community informed about thirty nine percent of the respondents about shack buildings in Freedom Park. Only twenty-four percent of

the respondents were informed by family members. This confirms the theory that the current social networks are unable to support the respondents given their own vulnerabilities. However, just providing or having the ability to inform people about options or opportunities are important. Many of them could not afford their previous places of residence and living in the informal settlement would have been a cheaper option at the time.

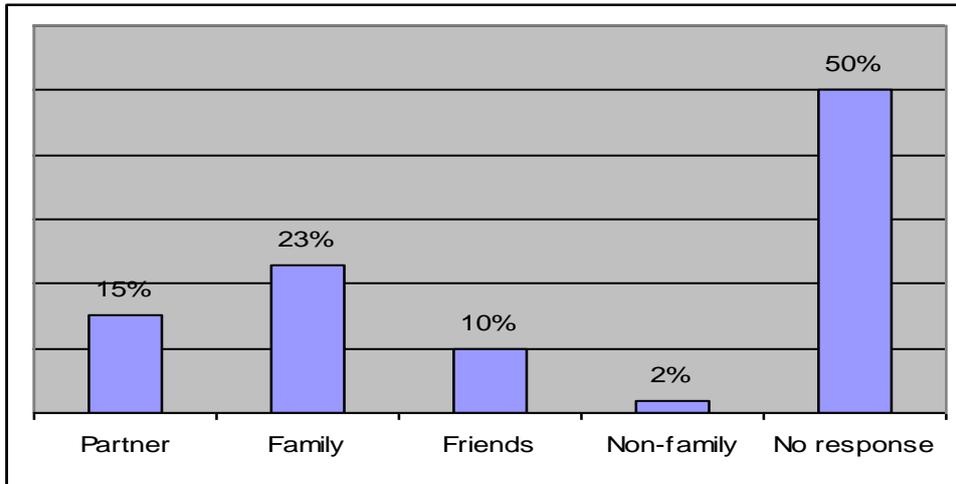
Figure 10: Reasons for moving to Freedom Park



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

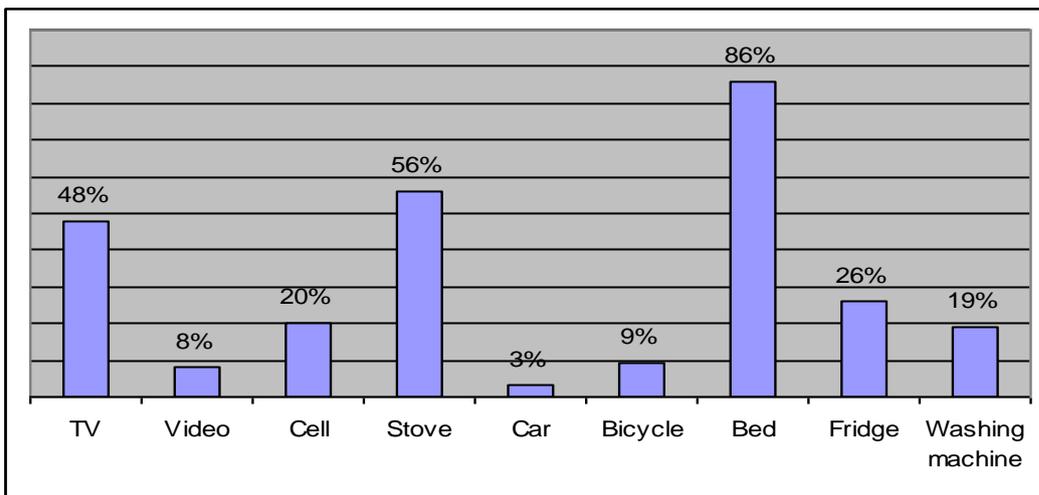
Seventy six percent of the respondents moved to Freedom Park because they wanted a place of their own or needed more space. Twenty three percent further indicated that the reason for moving to Freedom Park was looking for more space to live in as some were sharing rooms with family members. The ARK, a place for destitute families, was home to many of the residents. Others were living on the street before moving into Freedom Park. The overwhelming majority of people lived in other people’s backyards or shared a house with family members.

Figure 11: Whom did you live with prior to moving to Freedom Park?



Half of the people surveyed did not respond as to whom they lived with prior to moving to Freedom Park. The majority of those who responded, about twenty three percent indicated that they lived with extended family prior to moving to Freedom Park. A mere fifteen percent lived with a partner, ten percent lived with friends and two percent lived with people they were not acquainted with.

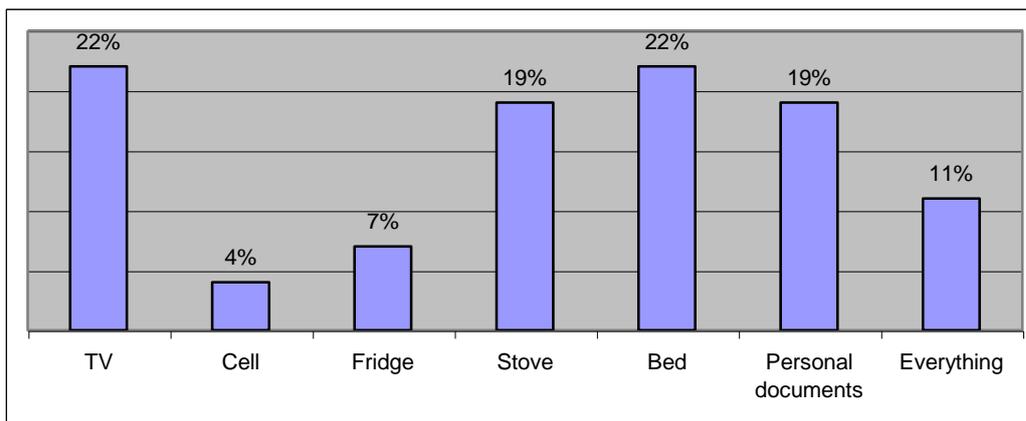
Figure 12: Household assets



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

The majority of people, eighty six percent, reported owning a bed; fifty six percent reported owning stove and forty-eight reported owning television. Only three percent of the households reported owning a car.

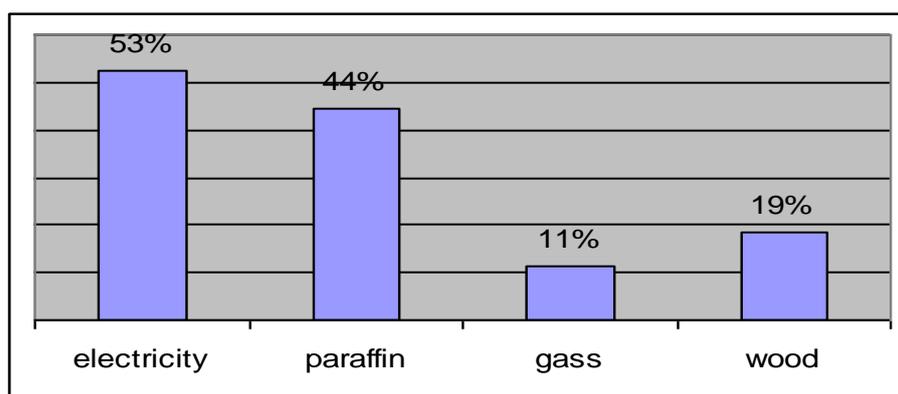
Figure 13: Most valued household asset



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

Only twenty-seven households out of the ninety-five surveyed responded as to what assets they treasured most in their households. The majority of the respondents rated their beds and TVs. Television, besides entertaining family, prevents children from joining the local gangsters according to the parents. Personal documents (such as birth certificate and identification documents) were identified by eleven percent as their most treasured possessions. These allow people to access their social security services as listed under the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution. Some respondents said that it was quite expensive to replace these personal documents.

Figure 14: Types of energy used for meals

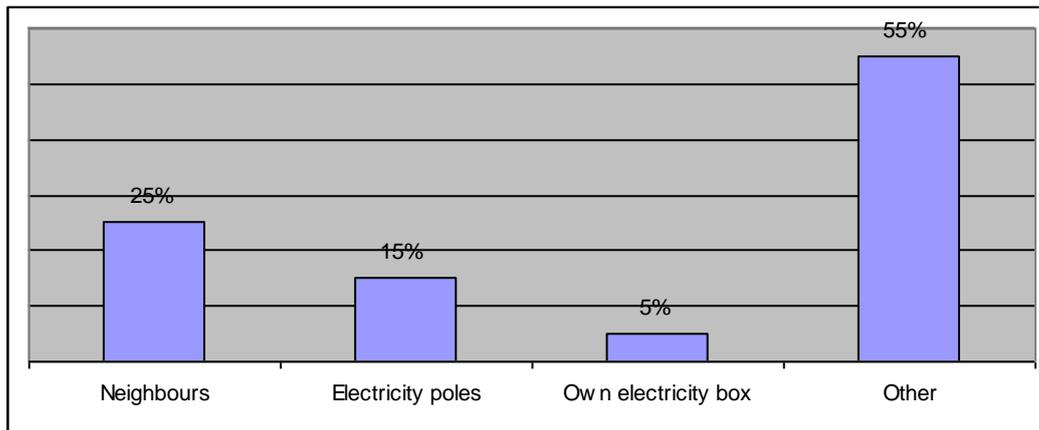


[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

Most households use electricity as the main source of energy. However, the overwhelming majority of households make use of more than one source of fuel. Following are some of the reasons for using more than one source of energy: *“If the light*

is off, I must use wood” Often the households from which they obtain their electricity do not use the money to purchase more electricity, but would use it for food or other necessities. Others sometimes cannot afford paraffin and are forced to use wood. In a few instances the households in the area share or make turns to prepare meals with their neighbours with the electricity they obtain from the Tafelsig community, “*Because my family also uses the energy to prepare their meals.*”

Figure 15: Source of energy

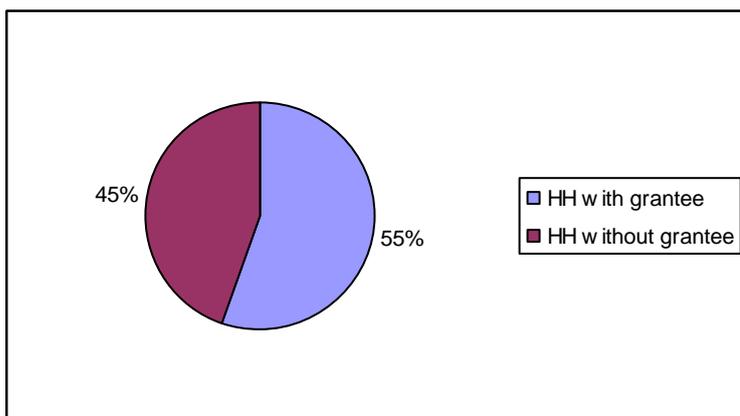


Electricity is obtained from “illegal connections” from the surrounding community and from municipal poles. Households pay between R80 and a R120 per week to be connected. Neighbours on the field often share the electricity costs. Fifteen percent of the respondents indicated that they obtain electricity illegally from the municipal poles. This is considered an inferior source of energy and is reported to harm household electrical goods because of the strong current or voltage.

6.3 ECONOMIC AND INCOME RELATED ACTIVITIES

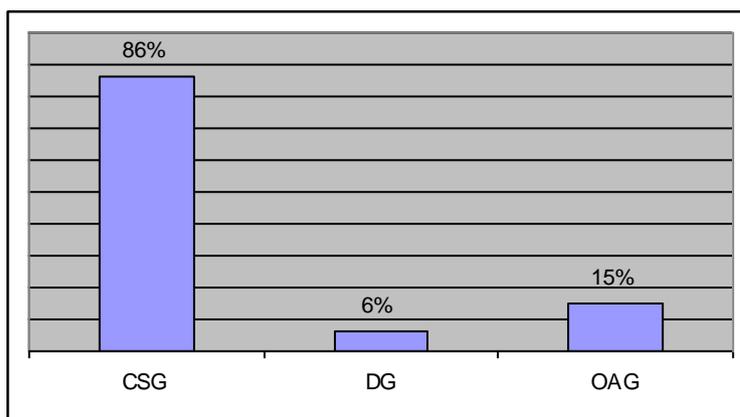
In the community of Freedom Park access to state grants is often seen as the most stable and source of income especially by vulnerable and poor households. Access to state grants also allows households access to credit from moneylenders during difficult times. Not all households in the community of freedom Park have access to state grants. Figure 16 shows the number of households with grantees.

Figure 16: The number of households with grantees



Fifty-five percent of households have access to one or more grants, while forty-five percent indicated having no access to state grants.

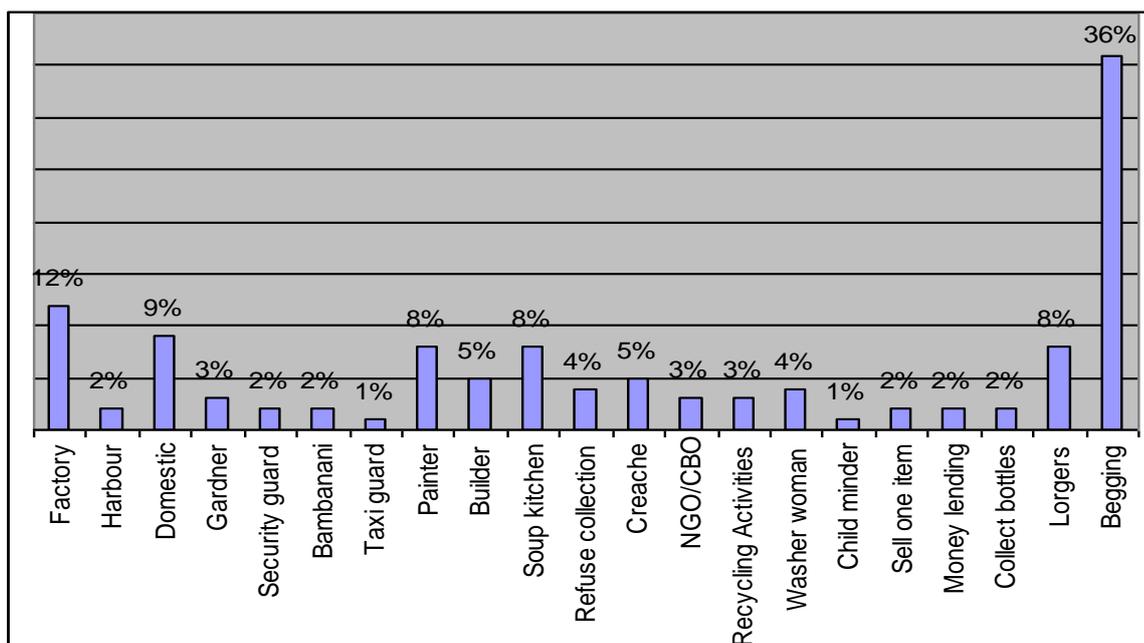
Figure 17: Distribution of grant types



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

Most beneficiaries receive the Child Support Grant (CSG) followed by the Old Age Grant (OAG) and the Disability Grant (DG). The CSG constitute eighty-six percent of all grants in Freedom Park, DG constitutes six percent and OAG constitutes fifteen percent. The value of the different grants differs considerably i.e., the CSG pays R170 while the OAG and the DG beneficiaries receive each R740 per month.

Figure 18: The main income generating activities undertaken by households

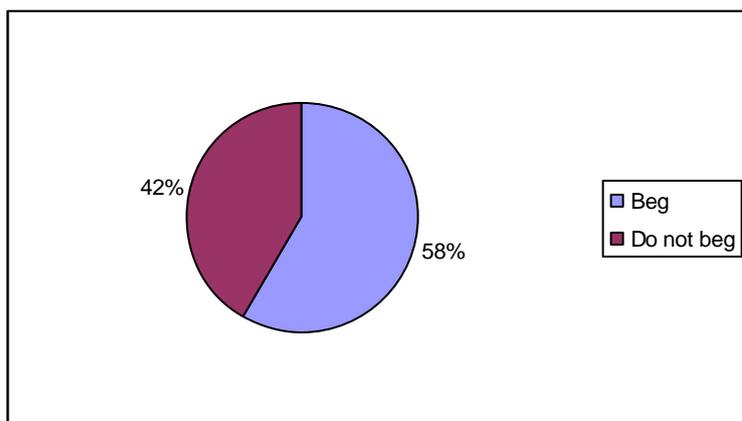


[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

Begging is the most important source of income generating activity. The second most popular area of work is factory work followed by domestic work and income from lodgers, painting and construction work. Even those who work in factories work as cleaners or “tea ladies” etc. They perform essentially the same work as domestic workers but in a different context. A few work as machinist. Others, especially men, work as welders, motor mechanics or painters. They work for small contractors, which tender for projects.

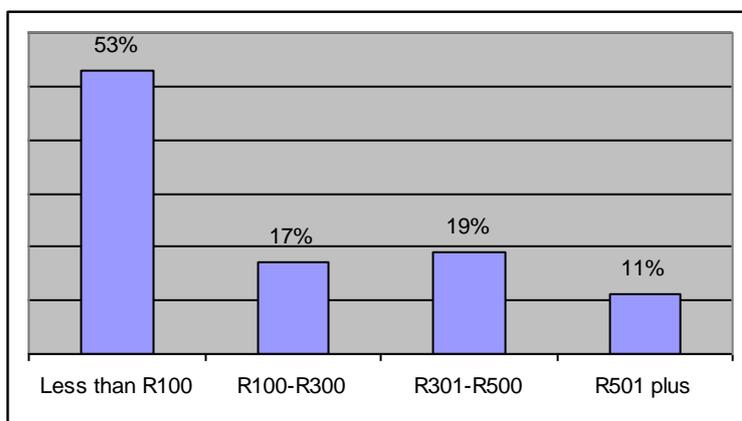
NGOs, CBOs and the school-feeding scheme supplement these households’ daily nutritional needs. Since most NGOs and CBOs are closed over weekends they are forced to find alternative sources of food. The local shopping centre is an ideal place to beg while others prefer to go to Cape Town.

Figure 19: Percentage of households involved in begging



From the ninety-five households surveyed only thirty-eight responded to whether they were involved to any begging activities as a source of food to their families. From the thirty-eight respondents, which constitute forty percent of the surveyed population, fifty eight percent indicated that they were involved in some form of begging activities. The remaining forty-two indicated that they were not involved in any begging activities. Respondents felt very embarrassed having to resort to begging, but it provides their families with some food. Normally the entire household would beg. This sometimes influences children’s ability to attend school negatively. Food is often the only reward people get from begging activities.

Figure 20: Household income per week (including grant payments)



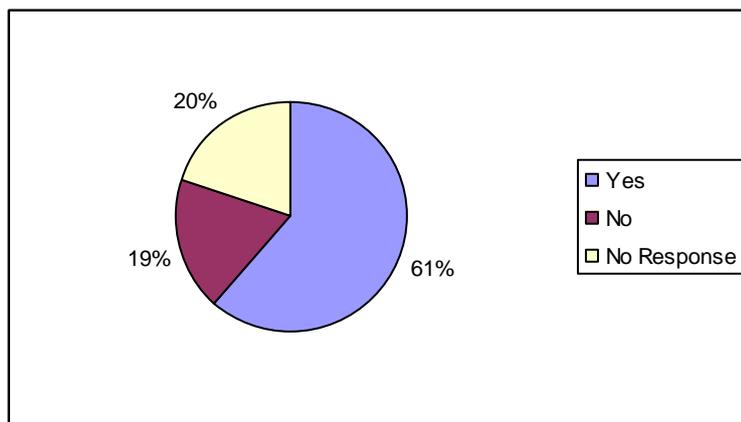
From the ninety-five households surveyed fifty three percent reported an income of less than R100 per week including grant payments. Seventeen percent reported earning between R100 to R300 per week while nineteen percent reported earning between R301

to R500 per week. Only eleven percent of the households surveyed reported earning R501 per week and more.

6.4 HOUSEHOLD VULNERABILITIES

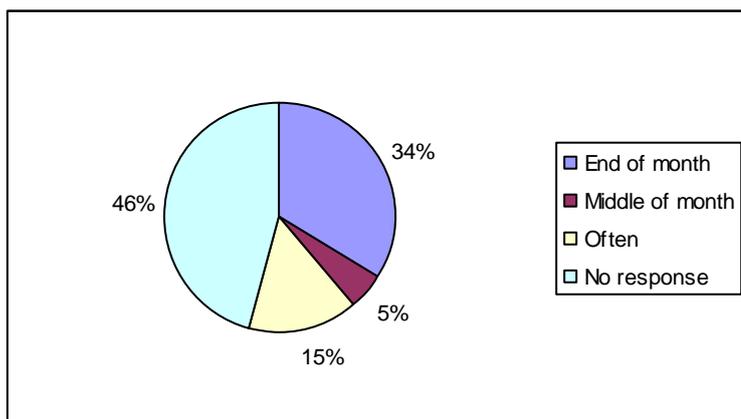
The inability of a household to meet their basic food needs is one of the most sensitive indicators of vulnerability. The majority of households go to bed without food at times. This is despite the number of individuals and organisations donating food. Some respondents had the following to say about being unable to provide their families with food: *“It is very painful I haven’t got anything to give him” Sometimes I feel like crying.* And *“It makes me feel depressed.”*

Figure 21: Does your family ever go without food at times?



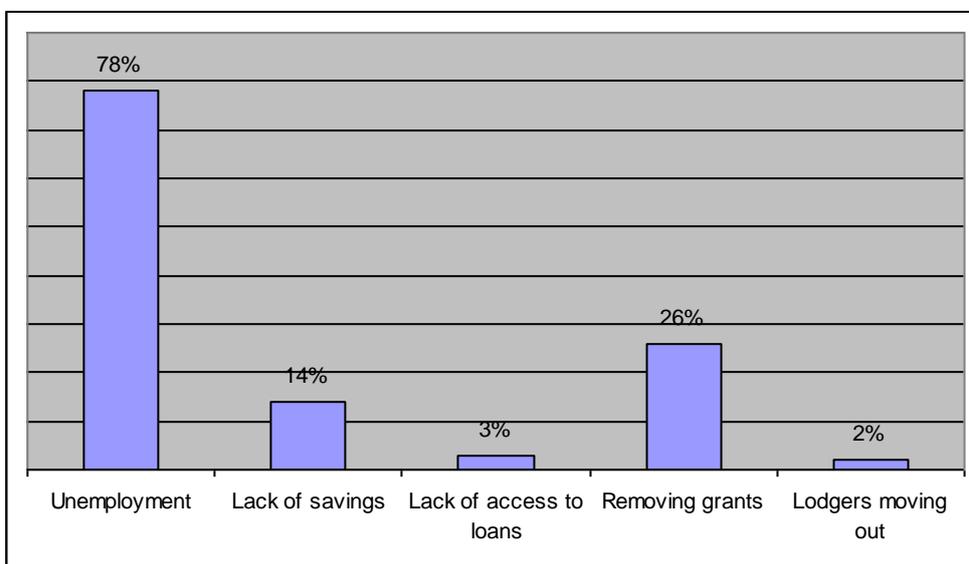
From the survey sixty one percent of households indicated that they go to bed without food sometimes. Sixty one percent from the ninety-five households did not respond as to whether they go to bed with or without food at times.

Figure 22: When is your household most likely to go without food?



Thirty four percent of the households surveyed indicated that they normally go without food towards the end of the month while fifteen percent indicated that they face food shortages most of the time. Only five percent indicated they normally go without food towards the middle of the month.

Figure 23: Financial vulnerability

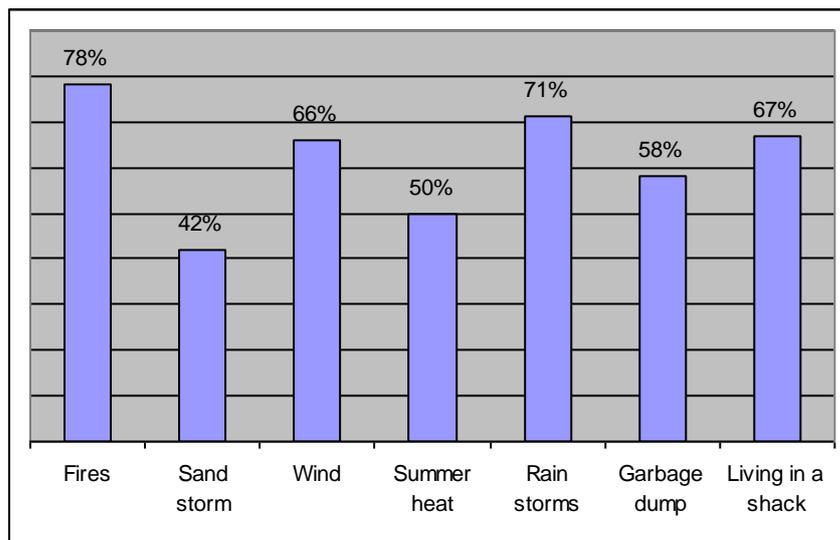


[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

The lack of strong financial capital is attributed to unemployment followed by the removal of grants and the absence of savings. Twenty six percent reported the loss of a grant as one of the most important reason for the vulnerability they are experiencing. Only three percent reported the lack of access to credit and fourteen percent reported

lack of savings as major impediments. Respondents are sceptical of credit and are unwilling to enter into debt, especially when they are familiar with the creditor. Debt also creates an obligation which extends beyond the actual repayment of the loan. Loan sharks on the other hand extend credit to families with secure sources of income such as a social security grants. Very few households, even those who are in employment, have the means to save in Freedom Park, at least at the rate required to pay off debt or any other significant purchase.

Figure 24: Environmental and Natural vulnerability



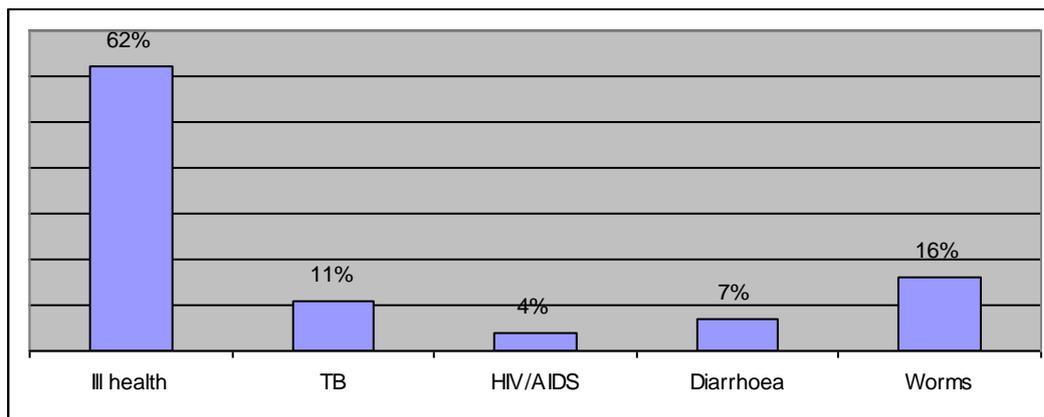
[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

Living in a shack exposes a household to several vulnerabilities. Fire and rainstorms highlight the inadequacy of a shack in providing adequate physical protection. Ideally speaking, a home should provide protection against the natural elements, it should be a place to raise families and run businesses from. Respondents said that many times gangsters would run through the settlement, kick down their doors and rob them of household belongings. The lack of proper lighting on the settlement provides further protection to gangsters while raiding the area. People are too scared to leave their shacks to search for work because of the constant looting. During winter the shacks are often very cold. To keep warm, they make fires inside the shacks. This has led to many fires and the loss of possessions. Seventy eight percent of the households reported that fires are a major cause of environmental and natural vulnerabilities in the Freedom Park community. In certain cases some children and adults were hurt and suffered burns due to fires. During rainy weather the grounds become extremely muddy and uncomfortable to walk around. The rain would also seep through the walls and roof even if sails provided by the City’s Disaster Management Programme cover them. Drying clothes and

preparing food are extremely difficult during this period. During sandstorms it is impossible to keep the shacks clean and for children to play outside. The garbage dump at the back of the settlement is another point of concern. It attracts flies and other insects.

The communal water points and toilets are other sources of vulnerabilities. Poor communal control is exercised over the hygienic standards and doors have been removed from toilets to reinforce shacks. Lack of proper lighting makes it extremely dangerous for women and children to use the toilets at night. Some households have decided to cordon off the toilets in an attempt to maintain acceptable hygienic levels. During warm weather a stench emanates from the toilets. The stench is worst during weekends when the municipal trucks do not collect buckets. Relations between the inhabitants and the surrounding community have become more strained because of this.

Figure 25: Health vulnerability

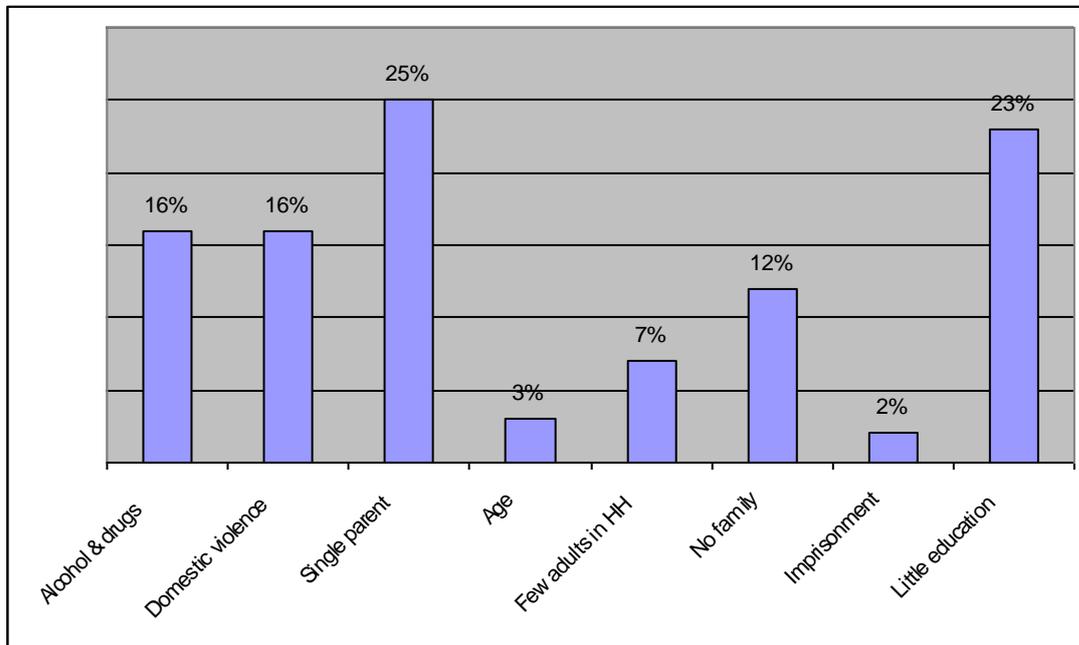


Only fifty-eight percent of the 95 households surveyed responded to the question. The majority of the respondents (62%) identified Ill health is one of the major causes of vulnerability in their households. Children also appear to be suffering from skin diseases. Most children appear to have large white spots on their faces indicative of nutritional deficiencies. The cold weather and inadequate sanitation and poor protection provided by the shacks expose humans to developing TB, colds and other infectious diseases. Sand has also been implicated in cases where high incidence of worms have been found and diarrhoea.

There is very little recreational facilities or programmes that exist on the settlement to occupy children and adult inhabitants after school. They aimlessly roam around the

settlement. Even though facilities exist in the surrounding community they do not feel comfortable accessing these.

Figure 26: Social vulnerability



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

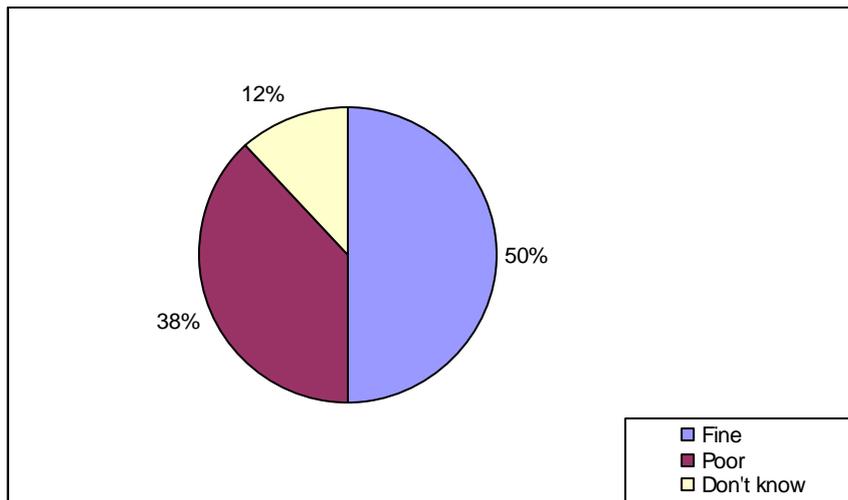
Little education (23%) and being a single parent (25%) were cited as the most important causes of social vulnerability. Domestic violence (16%) and alcohol and drug abuse (16%) were also identified. Mostly women-headed households highlighted these factors. Households with two partners present were more likely to identify domestic violence and alcohol and drug abuse as a cause of vulnerability. Key informants in the first phase of the study attributed the levels of violence in the settlement to the presence of male partners. They indicated that the fighting between partners attract gangsters from the surrounding neighbourhood as it creates a sense of instability and lawlessness.

Neighbours who provide support or shelter for the abused partner are often also at the receiving end of the abusers aggression. In some instances residents under the influence of alcohol and drugs have started fires on the shacks. Ex-convicts, residing on Freedom Park, have been identified as a source of concern by some of the respondents.

Twelve percent of the respondents reported that not having family causes a significant factor in their vulnerability. Living in a shack has also had other consequences for families. Parents are forced to send their children to live with family members who live in more secure structures. This has led to a breakdown in authority and relationship

between parent and children, considerably weakening the social capital of families. This has been exaggerated by absent male partners. The absence of a male partner or the children's father often means the child is being divorced from his or her father's family of which, it is an important potential source of social support.

Figure 27: Relationship with the surrounding community



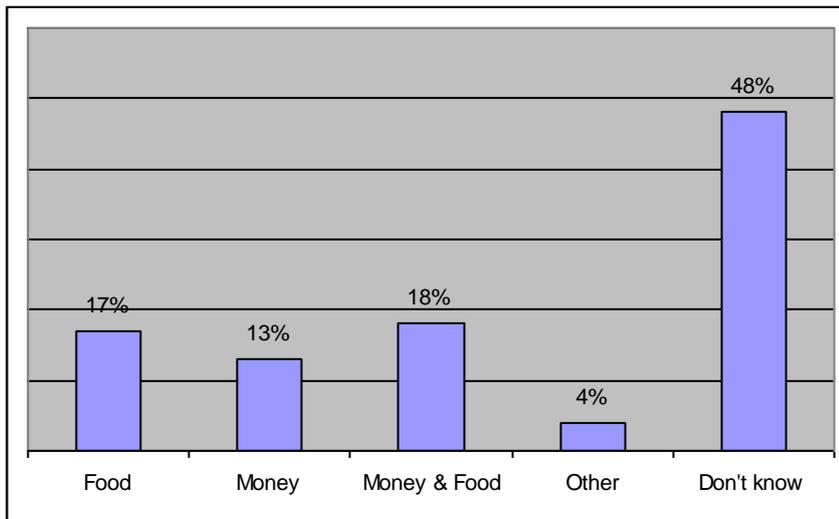
During the face-to-face interviews respondents complained that they were subjected to substantial levels of resentment and ridicule from the surrounding community. One respondent said: *“They say that we bring their house values down and are the causes of germs. And another said “They see us as parasites and gangsters”*. Another complained that the surrounding community would not allow their children to play with children from Freedom Park. The only time when the children make contact with each other is on the school grounds and even then it is fraught with tension.

Any level of tension between the surrounding community and the inhabitants of Freedom Park could result in substantial exclusion from households accessing services targeting poor individuals.

6.5 SOCIAL SUPPORT AND GOOD TIMES

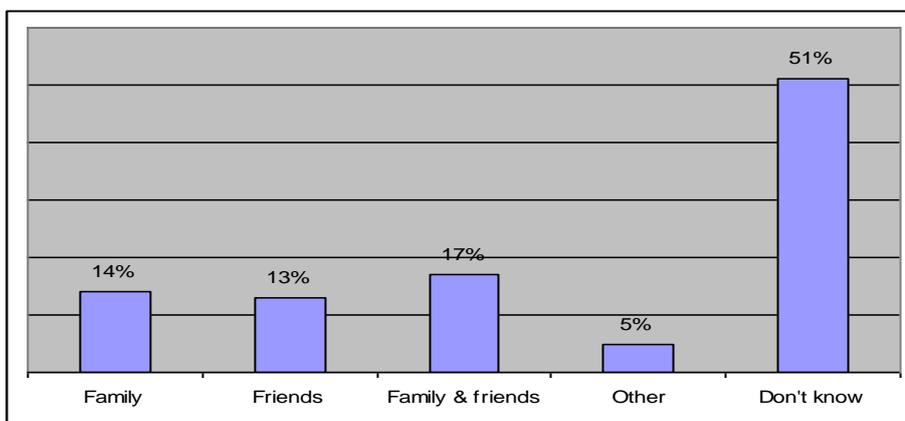
Social support for those in need is seen as a social credit. This allows households the right to claim or expect help from others in times of great need. Social support in the form of family ties, friendships and involvement in social activities can offer a psychological buffer against stress, anxiety and depression; it can also help households cope better with health problems.

Figure 28: When is it going well in your household?



According to eighteen percent of the respondents it goes well in their households when they have access to money and food. Seventeen percent reported that it goes well in their households when they have food while thirteen percent mentioned the presence of money as an indicator of good times.

Figure 29: Who is present in your household during good times?

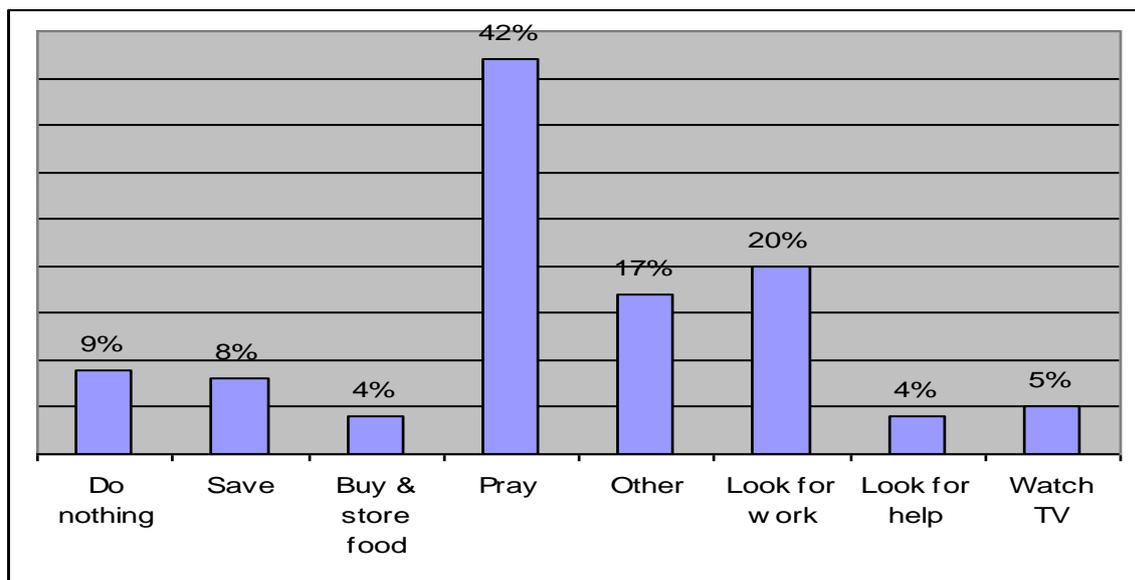


The presence of family and friends signals good times according to seventeen percent of households surveyed, while fourteen percent reported the presence family and thirteen percent reported the presence of friends. Family and friends are their most important sources of support for food and money during difficult times. This again confirms the importance of social networks in the livelihoods of poor households.

6.6 HOUSEHOLD STRATEGIES

The internal and external environments affect different households and different people differently. Hence households need to develop coping and adaptive strategies during times of vulnerability. These strategies are next best efforts to make do in a difficult situation with the hope that the household can return to normal activities and their normal livelihoods strategies.

Figure 30: Household strategy to mitigate the impact of vulnerability?

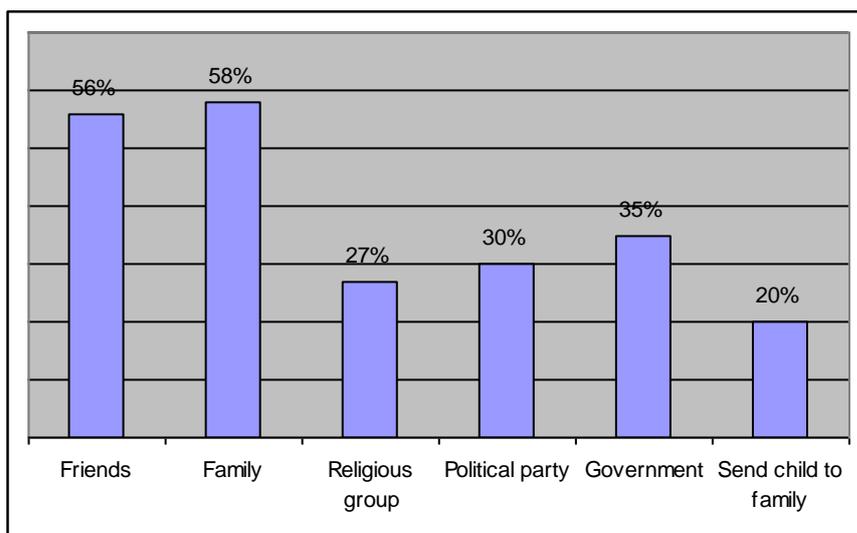


[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

The majority of individuals revert to praying as a means to ward off bad times. The strong religious base is evident in the three churches on Freedom Park, the host of religious organisations donating food on a daily basis and the dominance of religious institutions in the broader community. Often their extended families are too poor to support them. Only four percent prepare themselves for the worst by buying and storing food. Primarily because they do not have the capital (money) or the necessary equipment (fridge) to keep their food or they fear that they might be robbed of it if they do. Because

of the high gang activity and burglaries in the area, it is not wise to store food. The absence of electricity also negatively impacts on households' ability to buy in bulk and to save. *The poor physical structure in which they reside prevents them from applying normal strategies.* Only eight percent reported savings as a means of preparing for bad times. From the surveyed households twenty percent reported that they look for work in order to overcome difficult times.

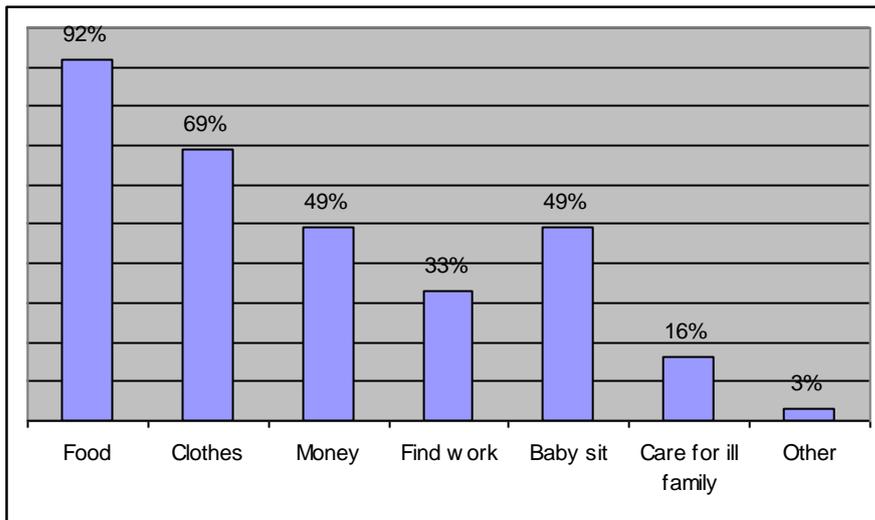
Figure 31: Whom do you approach for support during difficult times?



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

Family and friends followed by government are most likely to be approach for support during difficult times. Interestingly few said that the religious organisations (the poorest of the poor often do not feel comfortable to attend church because they do not have proper clothing, their lifestyle choices or the lack of clothes to attend the service) are their source of support. Well-off, better-off and vulnerable households are more likely to participate in the religious activities. Many of those classified as poor are forced to revert to illegal activities such as prostitution, drug smuggling and working in the local shebeens to make a living. Religious organisations do not support these activities. Only twenty percent of the respondents indicated that they send their children to stay with family members. They argue that sending children to family members leads to a breakdown in authority and relationship between the parent and children.

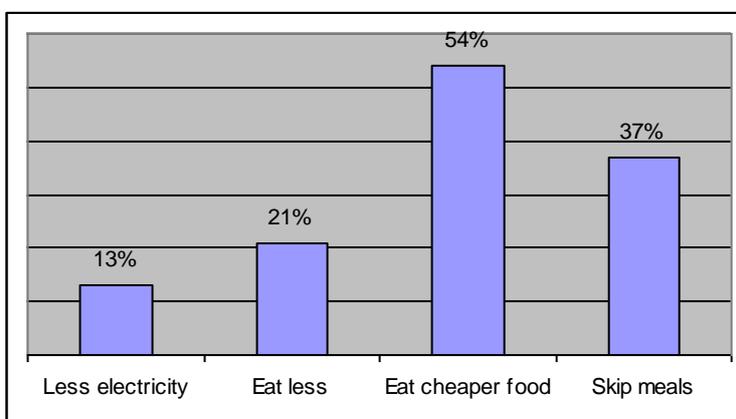
Figure 32: Help or support provided by social support network during difficult times



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

Ninety-two percent of the respondents reported that they receive food as a form of support from social networks during difficult times while sixty-nine percent reported receiving clothes. Financial support constitutes less than forty-nine percent of support offered by social network. Social networks are financially unable to support or help them. Social networks take care of children when their parents are at work. The level of gang activity on the settlement and the surrounding community accentuates the need for safe care options for children. Those who take care of the children are compensated with food or a little money. This is an important source of support and income, especially in the case of older women.

Figure 33: Adaptive strategy (expenditure reduction) during bad times



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

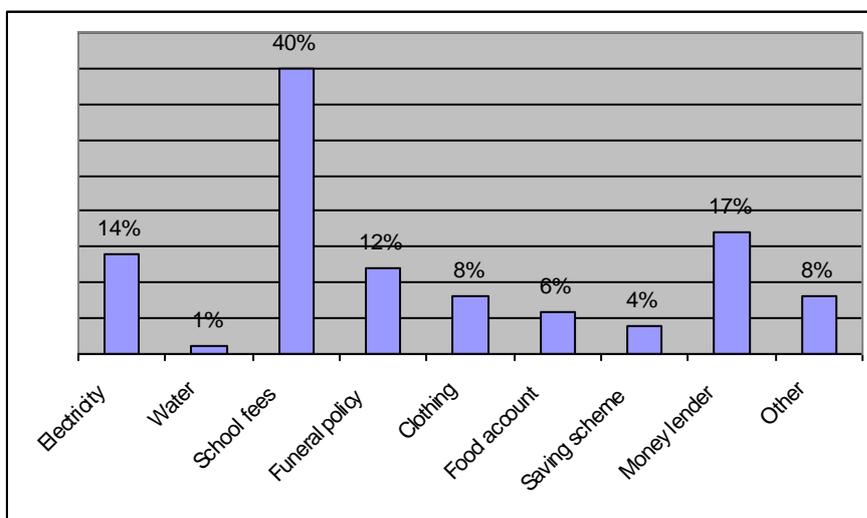
Making do with less is one of the most widely used reported strategies. Fifty-four percent of households reported resorting to eating cheaper foods (exclude meat), while twenty-one percent reported they eat less. In some cases households skip meals (37%) because they do not have access to food. Only thirteen percent reported to lower their consumption of electricity. Informants indicated that electricity payments were a priority, because they fear being disconnected if they stop payments. Clearly, the physical vulnerabilities (lack of electricity) of those living in the settlement have become an important source of income to the surrounding community. Those without access to an electricity source use paraffin also sold by some households on the settlement while others in the surrounding community also provide people on the settlement with paraffin. Many households in the settlement share the electricity costs.

Box 5: Change in diet between good and difficult times according to household type

	WELL-OFF	BETTER-OFF	VULNERABLE	POOR
GOOD TIMES				
Breakfast	Chops and steak	Porridge with milk	Maize meal	Porridge with milk
Lunch	Kentucky	Sausage and egg	Bread and tea	Bread
Supper	Tongue or leg of lamb		Cooked food	Curry and rice
BAD TIMES				
Breakfast	Do not have bad times	Maize meal	We eat what is there	Bread
Lunch	Do not have bad times	Bread and tea	We eat what is there	Nothing
Supper	Do not have bad times	Cooked food	We ear what is there	Nothing

At times those classified as vulnerable or poor go without food. This happens quite regularly despite the number of NGOs, private sector companies and individuals donating food to the people of Freedom Park. During bad times most households across household eat cheaper meals or skip meals all together. Foodstuff, which they can do without, such as milk, butter and meat are not consumed. Generally speaking whatever is available at that specific moment is consumed. Normal accepted food patterns (porridge for breakfast and cooked meals for supper) are discarded over during difficult periods.

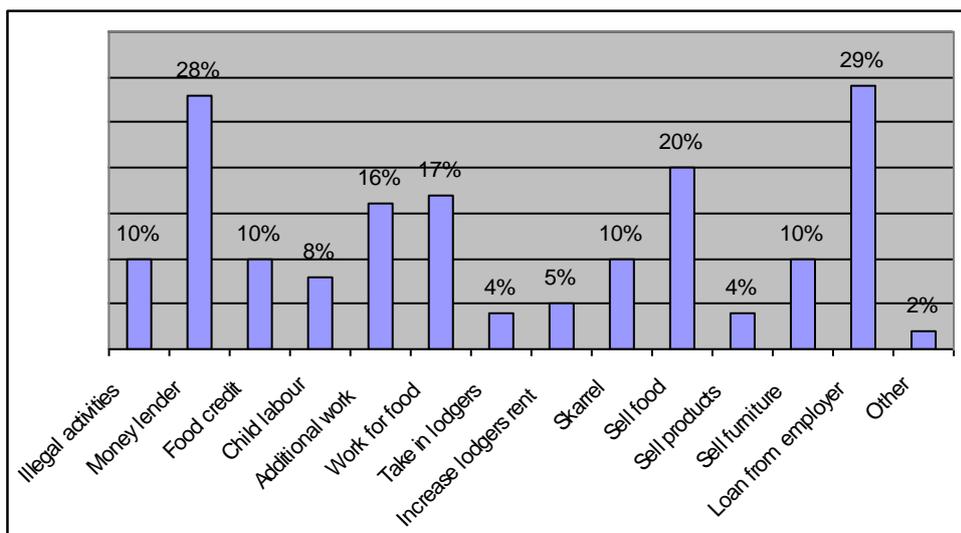
Figure 34: Which services do you skip paying during bad times?



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

Skipping service payments is another means of reducing expenditure. Parents of school going children would choose to clean schoolyards or classrooms instead of paying school fees. Others would clean the school and clinic's gardens.

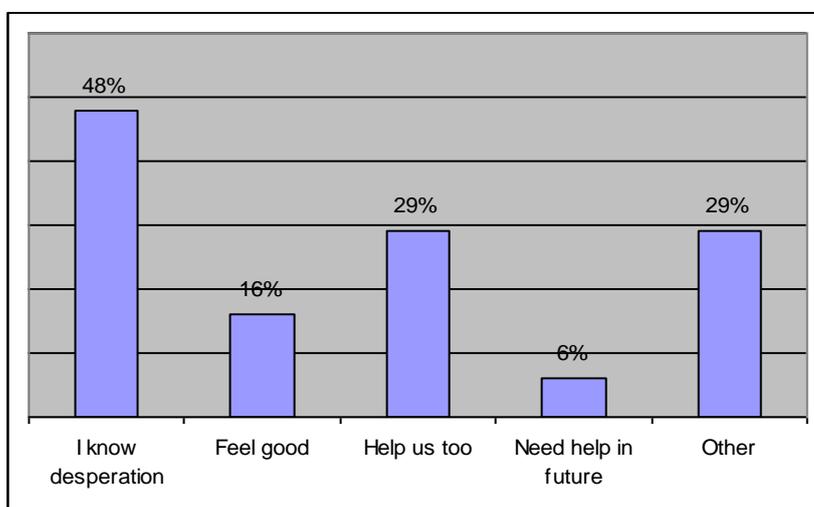
Figure 35: Adaptive strategy (income expansion)



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

Income expansion is another strategy used by households to cope during difficult times. Many people turn to moneylenders to survive difficult times. Grantees and those with a secure source of income are the only people who are extended credit by moneylenders. Others reported that they are prepared to work in exchange for food, while others sell plants they pluck from the nature reserve, take on additional work or they would beg (skarrel). A few would work around the neighbourhood offering to clean windows in exchange for money, while others would go to the Baden Powell Drive in search of work. Twenty nine percent reported that they would ask for loans from their employers while ten percent would be involved in illegal activities in order to cope during difficult times.

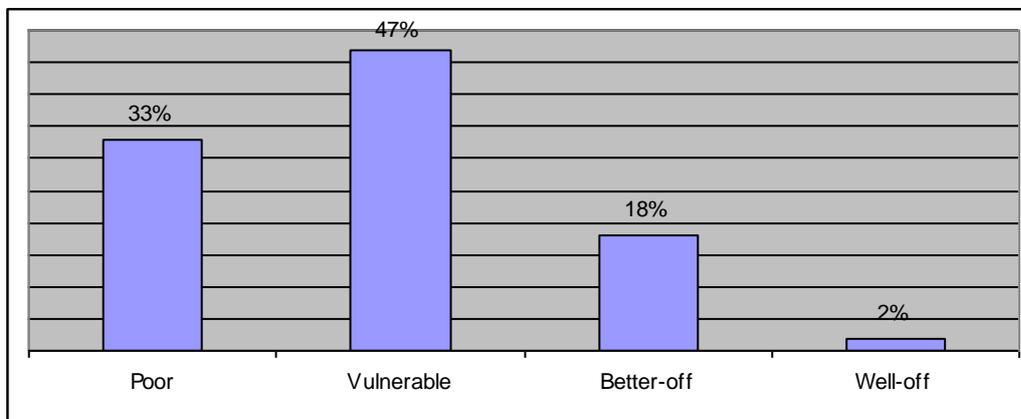
Figure 36: Social credit as a mitigating strategy



[Note: some respondents gave more than one answer so totals add up to more than 100%]

The most important mitigating strategy against future vulnerability is to help (social credit) neighbours and friends when able to do so. This places an obligation on those who receive help to return the favour when required to do so. Nearly all the respondents indicated that they help their friends, family and neighbours in need. The figure above shows that twenty nine percent reported that they help because their neighbours or friends help them too, six percent help others because they might need their help in future and forty eight percent help others because they too have experienced desperation times and that the knowledge and experience were sufficient to provide support to others. From the ninety-five households surveyed only forty responded to the question.

Figure 37: Household status



Only fifty one percent of the total households responded on the status of their households. From the respondents forty seven percent of households classified themselves as vulnerable followed by thirty three percent who classified themselves as poor and a tiny minority two percent classified themselves as well-off. Eighteen-percent classified themselves as better off.

SECTION SEVEN: VULNERABILITIES

7.1 Environmental vulnerability

Because of the material the shacks are made of and the use of gas and paraffin to prepare meals and for heating purposes, the inhabitants are continually exposed to fires. During rainy weather they are plagued by cold weather and wetness with dire consequences for their health. In summer they are faced with excruciating heat waves and sandstorms.

Twelve taps and 12 portable toilets are meant to service over 300 households. This has led to unsanitary circumstances and bad hygienic conditions. Children suffer from diarrhoea and worms. Tuberculosis is also very common in the settlement. The first few years of the settlement saw many babies dying because of the unhealthy living conditions that they were exposed to.

7.2 Social vulnerability: Internal disorder versus external cohesion

The community of Freedom Park has displayed significant cohesion in the face of external threats e.g. eviction notices served by the City of Cape Town in the early stages of the establishment of the settlement; marches organized and led by the community against school fees charged by the principals of local schools and the local gangsters.

The majority of household's social support networks are not able to provide them with financial support; however, they give support in the form of emotional or psychological support. Very few of the inhabitants have any secure income currently. Drug abuse and gangsterism are prevalent on the settlement. Some households are solely dependent on NGOs for their most basic food needs.

During the household interviews and discussions with residents it became evident that tension exists between the different sections of the settlement. Religious differences further add to an already tension charged environment. Acquisitions are bound that certain religious organizations exclusively focus on their members at the expense of others.

The community surrounding the settlement also has mixed feelings towards the inhabitants of the settlement. They feel that they bring down the value of their properties, while others feel that they are responsible for germs and are unhygienic. On both sides of the settlement two different gangs (Wonder Boys and Americans) are fighting to have the settlement as their territory. Gang shootouts are a regular feature on the settlement. The presence of gangsters also does not allow residents to leave their shacks unprotected, as they are often burgled. Some mentioned this as a big factor preventing them from looking for work.

Rape and molestation is a common occurrence as well. The lack of lighting and the continuous presence of unfamiliar people on the settlement make it an insecure place for women and children. Domestic violence is another common occurrence.

Because of the conditions outlined in the previous paragraphs, many families felt that they had no other option but to send their children to live elsewhere. This has led to the break up of families, and left parents feeling that they have lost control over their children and no longer playing a nurturing role in their futures.

Domestic violence between partners and among family members is also common. This has resulted in much physical and psychological trauma. This is often exaggerated by the presence of alcohol abuse (several members of the surrounding community and on the settlement are dependent on the sale of alcohol as their sole means of an income).

7.3 Food insecurity

Most of the time the entire households' energies are vested in securing food on a daily basis. Very little long-term planning is undertaken, mostly because of these circumstances. Others are forced to sustain their livelihoods through illegal activities. The high number of people reported going without food on Freedom Park is in sharp contrast to the actual number of individuals and organizations donating food to the residents. In most cases the food provided consists of soup and bread. This is not considered nutritionally sufficient even though it keeps the hunger pangs at bay.

7.4 Income insecurity

Very few of the households have access to any stable source of income. Grants are the most stable source of income in many of the households on the settlement. Both women-headed and male-headed households are income vulnerable, but in particular women-headed households.

The lack of income security leads to them not being able to pay for transport, neither do they have much choice in the type of health services or other services they are dependent on.

7.5 Political insecurity

Until now the City of Cape Town has been caught up in various legal battles with the residents of Freedom Park. This has resulted in many tensions between the City and Freedom Park residents. The settlement or residents are also split along political and religious alliances. However, the relationship between the City and the residents has significantly improved. The political factions formed during the land invasion are still evident today. This causes a lot of tension.

7.6 Poor human capital

Very few if any household members have managed to complete their formal education. Their children are not doing much better at school either, despite national government policies supporting free basic education. The schools in the area continue to deny children their basic right to education because their parents are unable to pay school fees.

The poor protection provided by shacks contributes to the high levels of tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases reported by the inhabitants, irrespective of the fact that the primary clinic and day hospital are within walking distance from the settlement.

7.7 Poor mental health status

The constant worry about securing food for the family and the stress of daily life on the settlement has resulted in high levels of mental stress. A few households have members who are disability grant recipients; however, many became recipients prior to living on the settlement.

7.8 Women-headed households

These are some of the poorest and most vulnerable households living on the settlement. Many of them became destitute when their partners deserted them, pass away, get prison sentences or when unemployed. Conflict with family members (domestic violence and abuse) resulted in many women losing and being homeless.

7.9 Grants

Most of the households have access to some sort of a grant, especially the CSG. Quite a few people with disabilities also live on the settlement. Respondents identified the removal of grants as the most serious threat to their livelihoods. This is significant given that the majority of respondents are CSG beneficiaries. The value of this grant (CSG) is R170 per beneficiary. The limited value of the grant means that households are unable to meet all their nutritional and other needs.

7.10 Urban renewal

A few residents are employed in the Bambanani project. Local residents are also employed by local businessmen as security guards or are employed to patrol the beaches

over weekends and public holidays. However, only a few isolated individuals benefit from these initiatives. These have not made a substantial divergence to unemployment and vulnerability.

The Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) between government and private contractors has also seen a few residents employed in the area. The PPP frame of reference requires that contractors that are awarded government contracts should utilise local labour in carrying their duties. Two residents have been employed as refuse collectors.

7.11 Limitation of the current housing subsidy scheme

The housing subsidy scheme has very clear perimeters in terms of who qualifies for support and who does not qualify. The overwhelming number of households qualifies for the subsidy but some do not. These are mostly women who have owned homes before but lost them due to divorce, separation or unemployment.

SECTION EIGHT: CONCLUSION

Livelihood frameworks help us to: identify what people are already doing to cope with risk and uncertainty; make the connections between factors that constrain or enhance their livelihoods on the one hand, and policies and institutions in the wider environment; identify measures that can strengthen assets.

Despite all the constraints and difficulties faced by the community of Freedom Park, social capital remains poor household's most valuable asset. Very few if any of the respondents identified government (national, provincial or local government) or the supporting agencies as the most important assets at their disposal. Yet the majority of respondents identified the removal of social security grants as the main cause of their vulnerability.

The following paragraphs examine the lessons learnt from the livelihood analysis undertaken at Freedom Park.

8.1 Traditional notion of well located land

The current location of the settlement even if far removed from employment opportunities (if defined in relation to the City of Cape Town) gives the inhabitants some limited access to social support from the surrounding community, religious and church organizations

in the area. Government's social services (health, grant payments) are also within walking distance and easily accessible. But the development indicators for this community suggest that the inhabitants have been unable to take advantage of the opportunities available to them.

8.2 The unintended consequences of interventions

Clearly, campaigns aimed at improving the physical space of inhabitants (electrification) and the improvement of the mode of transport (safety campaigns) of residents could negatively impact on the lives of others. Households who currently generate income through paraffin sales would have to find alternative sources of generating income to sustain their livelihoods.

8.3 Government interventions (PPP)

The PPP initiatives have resulted in little employment opportunities for the inhabitants. Only a few have managed to gain employment. The majority continues to be dependent on grants and the goodwill of others. Households are left with little option but to choose livelihood strategies (begging) detrimental to their long-term social mobility. Changes to these are not likely to occur within the immediate foreseeable future.

8.4 Sustainability of interventions

During the inception years of Freedom Park, the business sector and the religious institutions in the immediate surrounding made large donations to the residents. However, these organizations were not able to sustain the level of support over a long period of time. This was also true for individual donors and households.

8.5 The welfarist approach of current interventions

The overwhelming support is welfarist in approach and encourages dependency. Households are dependent on external support for their most basic needs. Food and clothes are the most important sources of support they receive from donors. The majority of households has been depended on this type of support for the past six years and will continue to be dependent in the foreseeable future unless some drastic interventions occur.

Current initiatives, which focus exclusively on children, ignore the need for a holistic intervention that would target each and every family member. Currently very little initiatives target adults.

8.6 The ineffectiveness of current interventions

Many organizations and individuals continue to deliver services duplicating each other. This calls for a more strategic intervention in a particular area. The following points illustrate the tension between the provision of resources and the poor's ability to access resources intended to benefit them.

- Food insecurity is prevalent despite huge and multiple donations from the different organization and individuals operating on the settlement.
- The impact of government services on the livelihoods of residents living on the settlement has also been limited. High incidence of tuberculosis and poor health persist despite access to basic primary health care.
- The same is true of the educational outcomes of the inhabitants. In spite of the free basic primary education guaranteed in the Constitution, the children's educational outcomes are not much better than that of their parents.
- Domestic violence is prevalent despite the presence of numerous religious organization and non-governmental organization's social services. The community continues to be plagued by gangsterism and violence five years after the area was incorporated into the Presidential Lead Programme: Urban Renewal and the Provincial Multi-Sectoral Action Teams. The South African Police Service's Mitchell's Plain office is less than two kilometers from the settlement.

8.7 The impact of external interventions on social relations on the settlement

Without the proper analyses of current networks or social support structures, well-intended external interventions could lead to decline or diminishing of current self-help initiatives. Several organizations provide training in childcare and care for the sick and infirm for people living on the settlement. Traditionally older women living on the settlement perform these functions. However, with the introduction of these support services by NGOs and other organizations, mostly younger and the more skilled women

receive training in childcare and taking care of the sick and the unskilled are not catered for.

8.8 Initiating programme

It is important to establish committed stakeholders at the inception of a programme. Using existing structures such as the case of the neighborhood watch for other purposes than what they were originally established for could result in severe tensions within communities.

8.9 Mix-income residents

During difficult times the more affluent households living on the settlement could become important assets to poorer households. These households provide them with access to credit and food which normal financial institutions would not be willing to extend to them.

8.10 The impact of progressive legislation on livelihoods

Legislation, which prevents the expulsion of homeless people from land, which they have occupied illegally, has had a significant impact on the livelihoods of poor households. It meant that they do not have to fear constant oppression and intimidation from the local authority. According to Section 27 (1) of the South African Constitution these residents also have the right to basic services such as water, electricity, sanitation and health facilities beside the right to not being evicted.

The participatory framework outlined in the South African Municipal Systems Act of 2000 demands that people be consulted on the services they receive from the local authority. It also says that communities have the right to be partners in delivering the said services.

Even though this community is unhappy with the quality and quantity of services provided to them, they did give an input as to where the services they receive (communal water taps and sanitation services) should be located.