

Social movements and poverty reduction in South Africa

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I. Introduction

This document reports on the findings of the first phase of the social movements and poverty project in South Africa. Movements are interpreted to be grievance-based, and are considered to be imprecise groupings of agencies, activities and ideas around problems and/or solutions. The larger project of which this phase is a part analyses the contribution of social movements to poverty reduction. This first mapping phase will be followed by in-depth study of selected movements and themes.

Following this introduction and a short description of the methodology used in this Phase of the study, Section Three sketches the evolution of South African political economy so as to contextualise the description of movement organizations and social movements that follows in Section Four. Section Three is divided into five sub-sections which consider historical economic development, constitutional processes, recent trends in poverty and inequality, the historical activities of movements and their organizations, and media representations of social movements. The discussion in Section Four identifies key areas of movement activities as well as constellations of interests among movements. After the identification of major areas of movement activity, ADD

The conclusion explores the primary focus on collective consumption (land, housing, services) and considers the extent to which this has been movement actions and approaches have been influenced by the position taken by the state and associated provision. What is notable is the lack of emphasis on labour markets and employment opportunities despite a strongly neo-liberal stance in respect of economic policy. In the search to understand the state's multiple attitudes towards movement organizations, we consider how some such organizations have come to host a political opposition. The discussion explores some reasons that account for this, including a reflection on political elite strategies to manage political dissent during the last twelve years, a period still influenced by the post-apartheid transition. We recognize that these strategies influence movement organizations themselves, perhaps shifting some organizations towards the stance of direct political opposition with less investment in the creation of political alternatives that are less state centred. The discussion highlights the need to understand movement positions and strategies in their political context, not as an isolated phenomenon, but as trajectories of both ideology and action. We repeatedly return to history and historical traditions as explanatory factors helping us to understand movement organizations' presence in distinct arenas of action, the intensity with which they undertake particular activities and meanings that they attribute to events and experiences. A further finding of particular note is the relative insignificance of the rights discourse for grassroots organization representatives in elaborating on their objectives, strategies and activities, and we elaborate and reflect on this in the discussion that follows.

The discussion in the concluding section considers why certain areas emerged as important for movement activity, and why others have not emerged. In particular, movement strategies have converged on areas in which state policy is active while paying relatively little attention to unemployment and low pay. These outcomes are, broadly speaking, beneficial to capital accumulation both because of the value to capital of state social programmes and the lack of disruption in labour markets. At the same time, movement activists appear to show considerable faith in the realm of government and the relative dominance of centralized state authority. Many of their efforts appear to be directed towards the central state and there is little investment in more decentralized and devolved authorities and decision making structures.

II. Methodology

The principal method used during the mapping phase was interviews with the leaders or representatives of sampled movements. Interviews were complemented by the participation of interviewees and other selected people in workshops, and by a scan of literature and websites.

Thirty-two representatives of grassroots organizations were interviewed with additional key informant interviews to draw on professional perspectives. In addition, practitioners from support NGOs and research institutes were also interviewed. A total of forty-five interviews were conducted: Cape Town (17), Johannesburg (10) and Durban (18). Sampling was purposive, seeking to balance geographical locations and different areas of interest while also drawing on available groups and willing participants. A further consideration was the practicalities of field research which was centred on the three cities of Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg. The intention was to interview representatives of better known movements while also drawing on a range of smaller and locally based activist groups. The strategy followed for this second grouping was related to an initial identification with snowballing to broaden the scope of the mapping process.

In the case of the larger organizations, contact was made with the formal office and an interview requested. This worked effectively in the case of the more institutionalised organizations. However, the same strategy could not be used in the case of smaller organizations (mainly community groups) which did not have offices. In this case, grassroot leaders were contacted through cell phones.

The analysis reported here draws primarily on the interviewees. However, it has been significantly enhanced by insights from the mapping workshops in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town. The purpose of the workshops was to review some of the preliminary findings through the collective participation of those interviewed and other key informants. The workshops were held in Durban (July 30 2008), Johannesburg (August 31 2008) and Cape Town (August 13 2008). The decision to hold three workshops was related primarily to the recognition that movement activities have a strong city focus. National politics is important but so are provincial and city politics. Reflecting South Africa's past apartheid policies and economic development trajectories, there are also very different identity politics in each of the three cities. A further consideration for the

three regional workshops was the opportunity to maximize participation within a limited budget. The discussions offered a diverse set of reflections with somewhat different conclusions emerging from each event. In Durban the weight of analysis was on the relationship between the state and movements, in, Johannesburg, the discussion placed emphasis on conceptual and analytical issues, and in Cape Town reflections were orientated to the pragmatics and practicalities of social movements' existence. Perspectives presented at the workshops have been used in the discussions below.

Some secondary literature has been drawn into the discussions below (particularly in respect of the analysis of the political and economic context). Our knowledge of the social movement literature also assisted in the analysis below, however, this literature is not comprehensively reviewed in this paper.

The remainder of the document discusses the social movements studied. It should be noted that the concepts and frameworks should be deemed provisional reflecting both the current stage of the research and the fact that certain constituencies have not been persuaded by the adequacy of concepts used to date.¹

III The Political and Economic Context

Developmental model and trends

Poverty in South Africa is more a manifestation of inequality than a lack of resources. The current inequality, which is regarded as the highest in the world (Bauer and Taylor 2005), can be traced from the apartheid period right through to the present and the developmental model that South Africa followed has never been inclusive enough to solve poverty or address inequality. This section will attempt to provide insight into how this stalemate has evolved to the present. Three factors are crucial in understanding this situation. One is the crisis that White capital encountered during apartheid especially in its final years. The second is the role of the African National Congress (ANC) in accommodating capital as opposed to transforming it which is characterised by the policy documents related to the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) and GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution). The third factor is the nature of globalised capitalism in the wake of the collapse of Communism.

Even before apartheid moved into a political and economic crisis, White capital had to manage a situation with considerable tensions.² From the 1970s, the manufacturing sector experienced low productivity and dependence on imports against the backdrop of volatile mineral exports and capital flows. The apartheid state, responding to the demands of White business, responded by introducing limited but ideologically laden political and

¹ In particular the mapping workshop held in Johannesburg (August 01 2008) was critical of the way categorizing concepts were employed to describe their movement organizations.

² This subsection draws heavily from Gelb (2003). However, there are other insightful contributions such as those offered by Seekings and Natrass (2005) and du Toit and Neeves (2008).

economic liberalization measures from the late 1970s onwards³. Gelb (2003, 30) argues that “[T]he aim was to raise aggregate domestic demand, labour productivity and skills levels, while achieving political stability”. Associated social changes to respond to growing political pressures included relaxing the restrictions on Africans living in urban areas, which allowed them to own houses and businesses and elect their own representatives in the townships, as well as to freely organize trade unions. The cooptation of Indians and Coloureds by means of the tri-cameral Parliament of 1983 was a form of political liberalization. Although these policies initially achieved political stability, they ironically fuelled anti-apartheid sentiments and activism within South Africa.

The economic crisis was compounded by the expansion of capital-intensive sub-sectors like chemicals and basic metals. This resulted in the shrinkage in the number of unskilled jobs available, in contrast with the relative growth of semiskilled and skilled labour. As a result, “...the number of Africans in middle class occupations grew at more than 6% per annum between 1970 and 1987, nearly trebling to about 600 0000” (Gelb 2003, 32). The Blacks, having secured modest concessions from the state, constituted a concerted force that agitated for more political recognition in the form of civic bodies, student organizations and professional associations. These South African based groups operated within the constraints of apartheid’s parameters but they also forged links with exiled and underground nationalist movements such as the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). The majority of those who benefited from political concessions were urban Blacks.⁴

The profitability of business was substantially undermined by internal resistance and economic sanctions – each a weapon of anti-apartheid activism. As a result, for business to thrive, it needed a legitimate government to quell the political unrest. Through its own actions, the National Party was discredited (among most groups of the population), thus making the ANC the sole candidate for such a government. “In short, apartheid uncompetitive labour laws, international sanctions, and a worsening domestic economy led South African business to support its [apartheid’s] dismantling by the mid-1980s” (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 270).

These processes combined to catalyse political change. In the late 1980s political prisoners were released, a process which culminated in the lifting of the ban on both ANC and PAC in 1990. The release of political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, in 1990 ushered in a new phase of South African political life. The ANC emerged with enormous social and political capital since it was historically associated with locally rooted organizations such as UDF, COSATU and the South African Council of Churches

³ Significant political events of the 1970s associated with black resistance were the Durban strikes of 1973, the Soweto student uprising of 1976, the formation of the Black People’s Convention in 1972 and the founding of the Azanian People’s Organization (Azapo) in 1978.

⁴ Rural Blacks were left under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders and homeland residents were excluded from South African citizenship. Today poverty remains overwhelmingly concentrated in provinces with former homelands, like Limpopo (Lebowa, Gazankulu and Venda) and Eastern Cape (Transkei and Ciskei).

and, in more recent years, the South African National Civic Organization (SANCO). The ANC then set in motion the negotiation process between itself and the National Party to determine a new future for South Africa. After some time, the process succeeded and culminated in the 1994 elections.

Two crucial documents in the run-up to the 1994 elections were the 1993 interim Constitution and the ANC's economic policy document, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). RDP was the official economic policy of the ANC when it won the first democratic elections in 1994. It was aimed to secure success for democracy by evenly redistributing resources in the country.⁵ The role of the state was central to its realization. "The RDP made a number of concrete proposals, including that market-related wages of R60 per day should be paid in the construction sector and that 30 per cent of redistribution should be achieved within the first five years of democratic government" (Davis 2003, 37). In summary, it proposed growth through the redistribution of income. The Programme had been drafted after extensive consultation with different groups of the society.

Despite this, the RDP was replaced by Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy in 1996. The underlying strategy of GEAR is economic growth first, which will, it is anticipated, lead to redistribution as the benefits of growth will trickle down to the poor. A growth rate of 5, 6 or 7 per cent was thought to be possible if certain conditions were met. The essential conditionalities were predicted to be "...attracting foreign direct investment, but (that it) also requires a domestic saving effort. Greater industrial competitiveness, a tighter fiscal stance, moderation of wage increases, accelerated public investment, efficient service delivery and a major expansion of private investment are integral aspects of the strategy" (Davis 2003, 36). GEAR was introduced by the Ministry of Finance and was described as non-negotiable by the then President, Nelson Mandela. By implication, GEAR postponed redistribution in favour of attracting and assuring business of their investment. In this case, the plight of the poor was subordinated to private sector led economic growth. Redistributive gestures like Black Economic Empowerment and affirmative action sought to legitimate a strategy of economic growth by deracialising the economy, as opposed to transforming it. According to Gelb (2003), the broad outlines of this deal had already existed during transition between white business and the ANC. In other words, the transition was made possible by the ANC's willingness to accommodate business. "...Since the deal was acknowledged very early in the transition, even as the RDP model began to be formulated, it is inappropriate to see in it a loss of hegemony by the left in the wake of political struggle during the first half of the 1990s: the struggle and the policy debate took place in the context of an already existing deal" (Gelb 2003, 41).

The ANC succeeded in shifting its economic policy from a redistributive to a conservative monetarist approach by virtue of its sheer political dominance. Apart from the role played by White business to ensure that the economy is preserved, the ANC as a liberation movement was more nationalist than socialist (Davis 2003)). Arguably, it appropriated social democratic rhetoric to cement its bond with labour and the South

⁵ In other words, to concretise the vision of the Freedom Charter that South Africa belongs to all.

African Communist Party (SACP). “...The real politics of the ANC was based on a nationalist view of the world with attainment of a nationalist democracy being the critical objective” (Davis 2003, 47). The postponement of socialism was made possible by the strategy called National Democratic Revolution re-introduced in the mid 1990s by ANC and its allies (COSATU and SACP). This talks about two stage revolution (Habib and Valodia 2006). The first stage is to seize state power and the second to implement socialism. The former has been achieved but not the latter yet.

The ANC’s switch in policy has to be understood within a global context. Socialism as practiced in the countries of Eastern Europe was discredited when the transition started in 1989. Neoliberalism, as prescribed by international agencies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank⁶, gained in strength and was adopted by governments in North and South. Structural adjustment programmes were adopted by many governments in the South and the ability of governments to adopt an alternative development model was limited. The Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, Mr. Tito Mboweni, emphasised the inevitability of globalisation. “No country can escape the consequences of globalisation, and all countries are being called upon to ensure rigour and transparency in overall economic management; banking and financial sector soundness; reform of the institutions of the state in terms of seeking public sector efficiency, appropriate regulation, emphasis on the rule of law, independence of the judiciary (and central banks), anti-corruption measures, etc.; and growth that is centred on human development” (Mboweni 2000, 03).

Constitution and nature of the formal political process⁷

The Constitutional processes are also important when understanding the perspectives and practices of movements. In 1996 a new Constitution introduced which forms the basis of South Africa’s current legal system. Arguably, the crucial part of the Constitution is the Bill of Rights which assures everyone that he/she is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law including the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms.⁸ The clauses include civil, political and socioeconomic rights. There is some ambiguity regarding the realisation of socio-economic rights. For example, when Mrs Grootboom took her need for housing to the Constitutional Court, the Court ruled that there was a housing programme already in place to progressively realise the right to housing (even if many remained in need); however, there was a gap in existing state provision in that “There was no comprehensive plan ...to deal with homeless people in situations of extreme desperation” (Sachs 2005, 146). And a policy for this situation was required to be in place by the Court.

⁶ For an explication of the role of global institutions in shaping South African economic policy, see Peet (2002).

⁷ The political context is changing in South Africa. Crucial developments include the election of Jacob Zuma as President of the ANC, the recall of Thabo Mbeki from the presidency of the country by the ANC, the mooted and fast materializing breakaway party from the ANC and the summit on economic policies by the ANC’s allies on the Left (the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the South African Communist Party). Jacob Zuma’s win of the ANC presidency was largely supported by the aforementioned allies. The response of social movements is not clear.

⁸ <http://www.info.gov.za/documents/constitution/1996/96cons2.htm#7>

Initially, constitutional amendments were made difficult by stipulating the condition of a two thirds majority in Parliament as a prerequisite for amendment. A Constitutional Court was established for the sole purpose of protecting the Constitution. While the Constitutional Court was credible in most of its rulings, it disappointed political parties other than the ANC by ratifying the floor-crossing legislation of 2003. This piece of legislation allows members of legislatures to switch parties between elections without losing their seats. It enabled the ANC to have a two-thirds majority in Parliament in 2003. This majority undermined the watchdog role of the Constitutional Court: “If the (Constitutional) Court strikes down legislation, the ANC now has the choice of altering the law to make it comply, or changing the Constitution” (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 251).

There is a hierarchy of courts according to their functions. They are the Constitutional Court; the Supreme Court of Appeal; the High Court and Magistrates’ Courts. For governance, there is an executive (President and Cabinet), legislature and an electoral system. The cabinet is appointed by the President who is elected from the Parliament by the National Assembly (and is usually the leader of the largest party). A President serves for no more than two four-year terms. The majority party forms the cabinet. There are legislatures at three levels: the National Assembly, Provincial legislatures and municipal councils. The role of the legislatures is to provide oversight to their respective executives. Members of legislatures are elected from candidates presented by political parties. The exception is the municipal elections where independent candidates are permitted to contest elections. A system of proportional representation is used.

In addition, there are institutions established under chapter nine of the Constitution to protect democracy and further other constitutional provisions. Among others are the Gender Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the National Economic Development and Labour Council (which includes representatives from labour, government and civil society) and the National Economic Forum.

Demystifying poverty and inequality in South Africa⁹

Poverty and inequality in South Africa are multidimensional. The analysis here does not follow former President Thabo Mbeki’s theorization that there are two nations (one black and poor and the other rich and white). Instead, we suggest that poverty and inequality have racial, spatial, gender and other dimensions.

Racially, in 1996 61% of Africans were poor compared with 1% of Whites (Everatt 2003, 78). However, there is growing inequality among Africans. “In 1991, 9 per cent of the richest income decile was African, rising to 22 per cent in 1996; the poorest remain obdurately and overwhelmingly black” (Everatt 2003,79). This pattern shows that although most Africans remain largely trapped in poverty, some have managed to achieve

⁹ Different researchers use different criteria to measure poverty, in accordance with their research objectives. This section does not take a position of which of these criteria are most valid and credible – it merely selects a few of these indices in order to sketch overall levels of poverty and inequality in South Africa.

social mobility. Employment is one possible route to escape poverty. Gelb (2003, 08) found that "...unemployment rates differed markedly amongst racial groups, 47% of Africans being unemployed on the broad definition compared with only 9.9% of Whites".

As Table 1 demonstrates, inequality did not change significantly between 1991 and 1996. Significant increases are recorded from 1996 to 2001, coincidentally the year in which GEAR was adopted. Although the per capita incomes of blacks remain below 15 per cent of their white counterparts, there has been a marked decline of poverty since the year 2000 (van der Berg et al. 2005). Among other factors, it was reduced by increased social security transfers, an improved income distribution among Blacks and increasing remuneration. This conclusion appears to be robust and "...the conclusion that poverty has declined in the last two years of the period studied (2003 and 2004) compared with poverty in earlier years is not dependent on the poverty line chosen" (van der Berg et al. 2005, 20).

Table1: Gini coefficient by population group (Human Sciences Research Council, 2004).

	1991	1996	2001
African	0.62	0.66	0.72
White	0.46	0.50	0.60
Coloured	0.52	0.56	0.64
Asian	0.49	0.52	0.60
Total	0.68	0.69	0.77

Table 2. Poverty indicators by province (Human Sciences research Council, 2004)

Province	No. of poor persons (million)	% of population in poverty	Poverty gap (R Share of poverty gap billion)*	
Eastern Cape	4.6	72%	14.8	18%
Free State	1.8	68%	5.9	7.2%
Gauteng	3.7	42%	12.1	14.9%
KwaZulu/Natal	5.7	61%	18.3	22.5%
Limpopo	4.1	77%	11.5	14.1%
Mpumalanga	1.8	57%	7.1	8.7%
North West	1.9	52%	6.1	7.5%
Northern Cape	0.5	61%	1.5	1.8%
Western Cape	1.4	32%	4.1	5.0%
South Africa	25.7	57%	81.3	100%

* The poverty gap aggregates the difference between household income or consumption and the poverty line, offering a measure of the depth of poverty.

Spatially, provinces with former homelands have more significant poverty than the rest. The richest provinces did not have any homelands (Gauteng and Western Cape). By contrast, KwaZulu/Natal has the highest number of low-income households (5.7 million) of all the provinces in South Africa (Human Sciences Research Council, 2004). At the

municipal level, Durban has the highest poverty rate (44 per cent) while Cape Town has the lowest (30 per cent). Johannesburg has a 38 per cent poverty rate. About 72 per cent of low-income South Africans are living in the rural areas, where 62 per cent of the population have low-incomes, compared with 13 per cent in metropolitan areas and 25 per cent in secondary cities. Regarding gender, in some areas 60 per cent of female-headed households have incomes below the poverty line which may be double the equivalent figure for men. “Unemployment amongst women is higher – the national broad unemployed rate for women was 46.4% in 2001 compared with 35.3% for men, while in rural areas 53.6% of women were unemployed versus 42.2% of men” (Gelb 2003, 10). At the national level, 57 per cent of the population had low-incomes which is equal to 25.7 million people living in low-income households.

Instead of directly addressing poverty and inequality as it is manifest across South African society, the political and economic liberalization of the 1980s plus affirmative action have had the effect of deracialising the middle class and creating new and limited opportunities for social mobility.

Historical precedence of social movements in South Africa

To assist in an understanding of the conclusions emerging from the mapping process, it is helpful to consider how the phenomenon of social mobilization has been manifested in South Africa.

Before 1994, most social movements employed their opposition to apartheid as their rallying point. The most crucial movement agencies were the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM); Inkatha; the United Democratic Front (UDF); the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African National Civic Association (SANCO).

The BCM filled the political vacuum that was created by the banning of liberation movements like the ANC and PAC. Its critical role was to encourage black people to redefine themselves and their potential in positive terms, and thus to challenge the negative images promoted by their oppressors. In 1972, some of its followers formed the Black People’s Convention (BPC) to have an organization within which they could carry forward these ideas. “The BPC aimed to counter economic oppression through Black communalism, building economic co-operatives, health projects, and literacy campaigns” (Camay and Gordon 2007, 203). Along these lines, it inspired the creation of many black associations. As the Convention was opposed to foreign investment, it was subjected to government repression. The Convention established an influential student organization at Turfloop University¹⁰ in 1969 called the South African Student Congress. The organization was a manifestation of disillusionment with a liberal white student organization, the National Union of South African Students. In later years, the Black Consciousness philosophy was fused with socialism, a process which took organizational form in the Azanian People’s Organization (Azapo).¹¹ Inkatha, Azapo and Fosatu

¹⁰ It is now called University of Limpopo.

¹¹ Azapo still exists as a political party but low membership means its presence is not significant.

withdrew from the UDF due to its association with the banned ANC, and Azapo was also critical of the membership of whites in the UDF.

Inkatha was formed in 1928 to protect the Zulu monarchy from disintegration. In 1975 it became a national mass organization under the leadership of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. In 1990 it became a political party, renamed the Inkatha Freedom Party. It opposed the UDF on certain issues, like its rejection of sanctions and its leadership of the former KwaZulu Bantustan. Fosatu preferred to concentrate workers' immediate needs as related to their employment rather than broader social issues.

The movement organizations which were aligned to the banned ANC were UDF, COSATU and SANCO. COSATU was established in 1985 to mobilize black labour against apartheid. It remains well represented in the public as well as private sectors and its largest single affiliate is the National Union of Mineworkers. COSATU was instrumental in reinvigorating mass mobilization in 1989 by cooperating with the weakened UDF in what was called the Mass Democratic Movement. It remains the most vibrant and influential of the pre-1994 movement organizations, engaging in issues that affect society over and above labour. SANCO was formed in 1991 to destabilize the black local councils and traditional authorities in preparation for the ANC local government. In contrast to COSATU, SANCO's role in the post apartheid South Africa is at best invisible. It is compromised by the legitimacy of the ANC local governments, the loss of its leadership to government, as well as lack of a clear enemy like apartheid.

The UDF was formed in 1983 to oppose the tricameral parliament and Bills for separate local authorities. On a deeper level, it aimed to translate the presence of the banned ANC into the broader society. Although it did not openly acknowledge its support for the ANC, its adoption of the Freedom Charter as its guiding document as well as its association with ANC stalwarts like Oscar Mpetha and Albertina Sisulu were indicative of its involvement with the ANC (Houston 1999). In contrast to the Black Consciousness Movement, which formed organizations, the UDF coordinated organizations that were already existing against apartheid. Its membership comprised student/youth organizations; trade unions; civic organizations; women's organizations; and other organizations. In short, it was a broad church. Its tactics include boycotts of institutions (like the tricameral poll), mass mobilization and confrontation (like local government structures and town councillors).

Media representation of social movements

Prior to considering the results of the mapping process, it may be helpful to examine current attitudes to movement activities and organizations as represented in the media.

Clippings from the major newspapers¹² from 2002 emphasise three broad themes on the coverage of social movements: the challenge to government policy, social movements and international events, and protests over service delivery. Although other stories are

¹² Newspaper clippings were retrieved from SA Media – The University of the Free State database.

covered, the aforementioned themes seem to dominate. The newspapers whose articles have been analysed are the *Mail&Guardian* (an influential national weekly with a daily online version), *Sunday Times* (equally influential weekly), *Sunday Independent* (weekly), *City Press* (weekly), *Business Day* (a business oriented daily), *Cape Argus* and *Cape Times* (Cape Town dailies), *The Star* and *Sowetan* (Johannesburg dailies), and *Saturday Argus* (Cape Town).

The major weeklies such as the *Sunday Times*, *Mail & Guardian* and *Sunday Independent* generally write stories that relate to government policy matters. *Business Day* also relates them to government policies and state institutions. Social movements enjoyed coverage of their involvement in international events,¹³ like the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg and the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, held in Durban in 2001.

In terms of specific issues, protests against service delivery policy appear in most papers, with the regional dailies also covering other issues specific to their regional contexts. The *Sowetan* covers stories about service delivery in Johannesburg even if, like other papers, it favours an analysis that focus on leadership. The Cape dailies, *Cape Times* and *Cape Argus* also cover service delivery protests although in this case they tend to interpret them through the lens of the authorities. In both cases, the movement itself is somewhat peripheral to the media focus. To date, the Treatment Action Campaign appears to be enjoying the greatest positive coverage in the media and appears, exceptionally, to play a central role in media stories. Since the rollout of anti-retrovirals has been institutionalized in South Africa, TAC's involvement in designing state machinery to fast-track the rollout has captured the attention of most newspapers.

This partial coverage of movement organizations appears to be frustrating to some of the organizations. Zillerain Heights Residents Association leaders explained that media staff approach them when they hear that there is a scandal or something dramatic. For example, they say that the media came when they heard that the houses were fraudulently sold, but when they found that it was not the case, they left. When asked about their coverage of movement-related issues and the newsworthiness of activities, Tony Weaver (news editor of *Cape Times*) suggested that considerations included the dramatic nature of the event as well as its relation to holding the government accountable.

IV Mapping South African social movements

In the light of this historical and political economic context, this section describes the contours of contemporary social movements in South Africa – in some instances tracing them back to these historical antecedents, in others understanding them as phenomena that have emerged from parts of South African society less tied to these traditional forms of mobilization. While the preceding sections have been based on a review of secondary literature, the remainder of the document draws primarily on interviews conducted as part of this project. As noted above (see Methods, Section 2), interviewees were deliberately

¹³ The role of social movements was to use these fora as a space to make their mark.

chosen to reflect the diversity of spatial and sectoral organizations and were drawn from locations in and around Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban.

The selection of interviewees also sought a balance between those with expertise in local, city and national movement and movement support organizations. In a few cases interviewees do not have a single organizational identity but rather are acknowledged experts in movement related activities. That said, the overall pattern of interviewees reflects something of an urban bias. In part this relates to the fact that this phase of study focuses on three provinces, two of which (Gauteng and Western Cape) that are by and large urban (the other province, KwaZulu/Natal, is more rural). Meanwhile, although the Malungisa Youth Development, Sinothando Gardening Group and Umzinyathi Concerned Resident Group are social movement organizations that have a rural base, they are largely influenced by the *modus operandi* of their urban counterparts in Durban.

The nature of movements

In total, 36 movement organizations and their associated activities were examined through the interviewees.

In terms of the longevity and scale of movement organizations, 18 have been founded since 2000, and a further 11 founded between 1994 and 2000. Most of the others have been founded during the 1980s. Those from the pre-1994 era include the Unity Movement, Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU), General Industries Workers Union of South Africa (GIWUSA) and South African National Civic Organization (SANCO). Apart from GIWUSA and Unity Movement, SANCO and COSATU are avowed allies of the African National Congress (ANC). Dissatisfaction within parts of the ANC and its allies (SACP and COSATU) about the centralisation of power and an intolerance of dissent helped to raise support for the Anti-Privatization Forum¹⁴ (APF), one of the more recently formed high profile movement organizations. The majority of organizations formed after 1996 relate their creation to the adoption of GEAR as an economic policy in South Africa.

Any attempt to group these organizations into movements, or at least into distinct arenas of discourse and activity, is difficult as it inevitably requires somewhat arbitrary judgements about the balance of discourse and activities within specific organizations. The selection is more complex because individual organizations may choose to represent their work in many different ways. These representations are related to such factors as the interpretation of the interviewee and/or author of written material, the particular political pressures and opportunities of the day, and what is perceived to be advantageous, or not, in the context of such pressures and opportunities. Moreover,

¹⁴ APF deserves a special mention regarding categorization. In the Johannesburg workshop its leader argued that as a network it should not be considered in the same way as a more specifically focused organization. The same point was raised at the Cape Town workshop regarding where the APF fits in terms of the current social movements' landscape. However, in this section we consider movements as groupings of ideas and agencies.

groupings and associated identifications are not fixed over time but respond to the ways in which other movements are defining their activities and realising their objectives.

With considered interpretation and some hesitancy (due to these and other factors), it appears that, at this moment, movement activity in South Africa falls predominantly into three major, and two minor, areas of concern, interest and grievance. “Major” areas are defined as those in which: many movement organizations appear to be active; there is a wide ranging discourse in political, professional and policy circles; and there are established popular concerns marked by significant grassroots activism. By corollary, the “minor” movement areas exhibit less movement organizations, as well as lower levels of other activities in terms of breadth of issues and/or the intensity with which they are raised. Following this schema, the major areas of movement activity revolve around shelter, labour and human rights; the minor areas around environment and feminism. This said, these remain very much “constellations” of grievances, activities and discourses; in using this word, we seek to imply that there are nodes of concentration within a universe that also includes many outliers.

The Shelter Movement(s)

Of the movements studied, housing, land and basic services (referred to below as shelter) form the most significant focus of movement activities in terms of the numbers of organizations interviewed in the course of the mapping study that self-identify with a related set of grievances and actions. In total, information about 14 grassroots organizations that are active in this area was gathered during the interviews. It should immediately be noted that their spatial extent differs significantly and several of these groups are local associations while others are regional or national networks.

Within the broad shelter sector, there are three or even four particular loci of activity and arguably each is an identifiable movement with distinctive constituencies, grievances and strategies/tactics which reflect the nature of these struggles; this is elaborated in the discussion that follows. The separate sub-movements are those related to: tenants (particularly tenants of formal housing); housing needs for those with bond or mortgage payments; housing needs for those presently living in shacks and/or informal settlements; and those households struggling to pay for services. Despite some particularities, there are considerable overlaps between these sub-movements. After some reflection, they have been grouped together in this paper because they are all essentially concerned with urban collective consumption (ie. urban land and urban basic services). While in some contexts housing and land may be provided individually, both the nature of the financial investment (site clearance and infrastructure installation) and the presence of the government housing subsidy programme mean that the acquisition of land and housing is generally achieved through some form of group process (ie. collective consumption).

All these sub-movements are essentially urban in nature (even though some movement organizations may be peri-urban in location); they are responding to the difficulties faced by families struggling to purchase commodities through a number of shelter related markets. This location of resistance struggles in urban areas reflects many different

strands in the historical trajectory of development within South Africa; this is true both in terms of economic development and the evolution of civil society and movement action. For example, and as noted above, South African urban areas have been the historical location of anti-apartheid struggle in black townships as the state used pass laws to control citizenship and related entitlements. Another factor leading to the importance of urban areas as a historic and current site of movement activity is the continuing rural to urban migration as people move in pursuit of livelihood opportunities. This migration is also related to the economic history of South Africa, the prevention of the evolution of a peasantry and the dominance of labour markets for incomes and livelihoods. At the same time, the strength of these movements related to urban land, housing and services reflects a strong sense of citizen entitlement towards the state which need not be exclusively urban but which does appear to be strongly rooted in shelter and settlement-related goods and services.

The first of the sub-movement areas and the least well represented among the interviewees are organizations representing the grievances of those in formal housing, which may arguably be further sub-divided into those who are home owners and those who are renters. The organizations representing the interests of formal sector renters are illustrated by the Inner City Resource Centre in central Johannesburg. These organizations are representative of other movements and movement support organizations. The Organization of Civil Rights in Durban is an illustration of the kinds of NGO support provided to tenants; this organization has been working for over ten years to address the problems of tenants, particularly but not exclusively those in the formal sector.¹⁵

The problems faced by home owners are somewhat different and a movement (or sub-movement) has developed among those struggling to repay bonds (mortgages). Within the interviewees, this grouping is represented by iLitha Park Anti-Eviction Campaign. Generally of significantly higher income than the broad categorization of the urban poor, the members are residents who have gained access to mortgage finance (which generally requires formal sector employment) but who find that they cannot continue to make their mortgage repayments. In some cases, they have historic debt owing to bond non-payment campaigns which were a tactic used against the apartheid regime. In other cases, this historic experience of this tactic has led to its repeat against other grievances and debts have mounted. These families may also have fallen behind with repayments due to retrenchment and difficulties in finding alternative employment. In the case of iLitha Park Anti-eviction Campaign, there is the intention to work both with those threatened with eviction due to the non-payment of bonds and those unable to pay for service charges and threatened with being cut-off. This extension of their work into addressing service charges links them to a further sub-movement within this broad category.

A third shelter sub-movement includes the grouping of organizations who are struggling to support their members gain access to land and housing. The constituency for this movement is urban dwellers who are either squatting on land, living in informal

¹⁵ See www.ocr.org.za

settlements or who are renting rooms and/or shacks, generally in the back yards of those with formal housing. In some cases, these are longstanding urban residents who have never managed to acquire legal tenure but in other cases they are more recent migrants to the city. Six of the organizations studied in the course of the mapping exercise focus on this specific issue. While in some contexts the scale of organizing activity is related to resistance to eviction and eviction threats against those living illegally on land, in a South African context these activities are also related to the potential of acquiring state-financed housing subsidies. This movement includes local organizations such as Zillerraine Heights Residents Association, an association of 63 families who have occupied land and most larger organizations notable for their scale. The Federation of the Urban Poor (FedUP), for example, has over 20,000 members living in shacks with a concentration of membership in the major cities.

This sub-movement has a particular historic significance; many black Africans were denied the right to life in the city through the use of home lands (designated areas in which they were expected to live) and pass-laws (which restricted access to urban space except for those whose labour was required). The ANC election campaign in 1994 placed some emphasis on the housing programme that they intended to provide once they took up office, reflecting the resonance between legal shelter, citizenship, and the promises associated with democratic transformation. The government's housing programme has only been subject to minor modification since 1995. Provision is dominated by a capital subsidy with the units being constructed by private construction companies and local government; the subsidy covers the cost of land, infrastructure and services with a housing unit (now 40 square metres in size). A minimum size was introduced in 1999 following concerns about the quality of the product being provided. This programme was designed with the involvement of the commercial construction sector who also sought state support in 1994 following a period of recession within their industry (Gilbert 2002). The programme has been relatively large scale (in global terms) with some 2 million units having been constructed in the last 12 years; however, the housing backlog has grown primarily because of rural to urban migration and new family formation (Baumann 2007).

The final urban residency sub-movement is related to basic services, generally either/or/and water and electricity. The impetus behind this movement is the high cost of bills that cannot be paid with subsequent cut-offs in service provision. A more recent strand is campaigning against the introduction of pre-paid meters which have been installed to, among other things, pre-empt non-payment, cut-offs and associated protest. The cost of services has become a major issue in the last ten years as the government has sought to provide these services on a cost recovery basis. In some cases, the private sector has been contracted to manage service provision (at the city level) but arguably the problem has been more related to corporatisation than privatization. Brown's (2005) study of Mbombela and Nelspruit showed that the state managed and privately managed water providers were implementing similar policies in respect of price, repayments and cut-offs. This grouping is represented within the mapping study by neighbourhood organizations such as the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee and by networking organizations such as the Anti-privatization Forum with over 10,000 members. With a

relatively local focus to many of these campaigns (as, for example, water is managed at the municipal level), there is both spontaneous protest (drawing on past experiences and replicating common practices elsewhere in South Africa), and the consolidation of activities into long-lasting organizations. Once more there are overlaps with anti-apartheid protests of the previous era when there were boycotts in rents and service payments that occurred against local providers that were judged to be managed by an illegitimate state. For reasons explored below, these movements have a particularly fractious relationship with the state.

The Human Rights Movement

There is an overlap between these shelter sub-movements and the human rights movement, with some of the movements allying to human rights movement organizations to advance their claims to basic services and/or access to secure tenure. This is our second movement emerging from the interviews. In part this overlap in activities occurs because “rights” is such a significant discourse in South Africa, both for social movements and civil society in general.¹⁶ This significance arises for several reasons. First, legal professional and associated institutions provided a significant resistance to the state during the days of apartheid. While the state undertook considerable extra-legal activity, the courts were an arena for contestation with trials providing space for arguments against apartheid to be articulated and attempts made to protect activists. Second, the state and society have chosen to protect democratic advances through a constitution that is seen to establish entitlements and rights for the less powerful (Jones and Stokke 2005). Third, South Africa remains a highly formalized and professionalised society with a preference for clear procedures rather than the more messy negotiations and informalities that dominate political deals in other countries. In such a context, rights are an important strategy to strengthen claims and entitlements because of the respect given to formal processes.

A number of movement organizations touch on human rights issues although there are no grassroots organizations that have a central focus on human rights *per se*. “Rights” perspectives are used to strengthen the arguments of the Treatment Action Campaign in the context of HIV/AIDS, of Jubilee South Africa in the context of reparations from corporations profiting from apartheid, of the Triangle Project in the context of sexual rights, and of the Sex Workers Education and Taskforce in respect of their constituency. As evident from this list, at the level of the grassroots, there is an engagement in the discourse of human rights to pursue particular agendas which have the potential to be advanced through the courts. Jubilee South Africa is notable in that, unlike the other organizations who use law to advance their own particular claims, this organization has addressed a number of issues through legal claims. In their human rights work, these grassroots organizations draw on a more substantive legal discourse to situate their claims and use a group of professional organizations are available to support the work of these grassroots organizations and others. For example, the Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS) is an independent organisation committed to promoting democracy, justice, equality and peace in South Africa addressing and undoing the legacy of oppression and

¹⁶ Martin Scurrah, one of the researchers in Peru, reflected that the same is true in this context.

discrimination through the realization of human rights for all South Africans.¹⁷ The Centre is based within the School of Law at the University of the Witwatersrand, one of the country's most prestigious universities, and its location is indicative of the broad-based appeal of this movement. Other examples of the organizations whose work might be wholly or partially placed within this category are the Democracy Development Programme which works to strengthen the nature and extent of democratic practice in the country and the Legal Resource Centre whose staff have been active for decades supporting access to legal services for low-income citizens. Rights, as suggested by these examples, tends to be a professionalized discourse around particular social agenda.¹⁸ The reasons for this are not clear and it is to state the obvious to say that there may not be a single reason. One reason may be that rights have become closely associated with legal struggles and as discussed below this strategy is only used by some movement organizations. As described by Oldfield and Stokke (2006, 125-7) there are practical as well as strategic explanations for this, and they discuss the difficulties for grassroots leaders in managing court processes. A further reason that cannot be discounted is the research emphasis on poverty which may have orientated interviewees away from a rights discourse.

The Labour Movement(s)

A third substantive area of movement activity is that of the labour movement. The labour movement has been through considerable social and political transition since 1994, reflecting changes within the labour market and economic policies more generally. As noted in the discussion of poverty and inequality above, there has been an increase in remuneration to those with higher levels of education and additional skills. The result has been increasing inequality as those without education have not been able to secure employment or have employment but receive relatively low pay. As is the case with both the movements noted above, the labour movement is also of historic significance in South Africa, although arguably (and unlike the other two movements above) its significance reflects its past more than its present activities.¹⁹ The economic model implemented by apartheid involved both the development of advanced capitalism in terms of significant capital investment in a range of manufacturing and service industries with an associated workforce, and extensive state provision of services. Hence the economy moved swiftly into the mode of advanced capitalism with large companies and at least a partially unionised workforce. Despite a role in history, trade unions have been affected by the industrial changes of the post-apartheid era and particularly by massive retrenchments and the casualisation of labour relations. As a consequence, COSATU's membership fell between 2000 and 2003 although it increased in the following three years resulting in an overall fall of 1 per cent between 2000-2006.²⁰

¹⁷ <http://www.communitylawcentre.org.za/about-us/links/centre-for-applied-legal-studies>

¹⁸ The situation appears to be different in Peru where grassroots leaders use a rights based discourse.

¹⁹ Once more, this resonates with the experience in Peru perhaps reflecting the weakening of labour movements in countries following neo-liberal economic policies and associated deregulation in labour markets.

²⁰ <http://www.cosatu.org.za/press/2006/sept/press22.htm>

The historic role of the labour movement and organized labour in the opposition to apartheid in South Africa are reflected in COSATU's present and ongoing participation in the Tripartite Alliance with the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party. However, and perhaps not surprisingly in a context in which the government is pursuing neo-liberal policies with associated attempts to reduce the power of organized labour to influence labour market outcomes in favour of the workers, there has subsequently been a split in the trade union movement between those aligned to and those opposed to government economic policy.

Included in the mapping process are both trade unions representing formally employed labour and a number of other civil society organizations (NGOs and membership organizations) working with casual and informal sector workers, generally associated with weaker unionization. These groups appear to have little to do with each other and hence we discuss them as two sub-movements, a formal labour movement and an informal labour and casual workers' movement. The sub-movements share some overlapping concerns in respect of working conditions and labour rights; however, it appears that there are relatively few joint initiatives.

Within the organizational representatives interviewed, the informal labour and casual workers' movement is explored through the work of Sikhula Sonke, an organization whose members are drawn from women workers on the commercialized farms of the Western Cape. This organization was formed in 2005 to represent the aspirations of casualised (women) farm workers in the Western Cape fruit and wine farms. Another example of organizational activity in this area is the work of the street vendors associations affiliated with StreetNet International, a network based in Durban.²¹ While these organizations seek to address the needs of their target groups, they remain weak relative to a highly unionised workforce; in the first case, relations between employees and employers are dominated by personalised and often paternalistic relations and the numbers of workers per farm being relatively small. Despite the presence of such organizations, in comparison to some towns and cities in the South there are relatively few grassroots associations at the level of informal labour. In part, this probably reflects the low level of informal sector activity due to the historic economic policies of the apartheid state and the state's determination to strengthen demand for formal sector goods and services. More recent factors include the growth of casualization to reduce the costs associated with formal workers, and the significant numbers of international migrants among street traders. These international migrants may act to reduce the ability of street traders to make claims and secure entitlements, and may reduce the level of solidarity between traders. Hence, in summary, the labour movement includes both conventional trade unions and a grouping of other organizations that are attempting to support and represent the interests of informal workers. The growth in casualization has resulted in growing informality and the capacity of movement organizations has not been able to fully respond to this.

Given the continuing significance of the labour market as a venue in which inequality and poverty are reproduced, it is surprising that there is not greater activity in this area.

²¹ <http://www.streetnet.org.za>

However, there are long-recognized problems in organizing the informal and under-employed workers. The COSATU representative interviewed in the course of this research highlighted their own organizational endeavours to initiate the Coalition Against Unemployment and Poverty in 2005. At the same time, two of the organizational representatives interviewed were from small neighbourhood groups with self-help activities to address youth unemployment, the Malungisa Youth Development (Durban) and Youth with Vision (Cape Town). Despite the work of these groups and the recognized possibility that many other neighbourhood organizations exist and are locally active on this issue, it seems misleading to talk about a movement of the unemployed. Rather, it remains confined to particular activities and organizational efforts without any broad-based momentum. This lack of a movement was reflected in comments made by the interviewees of these two organizations. The interviewee for Malungisa Youth Development (Durban) emphasized that the organization saw itself as “not fully networked to other movements outside of the community” and the second representative stressed that, while they now work on youth unemployment, their activities emerged from an anti-eviction struggle and this seems to remain important in terms of their movement identity.

The Feminist Movement

In addition to these three movements, there are two significant further areas in which movements appear to be constituted within South Africa: the environmental movement and the feminist movement. Despite sharing this apparent status of both being movements with an identifiable social presence (for non-participants and participants alike), with a distinct area of grievance and a thematic arena of organizing activity, these two movements nevertheless appear to be significantly different from each other.

The feminist movement, as suggested by the interviewees, appears to be longstanding and deeply rooted in the activist consciousness. There is a strong emphasis across many organizations on the importance of the beneficiaries of movement organizing activities being black women. Black South African women are perceived as being a group particularly in need in the context of poverty, inequality and particular forms of social exclusion.

However, despite this commonplace sensitivity to gender, a feminist consciousness among movement activists is considered to be lacking by some feminist movement activists and there are concerns about a dominance of chauvinist attitudes among a predominantly male leadership.²² This explains why REMMOHO was set up in 2007 with an explicit purpose being to address gender needs with a coalition of neighbourhood organizations, the Anti-Privatization Forum. The founders perceive the goals to be the advancement of gender awareness and women’s emancipation both within the Forum and more generally. Concerns about male attitudes towards within another movement organization (an anti-eviction movement in Cape Town) are elaborated by (Pointer 2004). The New Women’s Movement has a very different formation, having emerged from the National Women’s Coalition in 1997, following the demise of the Coalition in 1995.

²² This situation appears to be different in Peru where there are popular women’s and feminist movements

The feminist movement (in common with the environmental movement) does not have a strong grassroots constituency (although the significance of the ANC women's league needs to be recognised). However, it has multiple sources of diverse support within South African society, both in terms of a broad consciousness of the need for gender equality and recognition of the historical role of organized women in South African politics, through organizations such as the Black Sash movement. In this context, recognition of the need for gender equality goes well beyond poverty and inequality.

As noted above, the declared orientation of many of the organization is towards assisting or representing the needs and interests of black women. Hence, although they may not be avowedly feminist, movement organizations identify with, and seek to address, the needs of low-income women. For groups like FEDUP, a network of savings-based organizations that are seeking to improve land and housing options that are offered to shack-dwellers, women's needs are addressed through identifying organizing methodologies that favour the participation of women. The Federation of the Urban Poor makes deliberate use of an organizing methodology, savings, which is attractive to women (rather than men) enabling their base organizing communities to have a membership that is generally 80 to 90 per cent women.²³ The leaders believe that the dominance of women's participation nurtures a culture in which women can have both a voice and leadership positions. Equally in the case of Sikhula Sonke, the organizational focus is women and their members form women's committees; although men may be included in particular activities, such as training, they are not part of the decision making structures.

Environmental Movement(s)

A number of organizations are considered to be located within the environmental movement. What is notable is the diversity of this particular set of movement organizations although they all subscribe to environmental justice, placing them within a sub-set of environmental organizations that are active in South Africa.²⁴ The South Durban Community Environment Alliance is a community network in South Durban which was founded to respond to local noise, ground and air pollution. Earthlife Africa describes itself as a membership-based NGO which campaigns for environmental justice. The agency works across the country through local groups which collaborate with communities to challenge poor environmental practices. While its individual membership is small, it collaborates with a wide range of agencies. eThekweni Ecopeace is a political party (rather than a social movement organization) which was founded in 1995 in opposition to a perceived lack of concern shown by the ANC towards environmental issues. Despite having its own political interests, leaders considers that its role is as much that of encouraging other parties to address environmental issues as it is to advance its own political interests and in this sense might be considered to belong to

²³ The Federation belongs to an international network with a shared organizing methodology. The Malawian Federation began by excluding men but changed this policy 18 months after it had been founded.

²⁴ This is broadly similar to Peru.

the movement pressing particular and general interests rather than serve narrow partisan political interests. Earthlife Africa was involved in the creation of this party.

The environmental organizations included here are those with an orientation to the needs of low-income disadvantaged groups. They see their work as concerned with environmental justice and they seek to support the "...right of access to natural resources and to decision-making" (Cock 2006, 206). The perspective seeks to bring those affected into the politics of the environment and challenges the discourse which is concerned with the conservation of the environment on a technical and scientific basis.

Further comments

Before leaving this analysis of movement concentration in South Africa, it is worth noting the class base of movements and exploring their political orientations. All of the movements discussed here have professional movement support organizations. These organizations, staffed by a range of employees who fall into the broad category of the professional and/or middle class, take multiple forms. They may include NGOs who support grassroots organizations, are stand-alone advocacy organizations, and/or otherwise provide services that are perceived to be relevant to the achievement of movement goals and objectives. Such organizations may be linked to universities, the commercial sector and/or be some form of independent charitable institution. However, there are notable differences in class identification. The middle class have a strong self-interest identification with the issue of human rights and the protection from abuse by the powerful, including the state. They also have a self-interest identification with the gender and environmental movements. Middle class South African women may perceive that their own advancement is being held back by the prejudicial attitudes of male staff above them in the hierarchy. Middle class South Africans are, in some cases, extensive users of environmental goods and services. Their claim on incomes and assets means that they do not have such a self-interest identification with the movements related to land, housing, services, and labour/employment.

The most notable movements in terms of the scale of mass participation are those in the broad area of shelter (land, services and housing) and labour. Some organizations in these movement areas mention their membership in the tens of thousands or more, and they include networks of organizations with a considerable membership and wide-reaching activities. (Although some other organizations are very small and locally based.) These are the organizations that have mass representation of those who, whether measured by social or economic class, are placed at the bottom of the hierarchy. Faced with the scale of this grassroots organization, the proportion of non-membership based organizations within these two categories seems relatively small (although it still may be notable enough to have a separate identity such as the "urban sector NGOs or service organizations"). Those elements of the labour movement that represent the formal workers also have a strong claim to being a mass based organization although, to at least some degree, they represent a somewhat better placed class of citizens.

Moving to the area of human rights, there appear to be relatively more non-membership organizations, although groups such as the Treatment Action Campaign emphasise the scale of their organizations with 5,000 or more members in the Western Cape. Women's organizations tend to be larger and with a significant membership. While there are few movement organizations that associate with the feminist cause, those that do exist are either not concerned with membership (ie. they are unambiguously NGOs or another professional institution) or are large in scale.

As we will go on to consider in the following sub-sections, the strong class base to shelter and labour movements place them, in a political context dominated by neo-liberal policies, in a potentially antagonistic relationship with private capital and with the state. This potential appears to be realised in the case of the shelter sub-movements but does not emerge from the labour movements. The discussions below elaborate on our findings primarily through consideration of attitudes of movements towards poverty and activities related to poverty reduction, the ideologies and associated strategies of movements, and the diverse and dynamic relations between the state and social movements.

Perceptions of Poverty and Poverty Reduction strategies

In order to gain a sense of how movements themselves perceive their positions vis-à-vis poverty, interviewees were asked a number of questions related to their perception of poverty, the way in which they define poverty and the contribution of their organization to addressing poverty.

Generally speaking, and not at all surprisingly, definitions of poverty reflect the grievance focus of the specific movement organizations, although there is a notable breadth in the analysis of the nature of poverty. Of the seven movement organizations working in the area of land and housing, all interviewees talked about poverty as being a lack of land and/or housing. In some cases, this is linked to a lack of services and, in two cases, to a lack of employment opportunities. In the case of the six movement organizations focusing in the area of services, poverty was associated with such a lack of services by five of the interviewees. In two of these organizations, both located at a neighbourhood level there was an association with drug abuse being identified as one of the consequences of poverty. In two cases, poverty was associated with structural issues, ie. neoliberalism and associated policies. The movement organizations active in the labour market highlighted the association between poverty and a weak labour market eg. weak wage bargaining, casualization in the labour market, and labour fragmentation. The organizations working on issues related to gender highlighted the particular problems faced by women due to uneven power relationships.

Organizational representatives across all movements considered themselves to be responsible for acting on and addressing the problems associated with poverty as defined by them. However, a diverse set of strategies is suggested with little consistency in the described activities. In some cases, such as the iLitha Park Anti-Eviction Campaign, poverty reduction will be achieved by working towards the restoration of land to those that have been evicted. Soweto Concerned Residents (a movement organization

concerned with services and which has helped its members improve their nutrition through food gardens) considers it can help by “pressuring” the state, while representatives of the Treatment Action Campaign explained how their contribution to addressing poverty is to be “involved in the state machinery”. Westcliffe Flats Residents Association included as one of its achievements persuading the state to provide affordable water. The labour movements emphasised the wage bargaining and the lobbying of the state. In the case of Sikhula Sonke, one comment is that the membership organization has raised the consciousness of farm workers with respect to workers’ rights. The Sex Workers Education and Advocacy Taskforce has been trying to decriminalise sex work to improve their members’ working conditions and reduce stigma. One grassroots housing organization is agitating (the Landless People’s Movement) while another is building houses (Federation of the Urban Poor) – both are working to assist their members to secure housing. Jubilee South Africa (JSA) and Umzabalazo we Jubilee (UJ) are particularly interesting as they focus on state redistribution, including the need to address issues related to the state budget. However, this discourse does not emerge as important in terms of the activities and negotiating positions of other agencies who seem to be more concerned to access existing state resources, rather than to increase the scale of such resources. It appears that the way in which movement activists perceive their fight against poverty is conditioned by movement strategies and tactics (see below).

Other organizational achievements appear to be central to poverty reduction although the organizations might not define their objectives and activities as poverty reduction. For example, the New Women’s Movement identifies one of its achievements as its lobbying in favour of the Child Social Grant. COSATU (the Congress of South African Trade Unions) noted that its achievements had included the creation of the Coalition Against Jobs and Poverty in 2005 in the Western Cape.²⁵

While the interviewees associated with movement organizations involved in the struggle for land, housing and basic services made very specific associations between poverty and their particular grievance, there was also the recognition among some interviewees that their particular problem was located in a substantive and broader arena of anti-poor policy making and economic structures. For example, one of those interviewed argued that, while their main concern was in the area of bond (mortgage repayments) and that a definition of poverty should include those unable to make such repayments, poverty itself is manifest in “unemployment, commercialization and the privatization of water”.

The discussion of poverty by interviewees is notable for what is not mentioned as well as for what is. What is notable is that none of the interviewees emphasized race and/or ethnic discrimination in their discussion of the definitions and causes of poverty. This may be because they have observed the emergence of a Black middle class which suggests labour market mobility and/or because many of the exclusionary processes such as a lack of access to state resources are managed by Black and Coloured South African government employees. Despite the message emerging from analyses of poverty that race remains important (Seekings and Natrass 2006; Leite, McKinley and Osorio 2006),

²⁵ Neither was mentioned under poverty reduction activities but emerged at other stages in the interviews.

movement spokespeople and commentators do not emphasise this dimension. Why this is so, and the factors at play here, require better understanding.

Second, it is surprising, given other responses and the importance of a discourse of human rights, that rights perceptions did not emerge. Two organizations whose work has focussed strongly on rights replied in very different ways to the question about defining the nature of poverty, with the interviewees for TAC emphasizing the specific lack of affordable medicine and those for Jubilee South Africa mentioning structural factors such as accumulation by corporations. What is particularly noteworthy is that lack of rights *per se* is not associated with definitions and discussions about poverty; none of those interviewed talked about poverty in these terms. However, as elaborated below, rights are used as a strategy to advance claims. This raises questions about perceptions of entitlements and the relationship between movements and the state. We return to these issues in the conclusion.

A third notable absence is that the organizations orientated to the environmental movement had relatively little to say about poverty in part because they perceived their objectives as being to address specific environmental concerns (such as pollution in low-income settlements). The representatives spoke about their work to alleviate some aspects of poverty (such as the poor quality of the local environment). One possible interpretation is that they consider their activities to complement those of the grassroots organizations campaigning for access to tenure and services and/or for additional state support to improve employment opportunities, and faced with the scale of material needs are modest about their own contributions to poverty reduction. At the same time, one interviewee mentioned their work to elaborate the causes of poverty to their members, and the negative contribution of the corporate sector to local environmental quality.

All of those interviewed except the representative of the Unity Movement (a socialist organization) emphasised that their organization has an active engagement with poverty reduction.

Objectives and ideologies

The research team was aware from the beginning that the identification of movements with poverty reduction was a hypothesized connection that may or may not reflect the ways in which movements perceived their own activities. Prior to exploring issues of poverty and poverty reduction, interviewees were asked about the objectives of movement organizations, and about how objectives had changed since the inception of the movement. To ensure that objectives were fully captured, interviewees were asked about original, formal and existing objectives to take account of those situations in which working practice differed from public statements. Interviewees were also asked about the ideological orientation of the movement organization.

Looking first at the land and housing sub-movement within shelter, what is immediately clear is the divergence in ideological direction and intensity within this grouping of organizations: two judge their ideology as socialist, two say it is non-partisan and, of the

other two, one was unclear and the other did not reply. This divergence in ideologies may reflect the extent to which these movements respond to the imperative of need. Households facing eviction and/or living in unacceptable housing conditions act collectively in the face of their grievance without, it appears, moving towards a single ideological position. In terms of their objectives, they are, not surprisingly, focussed on land and housing. In three of the six cases, the organizations have shifted from this sole focus for their work into issues related to services (ie. to another sub-movement within this grouping). A similar shift has been made in the case of both the Inner City Resource Centre and the iLitha Park Anti-eviction Campaign (tenants and bond debtors respectively); the former, for example, now includes issues of services alongside work to contest the eviction of central Johannesburg tenants. This extension of objectives confirms our earlier grouping above, when we classified a single urban shelter movement within which there are a number of distinct sub-movements with overlapping affiliations and areas of work.

Turning to the second sub-movement, that of services, of the six movement organizations, three self-identify as socialist, one as non-partisan, one did not reply and one interviewee was unclear about the organization's orientation. Two of the service organizations were established with an explicit anti-privatization objective and hence take a particular policy position in terms of addressing the grievances associated with services. In the case of one of these organizations, the Anti-Privatization Forum, the interviewee considers that the network was formed in direct response to cost recovery measures and associated labour restructuring. As elaborated below, the formation of some of these organizations reflects the strategies of the ANC as the dominant political party to manage internal opposition as much as it reflects the emergence of more politically autonomous views among low-paid and otherwise disadvantaged citizens. The nature and direction of these organizations emphasise the importance of understanding movements within a broader political context and not as isolated phenomena.

The other organizations in this sub-movement appear to be driven by the need to access services, and to ensure the affordability of services (i.e. avoid cut-offs from a failure to pay bills). In one case, that of the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee, they have since adopted an anti-privatization objective. In the stance taken against privatization, some organizations within this movement are taking a directly confrontational position against the government (which has introduced the policy of cost recovery and privatization). As elaborated above in the brief discussion of movement formation, this ideological positioning is fuelled by grassroots associations becoming an organizational home for individuals expelled from the ANC. However, as explored below, this ideological stance is not necessarily consistent across the movement.

Turning to the second of our broad movement categorizations, that of human rights, there is a notable lack of emphasis on achieving rights within the interviewee responses. Only two of the feminist organizations mention rights in their founding, formal or current objectives. This will be further explored below.

In terms of the labour movement, there is a strong emphasis on protecting the interests of those already employed. In the case of COSATU, there has been a shift from the original objectives (to mobilize black labour against apartheid) to those more appropriate to present-day governance and their involvement in the Tripartite Alliance (to build socialism within a capitalist system). Both GIWUSA and COSATU make reference to the need to protect workers under somewhat adverse current circumstances with, for example, a requirement that new jobs are first offered to those recently made redundant. Perhaps not surprisingly in the case of these movement organizations that have a specific orientation to protecting workers within a capitalist economy, there is explicit support for socialism. In terms of the sub-movement on informal labour, Sikhula Sonke has extended its objectives beyond those specifically related to the employment contract and is now also looking at other issues including domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. Potential members of this group are two local organizations, one rural and one local, Malungiza Youth Development and Youth with Vision, that are struggling to improve livelihood opportunities for their members in rural KwaZulu Natal and Cape Town, respectively.

Turning to the groupings of movement organizations within the categories of feminist and environmental, the environmental movement organizations are clear about their ideological base and two declare it to be socialist and one concerned with environmental justice. Only one of the three feminist movement organizations (REMMOHO) identifies an ideological position which it defines as “African feminism and socialism”. This organization was established to “mainstream gender” within another movement organization, the Anti-Privatization Forum (which contests the spread of privatization and cost-recovery within service delivery). However, in its objectives it has spread beyond this to work more generally on issues of women’s empowerment. The two other feminist movement organizations (New Women’s Movement and the Reproductive Rights Alliance) were established with broadly-based objectives to work on issues related to women’s rights and they have not modified this in their working practice. The environmental organizations were also established with broadly-based objectives related to environmental justice and the environment, and these have also not been modified. It is notable that none of these organizations has an orientation towards the environment and conservation: all have a strong focus on issues related to people and citizens.

What are the conclusions that emerge from this section of the interviews? One of the most notable findings is that rights do not emerge as significant in the context of objectives which are focused on more material advancements. This may be for any one of a number of reasons. In part, it may reflect a reality in which there is ambivalence on the part of the state towards social, economic and cultural rights as exemplified by both a water subsidy and cost recovery policy for water companies. It may also reflect a recognition of the importance of rights within the constitutional process and hence a sense in which it has been “achieved”; nevertheless we might then anticipate greater emphasis on the realisation of rights. It might also be the case that rights are more of a professional than popular discourse.

A second finding is that our movement organizations differ in the extent to which objectives have been rewritten and the extent to which interviewees are comfortable and

confident in declaring an ideological direction. Of course, this is likely to reflect many things and we should be cautious about the conclusions that are drawn as to why these differences occur. However, we can say that organizations working in the field of gender and the environment are comfortable working within their objectives as originally drafted. This may also reflect the relative maturity of these movements and hence their ability to define a stable niche for the organization. It may also reflect a lack of contestation over the broader direction of the movement and the contribution of individual organizations. This is less true of the labour movement organizations that have been forced to adapt to changing political and economic regimes and increasingly adverse conditions for those in formal employment. Broadly speaking, modifications to objectives reflect this. There also appears to be a contested terrain for those organizations working in the field of urban shelter. In this case, their members have moved from a very adverse situation (prior to the end of apartheid) to one that is more favourable (with extensions in state support for housing acquisition and improvement). However, there are two particular findings that emerge from this discussion of ideology, objectives and the changes that have taken place to such objectives over time.. The first will come as no surprise to specialists of urban development. The movement organizations active in the field of land and housing have extended their objectives to include access to services as the acquisition of formal housing has been associated with new costs. There are frequently unforeseen costs associated with the formalization of shelter.²⁶ Even if these costs are anticipated, families may underestimate the actual practical difficulties involved in covering these bills. Moreover, there is a political logic to the extension of activities as the movement participants may be close neighbours and hence this is an easy way for organizations to expand potential membership. The second is that the programme of cost recovery for basic services is an acute point of tension between the anticipated benefits of democratisation for the previously disenfranchised black majority, who continue to face low-incomes and few opportunities, and the realities of government within the global neo-liberal hegemony of the opening years of the 21st century. Movement organizations active in this arena include those with an explicit ideological and political challenge to the national state and its policies as well as grassroots expressions of frustration at the impossibility of reconciling expectations with realities, and incomes and expenditures. However, as is elaborated below, this ideological direction has been influenced by a leadership which is in part made up of individuals expelled from the dominant political party (ie, the ANC) as well as more grassroots movement activists.

Strategies, Tactics and Approaches to the State

It is self-evident to say that the strategies and tactics used by organizations are likely to be dependent on the nature of the movement. This section reports on the interviewee responses by movement type.

²⁶ There is a clear rural parallel here in Peru – in that movements which initially sought access to land, once they had achieved it, then sought access to credit, water, basic services etc. This transition often led to a weakening of the movements (as reflected in the Peru case study) – indeed rural movements have only re-emerged as strong around new and distinct concerns (such as ethnicity and mining)

The movement organizations concerned with land and housing engage primarily with the state at the local and provincial level; two of the six also use the national level but all use the local level. What is evident from their response both to strategy and to relations with the state is that the nature of the relationship varies considerably and includes confrontation and participation within state housing projects. However, it is misleading to define strategy along a continuum because there is no agreement in the end points of such a continuum with some favouring state provision and others favouring state-financed self-development. Equally evident is that organizations use a variety of strategies, albeit with a concentration (or favoured) position; for example, the Landless People's Movement talked about "The relationship oscillates between confrontation and negotiation even if the former has an upper-hand..." The work of FEDUP is positioned more towards collaboration but the neighbourhood associations that make up this network developed a 24 per cent plan in the mid-1990s which included land invasion as a potential strategy.

Within the strategies identified by interviewees, there are four notable alignments of movement actions, strategy and relationship with the state:

- Confrontation and resistance: activities include demonstrations and court cases, and land invasions.
- Negotiation around a number of options. Negotiation outcomes may be around land acquisition, or around inclusion in the housing subsidy programme, or around inclusion in other government housing and service provision.
- State support for community development. The objective of FEDUP is to secure state housing subsidies for the community to self-develop, employing professional agencies within their own management structure. This option was formalised within the People's Housing Process.
- Access to and participation within an established state or contractor-led housing project

One interviewee, discussing the experiences of iLitha Park Anti-Eviction campaign, which is made up of a number of local organizations, stressed that in the case of this network the balance between negotiation and confrontation depended on the particular context that individual organizations were facing. This context varies from being very positive to being problematic. In one case, the interviewee suggested, this movement organization successfully created a relationship between banks and defaulters to the benefit of both, effectively stepping away from an interaction with the state.

In terms of their achievements, these organizations emphasise their ability to stop some evictions and to educate people about their rights in respect of housing. Also important has been access to housing finance either through subsidies or other budgets that enable significant shelter improvements to take place.

The service sub-movement is notable for the diversity of targets and breadth of strategies. Local and provincial government are all mentioned as targets for actions, along with service parastatal organizations, and the courts and legislature. Despite the ideological nature of some of these organizations and their political stance against state policies, no

interviewee believes that these movement organizations target the national state through their activities. The strategies spoken of by the interviewees are broadly confrontational including direct action (such as reconnection of cut off meters) as well as demonstrations and other protests. However, it is important not to over-emphasise the militant nature of these organizations, as interviewees also spoke about their positive engagement with service providers and it appears that in the case of some providers and some local governments there is room for negotiation (for example, to delay and prevent families having their services cut off because of non-payment of bills).

Two organizations seeking service improvements are judged by the interviewees to have shifted strategies and are now spending a greater proportion of their time negotiating; in both cases, these are organizations that engage with the courts as one strategy to advance the interests of their members. It appears that there is a possible link between these findings; one interpretation of what is taking place is that the courts legitimate the position of the organization and then enable negotiation to take place within a new and more favourable context, but this cannot be confirmed with the information available and would have to be verified by additional research.

Asked to consider their successes, interviewees pointed to the ability of some organizations to resist cutoffs and to declare debts written off. Also important in more recent months has been the campaign to prevent prepaid meters being installed in low-income areas.

The four organizations that are broadly located within the labour movement divide very clearly into two. Two of the movement organizations are traditional trade unions who emphasise that much of their work is concerned with collective bargaining related to wages and working conditions. The interviewee for the General Industries Workers Union of South Africa notes that they have succeeded in persuading some employees to employ retrenched workers when vacancies arise; in this discussion, he illustrates the strong orientation of the traditional labour movement towards addressing the needs of those in unionised employment. In contrast, those interviewed in regard to the two movement organizations working with the informal workers (farm workers and sex workers) have a strong emphasis on more general support for employees both in respect of direct services and advocacy and research, and they say very little about assisting in wage negotiations. These two organizations are orientated to working with the state in respect of legislation that might advance the interests of their target groups as well as improve the provision of state services. In contrast, the two traditional union organizations work with the state in respect of general economic policies and the perceived interests of formal workers rather than with policy interventions related to the provision of services.

This analysis emphasises the importance of treating the labour movement as two sub-movements. The traditional labour movement engages the state in respect of the macro-economy and negotiates with employers in respect of the re-numeration and working conditions of their members. Movement organizations working in the informal sector struggle to support employer negotiations in a context in which labour is weak due in

great part to the informality of the employer-employee relationship. Hence, they rely on the state to improve the well-being of particular types of informal workers through targeted legislation. Their interventions may be concerned with the nature of labour relations (such as the work of Sikhula Sonke with the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration) or with vulnerabilities that relate to the informal nature of their work (such as improving the way in which the police treat sex workers).

The two local organizations that identify their work to be with youth and unemployment vary in their approach to the state and the strategies that they use. In one case, that of the Malungisa Youth Development, they are negotiating with the state for financial support. In the other, Youth with Vision, they also participate with the state on youth training schemes; but have more confrontational and contesting relations when they join in anti-eviction struggles. This local organization has activities which span two different movement arenas.

Both the feminist and environmental movements have a strong focus on national government which, in the case of the environmental movement, extends to include local government. National policy making and legislation appear to be important activities in both cases. Both movements also share the strategies of education, lobbying and advocacy (both to the general public and parliamentarians) to further their goals and objectives. Marches and pickets are only mentioned in the context of highlighting issues rather than in the sense of coercive action. One organization that is somewhat different is eThinwiki EcoPeace in that the leaders also have the strategy of directly contesting local elections rather than simply influencing those who are already in power. This strategy is also used by one of the service organizations, the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee, although in this case it is to directly contest the installation of pre-paid metres and the cut-off of electricity supplies due to non-payment of bills.

Discussion of the human rights movement has deliberately been left until last because it is difficult to clearly identify their strategies towards the state, primarily because the movement is closely embedded within the strategies of other movements, influencing the identification and conceptualization of their strategies. A further difficulty in identifying strategies is that this movement is, arguably, now embedded within the state through constitutional processes. As explained by Sachs (2005, 134) the Human Rights Commission is “a state institution supporting constitutional democracy... [and ensuring] rights and values of the Constitution are observed, respected and promoted at all levels.” Sachs himself is a Justice of the Constitutional Court and was an active lawyer within the anti-apartheid movement, providing further evidence of the integration of state and civil society in respect of the rights movement. The Commission itself describes its origins thus:

Recognising that the protection and promotion of human rights cannot be left to individuals or the government, Chapter Nine of the Constitution creates independent national institutions, subject only to the Constitution and the law, to transform our society from its unjust past and to deliver the fundamental rights in the Constitution to all in South Africa.

The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) is one such national institution, which derives its powers from the Constitution and the South African Human Rights Commission Act of 1994²⁷.

Of the 36 movement organizations about which information was directly gathered during this component of the research process, ten interviewees mention an involvement with the courts (at some point in the interview) to further the interests of their members through the realization of individual or collective rights that exist under present legislation. Many of these organizations also undertake activities to spread awareness of such legislated rights within the general population and within the service providers. In one further case, the Palestine Support Organization, the approach is also related to rights, although in this case the organization is seeking to influence state foreign policy.

This orientation towards legal struggles is not identified for those organizations within the environmental movement. It appears to be less well used by those organisations struggling for land and housing, except in the case of those defending evictions from houses in which bond payments have not been made and for formal tenants. This may reflect the fact that local and provincial government has resources for housing investment and local groups seek to access such resources (rather than contest the state around issues of law and rights). However, it is also evident that there have been landmark cases in this area (Sachs 2005).

Two aspects of rights-related strategies may be worth highlighting. First, the significance of a rights discourse appears to be evident although it did not emerge specifically in relation to poverty. It is clear that most South African movement organizations have an orientation towards the state (in its broadest form) as playing a role in securing their interests and hence their interest in lobbying the state. Second, the emphasis is generally on the use of existing rights. The only notable policy changes that movements are currently campaigning for are changes in the neo-liberal stance of the government (traditional labour movement) and changes in the cost-recovery strategies of the service providers.

A further aspect that needs to be considered is the way in which the strategies of movements towards the state are influenced by the strategies through which the dominant political elite, ie, the ANC leadership, is managing dissent within the party and arguably the reluctance of the dissatisfied to move directly into a non-existent political opposition. The tripartite alliance partners have sought, on occasion, to push out outspoken opposition to their policies. Although both COSATU and SACP criticized the adoption of GEAR, they remain part of the ANC government. When COSATU convened the September Commission in 1997 to assess its role in the alliance, it opted to continue. As part of cost-recovery by GEAR, Egoli 2002 (the reform package within the Johannesburg authority) was aimed to provide basic services, like electricity and water, along corporate lines, therefore applying the no payment - no service principle. This led to the cut-off of electricity and water (for defaulters) and to the formation of the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC) in response to it. The leadership of the Alliance responded to internal

²⁷ /www.sahrc.org.za/sahrc_cms/publish/cat_index_88.shtml (accessed, 1/8/2009)

opposition by expelling the identified individuals, some of which became closely associated with the populist movements. Some of the most significant individuals are Dale McKinley (SACP), Trevor Ngwane (ANC) and Jon Appolis (CEPPAWU – which is an affiliate of COSATU).²⁸ Although the purpose of these organizations is contesting poverty resulting from privatization, the broader ideological position of their leadership emerges in their objectives and activities. These political left organisations are cooperating under the banner of Social Movements Indaba.²⁹ It is not clear if this leadership is choosing to locate within social movement organizations because there are limited options in terms of political opposition with the ANC³⁰, which has retained its hegemonic position as a result of the anti-apartheid struggle, or if this leadership has chosen to occupy movement organizations in a revisiting of the strategies which defeated apartheid.

Ballard et al (2006, 405) argue that “...social movements’ engagements fall on a continuum between in-system collaborative interactions on the one extreme and out-of-system adversarial relations on the other”; although there is no movement that is purely confrontational, there are some who favour out-of-system adversarial relations.³¹ Looking across the movements discussed here, organizations that are focusing on issues related to state service delivery are more inclined to confrontation in part because of state policies in this area. The interest in a less confrontational engagement emerges after the immediate pressing situation is alleviated. For example after Zilleraine Heights Residents Association occupied land by force, they started negotiating with the state, as well as contesting possible removal in court. By contrast, organizations within identity-related movements such as the Reproductive Rights Alliance, New Women’s Movements and Triangle Project, are more engaged in submissions, court cases and less disruptive demonstrations. The Treatment Action Campaign used both confrontation and negotiation prior to the institutionalisation of the antiretroviral rollout by the state. Currently it is more absorbed by participation in the rollout with occasional activism, mainly appearances in court cases that affect them.

Before leaving this section on strategies, it was notable that several interviewees remarked on the contribution of movements to creating unity and solidarity between those suffering from discrimination (for example, sex workers) and/or dispossession of assets. In this context, Abahlali base Mjondolo noted that its work was helping to create solidarity between races and tribal groups. Greater education and awareness of the problems people face and what might be done about them was also mentioned by a range of interviewees. These movement organizations in general saw their work as having an

²⁸ Jon Appolis then left CEPPAWU with about 12 000 members and joined GIWUSA.

²⁹ A grouping of movements who come together to exchange experiences.

³⁰ Although late in 2008 a new political party was created in South Africa when some ANC supporters broke away to form the Congress of the People. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7785021.stm> (accessed Saturday, 07 February 2009) .

³¹ Participants in the workshops in Durban and Cape Town suggested that there are protocols of engagement as well as expanding confrontation to litigation and demonstration. With respect to protocols, state institutions like NEDLAC, courts, the gender commission, the human rights commission and others are supposed to be channels for engagement in liberal democracy. Social movements are using mobilization to supplement them.

orientation to changing attitudes and perceptions through the provision of information and knowledge about a wide range of areas. Specific lobbying activities are located within this wider area of activity. Finally, some organizations, such as the Soweto Concerned Residents, were concerned with the immediacy of survival and spoke of their work assisting communities to grow food for themselves.

Scales of impact

With regard to the actual gains or successes of the organizational and movement activities, there are concrete successes and intangible³² gains and both include influencing policy and legislation, awareness and forging solidarity among affected members. Although more than one organization contributes to a particular success, there are some successes that can be attributed to one particular activity and/or organization. The Treatment Action Campaign, for example, succeeded in pressuring the state to institutionalise the rollout of anti-retrovirals to low-income people infected by HIV/AIDS and is also a major player in the rollout process. Within the environmental movement, SDCEA succeeded in getting oil and chemical corporations in South Durban to cooperate in the area of environmental safety. In the case of services, SECC persuaded the municipality of Johannesburg to scrap 50 per cent of electricity arrears and offer an amnesty to those that reconnected illegally. In terms of housing needs, the Federation of the Urban Poor negotiated an offer of 9,000 subsidies from the government. The Triangle Project and Reproductive Rights Alliance secured supportive legislation with the passing of the Civil Union Act of 2006 which legalised the marriage of homosexual people. The success of the movements can be accounted for in terms of a combination of various factors including the nature of the movement and its goals, the history of its leadership, and the ability to build alliances with other agencies. The issue that the movement agitates for is particularly significant. An issue that is urgent and evoking moral sympathy evokes a quick response. For example, because HIV/AIDS, electricity and water cut-offs and housing evictions threaten the life of the low-income victims they provoke moral sympathy. HIV/AIDS has been particularly successful in garnering support across different groups including the media, academics, medical scientists (like Professor Malegapuru Makgoba) and high-profile politicians, like former president Nelson Mandela.

Some movement organizations may not be given credit when their pressure pays off. For example, when the state scrapped electricity arrears in SOWETO, it recognized SANCO as a representative of the community as opposed to SECC. This is related to the way in which some movement organizations have been positioned (in part by themselves) as a political opposition posing a significant ideological challenge to the present government.

³² Intangible success may go beyond the passing of legislation or adoption of a policy. For example in the case of the passing of the Civil Union Bill, workshop attendants suggested that social acceptance of homosexual couples is an indicator of success.

Dimensions of movements

There are a number of other findings that emerge from the analysis, although they were not lines of investigation that were considered in the preparation of the questionnaire. One issue is the propensity of movement organizations to sub-divide as conflicts emerge within the membership. Within the organizations whose history has been explored through this mapping process, three major divides have occurred in the recent years; in two of these cases, both organizations were interviewed. Without any comparative studies, it is not possible to say whether or not this figure is high or low. The causes of the splits appear to be related both to ideology and personality. However, it should not be concluded that movement relations are necessarily contentious. There appears to be much collaboration between organizations. This is not just true for organizations that are active within movements but occurs between organizations that are, in general, located in different movements. In particular, local residents' associations may engage with activities in different movement arenas as they struggle to respond to the needs of their members.

What is evident from the interviews is that there are numerous professional NGOs that are broadly located within different movements identified and explored during the course of this research. The balance of NGOs appears to be particularly high in the movement areas of environment, feminism and human rights, while those movements concerned with both formal labour and the urban shelter sector appear to have proportionately more grassroots organizations as key active agencies. There are few mass movement organizations at scale within the informal sector but rather there are relatively small-scale activities that also have a high level of NGO involvement. This is likely to be due to the difficulties of both organizing within the informal sector and pressing wage demands in informal labour markets.

Finally it is very difficult to assess latent movements, although, as noted in the background paper to the mapping exercise, many movements and movement organizations spend periods of time in which they are dormant. Participants at workshops which reviewed the findings from the mapping process broadly concurred that there are movement activists who pursue their objectives in a less visible fashion and who may have periods of inactivity. This seems to be particular true for low-income women activists who may fear confrontation but who are nevertheless committed to advancing collective needs and interests.

V. Conclusions

There are several questions that emerge from this analysis and in this conclusion it seems right that we dwell on these questions. Understanding social movements through a country review is new and we have to be careful not to draw too much from the methodology, data and subsequent analysis, all of which are necessarily exploratory. One initial area for consideration seems to be why certain areas emerged as important for movement activity, and why not others. The strategies and tactics are also worthy of

additional reflection but they will be a major focus of the research in phase two of the study and the questions raised above will be pursued through this process.

The paragraphs below explore possible reasons to help account for the differences in movement presence and strength. We begin with the movements related to collective consumption and then move on to the labour and rights movements, before considering the feminist and environmental movements, and then some thoughts on the lack of identity politics in South Africa. The discussion moves on to consider movement presence and strength within the broader political context, looking first at state policy to the social and economic sectors and then to issues related to governance and state authority.

Understanding the presence of movements

Perhaps the most notable question, for someone not embedded in the immediacy of South African politics, is why urban collective consumption movements are so strong given that the South African state has undertaken considerable investment in this area (particularly around housing and basic services). On the one hand, it might be argued that these state-sponsored measures are inadequate and partial. For example, there has been very little access to well located urban land and the location of low-income settlements remains a major factor in reproducing spatial and social exclusion; at the same time, there have been concerns about the quality of construction and the size of units (Mitlin 2007). In this context, our explanation of the existence of such high levels of movement activity in this domain is that government programmes only appear to be addressing the needs of the urban poor and are demonstrably inadequate. Our analysis also has to take into account the scale of need in the area of collective consumption. Despite the considerable investment in shelter, the housing backlog today is even larger than in 1994 due to high rates of household formation and rural to urban migration alike. That said, the programmes of the South African government are remarkable compared to other countries. The South African housing subsidy programme is more generous in terms of unit subsidies and bigger in scale than elsewhere; the free basic water policy is also significantly better than alternatives offered to the urban poor in other countries. In this context, why are there so many grassroots movement organizations in this area? Does their presence have little to do with the adequacy or otherwise of these interventions? Is it, for example, more to do with the fact that government is sanctioning claim-making in this area?

The suggestion that the extent to which the state implicitly or explicitly sanctions or resists claim-making is directly related to levels of movement activity is reinforced by the argument made by several participants at the Durban workshop that the state is important in legitimising some movements and in excluding others. By investing in shelter provision and subsidies, the state makes a commitment to respond to the needs of its citizens. In some cases, state agencies are willing to engage in a dialogue with movement organizations although in other cases state agencies provide services with very little dialogue with beneficiaries (see, for example, the discussions in van Donk, Swilling, Pieterse and Parnell 2008). The very public pronouncements and promises of politicians

in this area (for example, related to the housing subsidy programme) remind citizens of the state's willingness to respond in these areas and reinforce in citizens their belief that this is part of the public investment programme and collective consumption goods that they are entitled to. The (at least partial) state sanction of claim making may, perhaps, be particularly important in a society in which counter state action was so rigorously and comprehensively repressed as was the case under the apartheid regime. Residents of low-income communities recognise that they now have a democratic government (see, for example, the discussions in Skuse and Cousins (2007)). However, at another level there is considerable fear of the state and its repressive apparatus and related capacity. That repressive capacity continues to the present day, for example, related to police action and eviction struggles (in the public) and control of subsidy investment finance (much less public) (see, for example, the case studies in Ballard, Habib and Valodia 2006). Such factors support the thesis that the state's own willingness to engage in this area is one factor accounting for social movement activity.

A further factor is that while collective consumption goods may address multiple needs for low-income groups there are real tensions embedded within the particular nature of these policies and associated programmes. These tensions (rather than simple programme inadequacies) may also be the instigation behind movement activities. The housing policy which provides capital grants to low-income households was first designed to address the needs of the construction sector, offering a win-win programme for the state which simultaneously secured the support of capital and addressed the needs of low-income households that were deprived of housing and secure tenure. The contractor-orientated programmes addressed some needs but with limitations, especially in terms of location and size (Mitlin 2007). Policy interventions since the introduction of the programme have sought to address these needs. At the same time, service provision policies with their alternative emphasis on redistributive and cost recovery policies are a real and almost unique point of public policy tension in terms of the scale of contradiction. Families struggle to pay their service bills and are threatened with the withdrawal of services; they are conscious that state promises have not, to their understanding, been fulfilled. Why do such tensions matter? They provide a rich field for ideologically motivated groups to focus on. Other authors have commented on the divergence between a politically motivated leadership and a survival needs-focussed membership within these groups (Ballard 2005) and in part this appears to reflect the deliberate targeting of public services by intellectuals seeking grounds on which to challenge neo-liberal policies.

The state's programmes do not simply reflect its own political need for electoral support or the ideological preferences of a liberation state but are, in some sense, linked to citizen needs. In this sense, there is a chicken and egg issue: is it the scale of citizen needs and their movements' activities that encourage the state to act and introduce programmes, or is it the presence of the state programmes that encourages citizens to focus on these areas? As in most dilemmas of this type, it is unlikely that there is one simple answer. While recognising the importance of understanding such iterative processes and their influence on social protest and policy making, we should also recognise the significance of structural forces which influence state strategies and responses. There is an underlying

issue related to the distribution of power in society, the extent to which movement-type activities are encouraged or discouraged by the state and ruling political elites (which differ in the extent to which they overlap). The general issue of state and movement relations is returned to below after a brief review of the remaining movements and factors which account for the strength of their presence.

While collective consumption goods are important, we recognise that this is not the only area of citizen need. In particular, there are acute needs for employment and wage income. Turning to labour movements, what is notable is that social protests and movement activities are weak in terms of unemployment and particularly informal casual workers. While formal labour unions remain strong in political terms, relative to other movements, in part because of their alliance with the state, it appears to be very difficult to strengthen local organizations of informal and/or unemployed workers. Moreover, traditional labour unions are failing to mobilise protests against state neo-liberal policies, and this seems to be true whether they are political insiders or outsiders. Grassroots responses, judging by the interviews undertaken for this study, are more concerned with survival strategies than with challenging state economic policies. At the same time, there appears to be less professional civil society input in critiquing neo-liberalism and proposing alternative economic policies and programmes than is taking place in the areas of rights, feminism and environmentalism.

Hence, one notable observation emerging from the mapping is that social protest and movement activity appear to avoid labour market issues and are instead concentrated in other arenas, allowing private capital to structure the economy with an increasingly unequal wage distribution. Redistribution through taxes appears to be relatively benign for capital and economic elites (Seekings and Natrass 2006). Income inequality changed little and may the distribution may have become more unequal (ibid, 303). Seekings and Natrass (2006, 341) argue that “public policies exacerbated rather than mitigated the problem of unemployment” and find themselves having to explain “why there was not more political pressure to transform the distributive regime.” At the same time, the share of profits in the value of aggregate output rose by over ten per cent between 1990 and 2001 (ibid, 351). While there is activity taking place around budget scale and priorities, this is notable for the lack of scale. Labour market policies have remained with the same industrial conciliation processes as before and national bargaining councils provide a forum for employers and trade unions to set minimum wages which are enforced by the state across the formal industry (ibid, 348 and 350)

The human rights movement presents some of the most ambiguous findings. Rights discourse has such a wide resonance within South African state and civil society deliberations. However, it is not a critical framework, neither in the way in which organizations see poverty and poverty reduction, nor in the way they frame their own objectives nor in terms of how they describe their achievements. Is it so taken for granted that it does not emerge in the interviews? Or is it primarily seen as the terrain of the state? Or is it so abstract that it is not articulated by the members of the types of organizations interviewed in this study because, in general, they consider their work in very pragmatic terms. Legal processes (for example, court battles and legislation) are

mentioned, although rights are not talked about in direct terms and it may be the case that in South Africa an understanding of rights as a practical development tool has been subsumed within such legal institutions (perhaps in part because of the new constitution and related processes which themselves reflect past movement struggles). It may also be the case that for those organization that are not pursuing legal challenges, rights-related claims are not a useful way to proceed because of the confrontational nature of the engagement with the state that such a strategy would imply. Furthermore, it may be difficult for movement organizations to claim their legitimacy of action from a framework that the state has made its own. Groups appear to emphasise negotiations as an important component of their work and they may wish to adopt those stances that they believe will further their negotiating capacities. A further difficulty (mentioned in Chapman et al 2008 in the context of people's movement struggles outside of South Africa) is that working through rights frameworks may require a high level of formal skill and expertise, and hence may be used by professionals rather than the people's organizations that formed the majority of organizations considered in the course of this study. At this stage it is not possible to reach conclusions regarding these questions and the ways in which rights are used to advance particular struggles. The issue will be taken up in the second phase of the research.

The feminist movement appears to be well established with a number of national activities. It is evident from a number of studies that the feminist cause remains critical to the quality of life of women, particularly those living in low-income communities; women experience high levels of domestic violence as well as discrimination in labour markets and face adverse gender relations. Nevertheless, the mapping suggests a low level of grassroots activity in this area with few grassroots organizations that highlight and work on women's issues. Rather, these tend to be prioritised by professional organizations that emphasise work at the national level, including legislative change, lobbying and attitudinal change. At the level of the grassroots organizations, their position is fairly commonplace in other studies of social movements that have pointed out the critical contribution of local women to grassroots struggles around material needs but not around identity politics (Houtzager and Moore 2003). It has also been recognised that many women's movements have been primarily based within the professional classes and have at times tended to represent the interests of such groups (Tripp 2002).

Despite a lack of direct attention to the feminist cause, the emphasis of movement organizations on addressing the needs of "poor black women" reinforces the importance given to gender perspectives. This points to the success of the feminist movement in establishing itself as a discourse that is available to disadvantaged groups seeking to increase their political space and develop greater legitimacy for their work. It reflects that the cause of feminism is still widely recognised as relevant and groups working to address these needs are likely to secure a sympathetic hearing from the state. While funding issues have not been elaborated during the mapping exercises, the emphasis on women's needs and interests may also be important in securing resources from a range of development organizations that have gender as a significant priority influencing their funding allocations. We have to remain open to the possibility that the emphasis given by organizational representatives to "poor black women" reflects donor priorities rather

than national attitudes. However, given the lack of resistance to this direction, even if donors (and other support organizations) are relevant to decision making, these priorities appear to have real resonance in movement organizations.

The environmental movement appears to be particularly diverse in its nature, objectives and strategies. It may be because it is an emerging movement or it may reflect the diverse class base that lies behind the movement and the complexity of the environmental cause in a context in which conservation, leisure, livelihoods and health are included within a single broad umbrella. The organizations whose representatives were interviewed during the course of this research are all those aligned to the environmental justice movement. This is a particular sub-group within a broader environmental movement that includes conservation groups whose appeal is mainly to the middle class. The relationship between these sub-groupings within this wider movement is not clear and it appears to be the case that the ties are not strong with alliances within the environmental movement being made opportunistically rather than as a part of some more substantive strategy. However, a comprehensive mapping was not taken across the environmental sector and hence many questions remain.

Finally, it appears that identity politics remains weak in the South African context. South African citizens have, for the most part, been through decades of intense struggle. The apartheid state denied the rights and needs of the majority of the population and dedicated itself to addressing the interests of those classified as white. In this context, access to rights and resources was defined according to racial identities. Black African and coloured populations did not have access to essential resources, including land, education and health services, and consequently they struggled to secure financial incomes and assets. In regard to the struggle for democracy, the dominant effort, through the ANC, was to transcend racial identities and build a national movement to end apartheid and secure democracy for all. While a strong racially-based consciousness remains, there appears to be a collective reluctance to develop a discourse around racial identity and hence it does not appear to be used in public as a mobilising tactic or to legitimise movement activities. This may be because, reflecting back to discussions about the dangers of a race war in the post 1994 period, there is an unspoken collective view that there is more to lose than to gain in the present South Africa through such representations.³³ Does post-apartheid South Africa find it difficult to deal with identity politics based around race for such reasons? Is it that all identity politics has become subsumed under this particular strategy regarding race? As with other questions raised here, this is difficult to answer. The Cape Town workshop suggested that race and religion are important characteristics defining the identities of at least some movement participants. In the case of religion, the dominance of Christianity is widely recognised. Muslim identities may be important for some movement activities (hence the issue was raised at the Cape Town workshop); however, the significance of religion for most movement organizations appears to be relatively weak.

³³ There are some conventions to address racial interests, such as the racial identity of the premier of the Western Cape province (someone with a coloured identity), that act to reassure minority groups. However, there appears to be a reluctance to formalise such arrangements.

There are movement organizations focussing on sexual identities but they appear to be relatively new and their potential for growth is difficult to assess. The continuing emphasis of movement activities on areas of mass grievance in a context of large-scale poverty and inequality makes it unlikely that they will be significant movements for some time to come.

The challenge of social transformation

In closing this review of the mapping process, it may be helpful to readers to offer one final set of related reflections about the contestation over political power and control of authority (in terms of organized citizenry and the state). In this final sub-section we consider the nature of the space that is open to movements and their constituents, and political influences over the nature and extent of that space.

As noted in a preparatory paper (Mitlin 2007), the State can adopt a number of positions in their responses to social movement activities and may be bureaucratic (rights-based), clientelist (patronage), authoritarian (dictator), participatory democratic (encouraging involvement of local groups) or co-productive (decentralised decision-making). While each state poses advantages as well as disadvantages to concerned social movements, the South African state appears to oscillate across the categories in this typology, choosing positions which appear to offer advantages in particular social contexts and historical moments. SECC broke the law by reconnecting households to electricity and water services, in some doing they combined practical action to mitigate the effects of low incomes with, on the part of the leaders, political action to strengthen residents' experience of combating state institutions. The same phenomenon is found in other sectors including illegal land occupations. The state responded in an authoritarian way to the marches of SECC and LPM. When SECC marched to the house of Johannesburg Mayor, Amos Masondo, they were beaten and arrested. On the other hand, when the government scrapped 50 per cent of electricity arrears it recognised SANCO as a representative of communities even if it had not contributed on the scale of the SECC. In this context, it was willing to act as a patron, responding to pressures from below with irregular concessions. In other engagements, the state refers to the Constitution as the blueprint for interaction with movements (bureaucratic). In its relationship with TAC and the Federation of Urban Poor resembles co-production (Mitlin 2008). After TAC succeeded in institutionalising antiretroviral rollout, the State began to involve TAC in HIV/AIDS policy and rollout. It is also involving the Federation of Urban Poor in designing housing policy as well as financing the building of 9,000 houses. However, in this co-productive process, the state offers limited opportunities for a redesign of substantive issues, preferring to focus on the detail of programmes. Our closing comments help to elaborate on possible reasons for this shifting set of strategies.

The nature of movements and movement politics in South Africa is partly influenced by the strategy of the state towards its internal opposition, and by the choices that opposition politicians make. Every historical movement is particular and needs to be understood within its context. At present, South African politics is characterised by a dominant

political party which gains considerable legitimacy and electoral support by virtue of its past position and success, rather than as a result of its current policies. That past involved individuals who voluntarily sacrificed and suppressed, for the most part, ideological purity and the related political differences in the quest to end apartheid. It was a real ideological coalition in which the future political direction of the country was considered to be less important than challenging and defeating the apartheid state. In this context, as the years of democratic government have continued, the question has been much more when the ANC splits than if it splits. And in the course of this mapping process, one ideological schism (in part represented by a clash of personalities) has occurred and a new political party has been formed. Whatever the choices made by those individuals, some of the most explicitly oppositional movement organizations in our study are led by individuals expelled from the ANC who have chosen to locate themselves within movement organizations. These individuals have chosen not to create new political parties but rather occupy movement space. In making this choice, they returned to the drama of the street protests that challenged and defeated apartheid; within movements they seek to create and further a politics that opposes the state. This objective does not appear to be shared by all other movement organizations, or by all their own members. However, it is to state the obvious to say that this political strategy must have some influence over the way in which other movement organizations see and position themselves.

At the same time and perhaps because of this oppositional presence within the broad arena of movement activities, the state is neither neutral nor indifferent to movements. Once the state has formed an opinion of a particular movement, activists believe that they respond either by engaging organizations or by creating a distance between that movement organization and their own activities. All of those interviewed spoke at length about their relations to the state, and some either feel excluded by state agencies or recognise that others are excluded. As noted above, the state appears to be active in legitimising some movements and movement organizations, and de-legitimising others. This mapping process is not directly a study on the South African state and we cannot take a comprehensive view but in understanding these relations it is helpful to take a view of the state. South Africa's government is, relatively speaking across the Global South, a capable and strong institution. The attitudes of the ruling ANC elites towards street protests have been recognised to be ambiguous. On the one hand, street protests created an unstable political situation that resulted in the triumph of the ANC cause; on the other, they represent a challenge to the particular incumbent government and seek to pressure government leaders to deliver particular policies and/or hold them to account. Zuma's election as leader of the ANC offered a re-enfranchisement of a group excluded from ANC decision making, young low-income men. Despite this evidence of a more populist political approach on the part of the ANC, the state continues to control movement activity. In so doing it reinforces a more general reality of authority as hierarchical and state-led. There appears to be little interest and support for the creation of a more pluralist society in which power rests with a number of groups and decision making is decentralised and able to be negotiated between those agencies that are locally active and considered by others to be credible. The state appears to be relatively successful in imposing its governance framework on movements and there are very few

challenges to the nature of governmental decision making. To draw a simple analogy, most movement organizations spend more time trying to get a share of the cake than in challenging the size of the cake and who has the right to set the rules that govern access to the cake.

In this sense, we can understand the dominance of shelter-based movements contesting state action along explicit, policy-orientated and technical lines identified by the mapping process as reflecting a situation which, at some level, represents state control and state interests. While individuals may wish to follow alternative objectives and associated action, the majority of efforts are either to challenge for a share of an existing housing subsidy programme, or to change cost recovery policies at the margin. We return to analysing this situation below after some comments on the rights-based framework because this helps to elucidate the complexities of pro-poor policies and programmes and is suggestive of the ways that the state influences movement outcomes.

From one perspective, a rights framework should support movement activists to challenge the state and to further a participative and redistributive process. However the state, at least to some degree, appears to have dominated the rights discussion and the perceptions, actions and interests of the movement organizations in regard to rights simply do not emerge from this mapping process (although given the importance of rights within South African civil society it might be anticipated that they would). Rights, as argued above, appear to be more of an opportunity framework for movement organizations that offers tactical advantages to the dispossessed, excluded or otherwise disadvantaged rather than an all-encompassing vision through which citizens might challenge for power. The mention of rights, when made, was related to court actions and legislative processes. By encouraging contestation from the streets into the courts to be decided on by a constitutional framework determined by the ANC itself, the state is likely to reinforce its own reputation in the areas of both legitimacy and benevolence, whilst gaining from the apparent independence of the process. Rights, in this way, are absolute and independent of particular politically fraught negotiations because they are determined by an institution with a degree of independence from the state. At the same time, the ANC, as a particular political party, can claim the credit for having managed the process of the new Constitution and the associated institutions. Moreover, the very fact of rendering the subaltern dependent on the professionals, with the timing of the process taken away from the dynamics of local communities, helps to negate the energy that might build up with frustration over the level of poverty and structural disadvantage. In some locations, rights might be inspirational in catalysing local action offering a sense of moral imperative and social justice but in this research rights do not appear to be important to the struggles of some grassroots organizations; in other cases, they offer an advance due to the capacities of middle class legal experts willing to pursue grievances through the courts. One further possible consequence of this process is that the confidence of grassroots leaders in respect of their own efforts and capacities is subtly undermined.

The pattern of movement activity is, arguably, opportune for capital.³⁴ The South African state has shifted the arena of protest for the low-paid, disadvantaged and otherwise excluded away from the labour market and the productive sphere to the sphere of collective consumption. By structuring a situation in which the nature and scale of policies related to land, housing and services are the major focus area of large numbers of frustrated citizens, the state permits capital to continue with relatively little disturbance. It is clear and does not need to be repeated here that the restructuring of the capitalist economy takes place to further profit acquisition strategies. A major battle in the 21st century continues to be that between labour and capital over the share of value added during productive processes. The very mobility of global capital helps to undermine collective bargaining processes as well as enabling corporate interest to take advantage of governments that do not prioritise citizen interests. However, in South Africa, despite the apparent political position of the ANC, the state has constructed a situation in which it draws protests towards its own redistribution programmes while presiding over relatively lax taxation systems and wage distributions that favour skilled rather than unskilled labour. On many occasions, movement organizations appear to compete with each other to access limited state programmes, despite the obvious shortcomings to this strategy. Movements do not appear to make any significant challenges to capital or to the state over the way in which they are regulating the wider economy and/or the behaviour of particular corporations. The programmes of collective consumption are important in adding to the incomes of low-income households and there are real gains to be secured. However, employment income remains important in determining household well-being and it is difficult to imagine that poverty and inequality can be addressed without significant changes to the distribution of employment-related income.

We make this comment cautiously because one potential implication is that movements should be working in this area and that is less clear to us. There is no reason to believe that movements are or might be strong enough to challenge capitalist development in South Africa. Movements may choose to strategically engage where they can secure greater benefits; and that may result in activities in the field of collective consumption. However, such choices require debate, and that does not seem to be taking place except in highly ideological terms led in no small way by the excluded politicians who were once members of the ANC. Indeed, there appears to be a reverse causality with individuals expelled from the ANC, primarily because they were frustrated at their policies towards capital, moving in and occupying movement space. This appears to be reinforcing an oppositional engagement at the margins rather than a more substantive exploration of alternative forms of government and governance, which might favour a regrouping of political forces and potentially a more effective challenge to capital.

Moving on from commenting on the ability of movements to challenge the distribution of wealth and income to consider their contribution to the authority and structures of governance, the mapping process is once again suggestive rather than definitive. It is,

³⁴ At the same time, some specific areas of state programme are also advantageous to capital. The subsidy programme was partially designed to meet the needs of the construction sector, which has been similarly aided by South Africa hosting the World Cup 2010. Subsidised basic services reduce the costs of subsistence and help to relieve pressure on wage demands.

arguably, as much a challenge for movements to change the nature of the state and society as it is to capture the state. That is, movements represent an alternative politics as much as they may offer a political opposition. As argued by Hirschmann (1984), the contribution of civil society is (in part) in enabling citizens to determine and/or influence local development agendas within a decentralised and devolved system of decision making. Securing decentralisation and the autonomy of local processes may be more, or as important, as influencing the specific actions of the central government or capturing the state. There are two important dimensions to this process that have been identified during the course of the mapping process. First, movements help to create relations of solidarity within and between excluded and disadvantaged groups. If capitalist production processes and the modern state seek to individualize citizen-state relations, and to weaken the power of collective bargaining against individual employee and employer contracts, movement organizations, through practices of citizen engagement and through the complexities of local democracy, challenge and undermine such processes. Meetings, conflict resolution, demonstrations and negotiations are all processes that offer an alternative collective experience for their participants. Through such a contribution, movements help to prepare and orient citizens to more decentralized governance. Second, organizations such as FEDUP have sought to change state practice and open up space for a more creative engagement between organized citizenry and the state, in this case related to the ability of shackdwellers and landless members to use the state housing subsidy finance to augment self-reliant improvement processes. This particular experience is interesting because that space appears to have narrowed significantly over the last decade ie. local grassroots organizations find it more difficult to negotiate the rules and regulations around state access to resources. Generally speaking, leaders of other movement organizations find this strategy hard to understand and some accuse FEDUP of “selling out” through its attempts at negotiation with the state. These movement activists take a more traditional leftist position and argue that it is more important to capture the state and influence its programmes than to change the centralisation of power and negotiate for more autonomous locally-driven alternatives. Other movement organizations follow a range of positions in respect of such a strategy. The representative of SECC at the Johannesburg workshop spoke of encouraging old age pensioners to build rooms to rent, thereby augmenting their own income and helping to pay the costs of services; to secure the capital, a group of 30 each deposited R100 and built in turn with this finance.³⁵

Despite such efforts, the state is not responding by opening up or otherwise changing the nature of the decision making space. This is understandable within the context of a liberation government that has fought for years to struggle for democracy. In this context, it is difficult for state institutions to understand their own incapacity to address the need for empowerment and support grassroots development, especially for those excluded from mainstream development processes. However, as the years move on more fundamental questions are asked. The inherent limitations of the developmental state become clearer as well as the particularities of each and any government. Such a

³⁵ This should not be confused with some local organizations who undertake self-reliant activities in the area of income generation, making no attempt to link this to state programmes and redistribution policies.

question may provide new opportunities for movement activists and organizations to consider their objectives and alignments.

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