

CHAPTER 6: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS - 4. OVERALL PICTURE

4.2. BUILDING ACTIVITY PROFILE

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section is meant to provide an overview of the building activities taken place in the two case study areas. Various activities within the construction process is analysed, e.g. the type of building materials used to construct temporary structures, the builders used, transport of building materials, the cost of building materials, etc.

EXTENSION 10

EXTENSION 6

4.2.2. MATERIALS

- 52% of temporary structures were constructed from corrugated iron and 25% from metal sheets. This is quite an abundant usage of metal.
- The remaining categories of wooden boards, pre-cast slabs, and asbestos contributed to 17%, 3% and 3% of usage respectively.
- Quite interestingly to note though, is that none of the shacks made use of bricks or any materials classified as permanent. Only temporary materials were made use of.

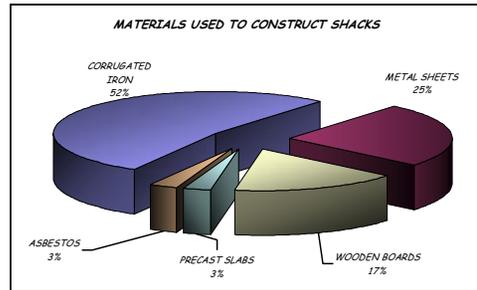


CHART 32a: Materials used to construct shacks

- On further analysis, it was found that the houses constructed did indeed make use of only permanent materials (bricks) only.

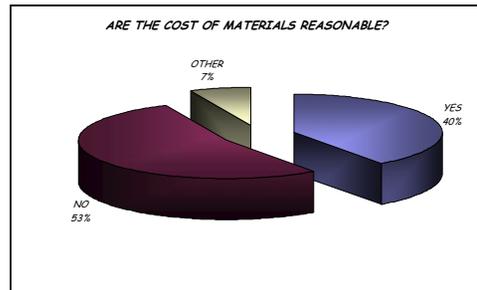


CHART 33a: Cost of materials

- Of the temporal structures built, 52% was constructed from corrugated iron and 21% from metal sheets.
- The remaining categories of wooden boards and pre-cast slabs contributed to 21% and 6% of usage respectively.
- As in the case of extension 10, all shacks seem to have been constructed from materials classified as temporary.
- All houses made use of bricks and other permanent materials. In the case of the shacks, the use of materials is directly reflective of the pie chart below.

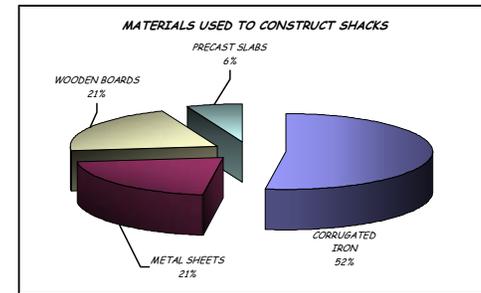


CHART 32b: Materials used to construct shacks

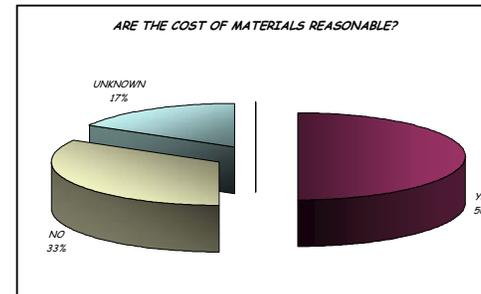


CHART 33b: Cost of materials

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- More than half of these residents think that the cost of materials is quite unreasonable. The remainder reflected the opposite opinion with one or two unsure.
- These results are however related directly to being knowledgeable about where to get a bargain. Some people had purchased materials during a discounted period and upon returning for a second purchase, the materials had become expensive again.
- In other cases, certain materials were expensive whilst others were a bit more out of range. This reference is made to one of the worst off families within this extension. The family has a single source of income, i.e. the father has occasional part-time employment. The flow of income into this family is therefore not consistent since it is very rarely that the father of this family is able to secure work. It is a family of nine that are more or less totally reliant on handouts. The creativity and skills inherent within this family has however enabled the completion of covering the roof structure provided by making their own bricks and purchasing some as well with the necessary window frames. This family considered the cost of materials to be reasonable. However, such creativity is not in abundance in the area and their situation and success in this regard is specific to their resources, standards, and needs. Others may have thought of this alternative but chose not to because they differ in opinions, resources, etc.

EXTENSION 6

- Observing the response to the cost of materials produced results that imply reasonable prices. 50% of residents found the cost of materials to be reasonable, whereas 33% were dissatisfied with the price paid. There were however a few that were uncertain (17%). Such statistics point out that the cost of materials is 33% of the time an inhibiting factor in terms of consolidation.

4.2.3. MATERIAL SUPPLIER

- 20% of people were unaware of material suppliers' existence or location, whether within the confines of Mamelodi or outside it.
- Materials were sought within the neighbourhood, within Mamelodi, and outside Mamelodi. All three categories were almost equally valued, i.e. 28%, 23% and 29% respectively.
- From observation of the types of extensions that were made and the suppliers sought, it can be concluded that the suppliers sought outside were for the construction of houses with the use of permanent materials and those sought within Mamelodi and the neighbourhood were for the construction of temporary structures.

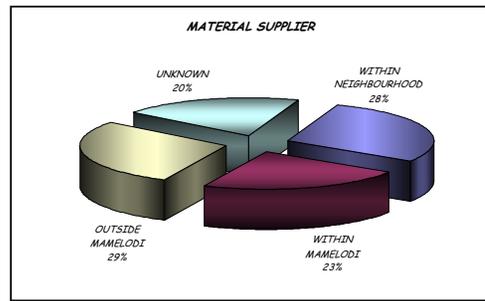


CHART 34a: Material supplier

- Within Mamelodi (inclusive of neighbourhood) we find more informal entrepreneurial activity in relation to material suppliers and externally more formal businesses are found.
- There the fact that 29% had purchased externally and 51% internally also reflects that a greater percentage of temporary structures had been constructed as opposed to houses.

- Quite a large percentage of people were unaware (56%) of material suppliers' existence or location, whether within the confines of Mamelodi or outside it. This lack of awareness amounts to more than half of the people interviewed.
- Materials were sought within the neighbourhood, within Mamelodi, and outside Mamelodi.
- 59% of the cases were unknown. Residents could not recall the suppliers of the materials used.
- Very few (4%) suppliers were sought in the neighbourhood, whereas 19% was purchased from within Mamelodi and 11% from external sources. Other sources were cases where materials were given to them by either family members or employers.

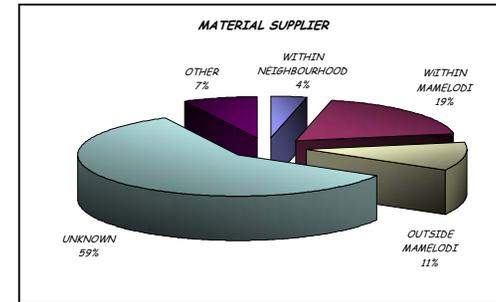


CHART 34b: Material supplier

- In Extension Six the suppliers sought outside were for the construction of houses with the use of permanent materials and those sought within Mamelodi and the neighbourhood were for the construction of shacks. The fact that 11% had purchased externally and 19% internally also reflects that a greater percentage of temporary structures had been constructed as opposed to houses. The type of housing provided in this area was merely a site and service effort. The effort to build up to the completed house would therefore take a little longer as opposed to and area provided with roof structures (extension 10).

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4.2.4. TRANSPORTATION

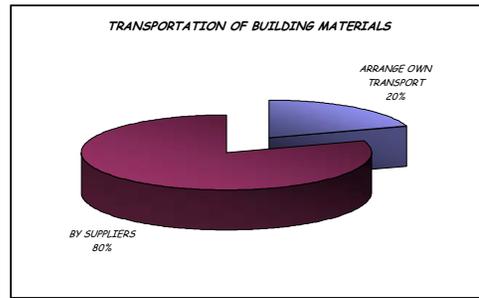


CHART 35a: Transportation of building materials

- 80% of the residents made use of the transport provided by the suppliers with a fee attached to this service and a mere 20% of the people find their own transport.
- In some instances, people prefer to carry the supplies home, depending on the size of the load. In other instances, (majority) the load proves to be too large to even consider an alternative to being delivered by the supplier. The distance of transportation is also an important consideration.

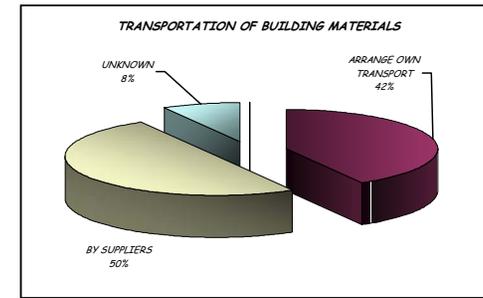


CHART 35b: Transportation of building materials

- Looking at the transportation of the building materials purchased, one can see that 50% of the residents had used the transport provided by the suppliers at a price and 42% seek out transport. 8% of people were unsure of the past activities. If the loads are manageable to carry, then residents simply do so.

4.2.5. FUNDING SOURCES

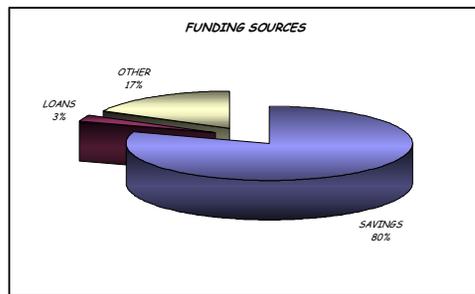


CHART 36a: Funding sources

- A large number of the structures were paid for via savings (80%).
- Means of payment also seems to originate from loans (from work - 3%), and other (retirement money, given to them by family or employees - 6%).

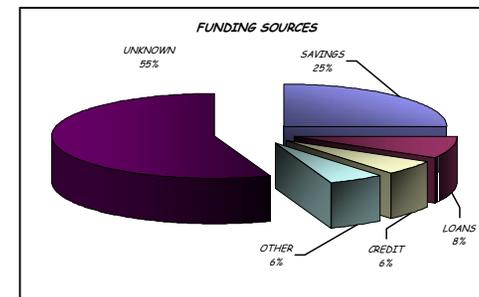


CHART 36b: Funding sources

- Information on a large number of the additions built was unknown (55%).
- However, their means of payment seems to originate from their savings (25%), loans (from work - 8%), and credit (with the supplier - 6%).
- Other means reflect being given materials by either family members or an employer. No payment was required in those cases.
- Those that have entered into agreements as far as loans are concerned seem to have arrangements with employers.
- Credit facilities are created where building materials are purchased on credit.
- Residents within this area have therefore sought other methods of funding apart from savings to be able to construct their homes.

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4.2.6. BUILDERS

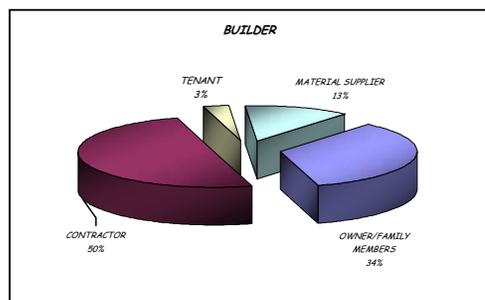


CHART 37a: The builder

- Most households employed a contractor to build the homes (50%). This is not representative of the lack of skills within the area since 34% of the extensions were made by the owners and some were assisted by family members. Construction skills are prevalent here.
- In most cases the contractors were hired to build the actual house (permanent materials) and the construction of shacks mainly entailed the owners, family members, tenants and material suppliers.
- Tenants were involved in erecting shacks when they moved in and material suppliers were requested in some instances where skills were lacking within that family. There are however a few cases where the owner is in the process of constructing his own home.

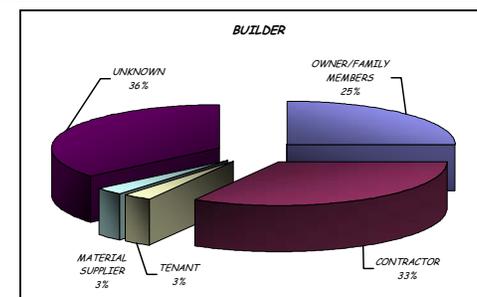


CHART 37b: The builder

- Most households employed a contractor to build homes (33%). This is not representative of the lack of skills within the area. 25% of the extensions were made by the owners and some were assisted by family members.
- Quite interestingly to note is that most of the private contractors employed were for the purposes of constructing the homes (permanent structures).
- Some permanent structures however, are in the process of being constructed by the owners, indicating that there are skills prevalent in this area.
- In other cases materials suppliers were used to erect the shacks purchased from them and tenants that moved onto the erf had constructed their own shacks. Quite a large number of these residents could not recall the builders of their structures.

4.2.7. PROBLEMS

- Amongst the numerous problems mentioned by the residents, the more glaring issues seem to be that of financing and unemployment.
- Many are either unemployed or do not earn enough to be able to enclose the structure provided.
- The cost of building materials also tends to be beyond the reach of many.
- Other problems include issues of construction conducted by government, where there are gaps between walls and prepaid meters are registered under incorrect names.

- The most glaring issues that were made apparent within this extension were that of the dire need for funding. Construction of the homes becomes very difficult when families need to be sought after first before considering extending homes. Income sources within families can only spread so far.
- Amongst the other problems mentioned were leakages within shacks, the process of constructing the homes was slow and the storage of materials becomes quite problematic.
- A more serious issue was that of water. Two households had been living in the area without water for quite a while. One particular household had occupied the area for 8 months before water was made available or the functioning of the toilet was initiated. The other household didn't have to wait that long.