

**THE TRAUMATIC EFFECTS OF RAPID URBANIZATION IN THE
NEW SOUTH AFRICA AFTER THE 1994 DISPENSATION, A
CHALLENGE TO PASTORAL COUNSELLING, WITH
PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN
THE ROODEPOORT AREA**

By

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Shacks within the upmarket Princess Crossing in Roodepoort



Signs of rapid urbanization – promised houses not available

I. DECLARATION:

I, White Makabe Rakuba (Rev) hereby declare that the dissertation which I submit for the Degree of Philosophiae Doctor, PHD in Practical Theology, at the University of Pretoria is my own work and has not been previously submitted by me at this or any other University

Signature (Student): _____ Date _____

WM RAKUBA (Rev)

Signature: (Supervisor): _____ Date _____

MJS MASANGO (Professor)

II) DEDICATION:

This thesis is dedicated to my grandfather after whom I was named, Elkan Makabe. He predicted many years ago, when I was still a small boy of 11 years, that I was Doctoral material. Sadly, he passed away a year later when I was only 12 years old. Life never became the same after his departure and dreams to fulfil his prophecy took many years to realise. The short time I spent with him was so valuable in moulding my mind to be independent. He was so innovative. His famous donkey cart, which he had built using locally available materials, including wheel barrow wheels, became the envy of the community we lived in. People never stopped to admire his rare skills. I grew to learn that what he used at that time is called “Appropriate Technology.”

He was such a marvellous old man to spend time with, but a tough disciplinarian who could not spare the rod. He made me sandals with the hide of an ox taken from the forehead, popularly known as “Phaphela.” The hide was so tough that thorns could not penetrate it but the funny thing about the sandals was that they made unique tracks on the ground. When I ran away from the cattle post, it was so easy for the old man to follow my tracks and he would beat the hell out of me.

Twelve years as I was, I never forget the day he called us to his bedside to give us his last message; I can still imagine the afternoon sun penetrating his bedroom. His words were written with an indelible ink in my heart. The following morning we were whisked away to our uncle next door, and gradually the yard was filling with people. Nobody from the family told us what had happened, but as



children, we made our own conclusion. The old man was no more;
may his soul rest in Peace.

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different denominations had indeed proven how cruel ministry can be. However, through team work, we managed to bring meaning to life in the ministry.

May God help those who are still working on their researches to complete their work, and to those who have already crossed the river Jordan; I wish to say to them: ***“Please extend your hands to lift up your colleagues who are struggling against the current of waters to cross over to you.!!!”***

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drove together through a wilderness, sharing the challenges of the road together and not criticizing one another's driving techniques.

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(IV) THE ABSTRACT:

The research has been designed to study the effects of the rapid urbanization in and around the Roodepoort, targeting mainly the sprawling informal settlements across the area and the existing townships of Dobsonville, Doornkop (Snakepark) and Kagiso. The researcher, who is a practising pastor in the area, had been challenged by a number of issues related to the process of urbanization.

The CODESA process that culminated with the elections of 1994 and the subsequent change of government had raised very high hopes among the majority of South Africans who lived in poverty and foreigners, in their own land, for decades. The turnover at the elections, inspired by leaders such as Bishop Desmond Tutu, was a clear indication that an ordinary South African was yearning for a better life. This was a new beginning as many people had been restricted by the apartheid laws to work and live where they wanted.

The repeal of all the apartheid laws saw the beginning of influx from the rural homelands to the cities. The hope that job opportunities were available near the cities was the main force of attraction. This unplanned process resulted in creation of massive informal settlements as there were no houses to cater for the massive movement. This process is called rapid urbanization.

Not very long, the reality of the past indicated that there were no major changes with the new government. The economy still remained in the hands of few individuals, majority of whom still being white, as the new government came through negotiations and not complete take over (Coup D'état.) Few blacks managed to shoot up the economy ladder through processes such as BEE and the GEAR leaving the majority of people in abject poverty.

The great trek did not only happen within the borders of the country, millions of people from the African, Asian and East European countries also moved into South Africa to try their luck at the new South African economy. Highly qualified professionals left their struggling countries to seek better life in South Africa. This category came legally through the recruitment processes but the larger contingency came illegally into the country. They took the advantage of lack of internationally recognised immigration instruments to regulate movement in and out of the country.

This process saw the country soaring with illegal economic migrants as well as genuine refugees and asylum seekers.

The rapid urbanization process brought about the following challenges:

- Culture shock
- Declining family structures/ life and Social problems
- Drug trafficking

- Education
- Exploitation of foreigners
- Exploitation of informal settlement dwellers and “Shack farming”
- Human trafficking.
- Inadequate housing and homelessness
- Institutional harassment and unfair discrimination
- Lack of Employment
- Poverty in urban areas
- Refugees and economic migrants
- Social benefit exclusion
- Stigmatization on HIV and AIDS, Crime, including serious crimes
- Xenophobia

The challenges, as tabled above, brought about a series of conflicts between the South African internal migrants and the foreigners which culminated into a bitter xenophobic outburst of 2008. The main reason for the conflict was that South Africans felt that jobs were being taken away by foreigners and also that the government was neglecting service provision to the local community in favour of foreigners.

A number of service delivery protests have become a common sight, particularly in the informal settlements. Lack of basic facilities and the irregular allocations of the RDP Houses, crime and poverty have waned the patience of residences of informal settlements. The resent protests in Zandspruit, Rietfontein and

Diepsloot informal settlements north west of Johannesburg are some of the concrete examples.

The situation could not be ignored by the Church and this research was an attempt to understand the extent of the problem in order to find a way to improve ministry to the affected communities.

V) **ACRONYMS:**

ACHIB:	African Council of Hawkers and Informal Business
AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC:	African National Congress
AU:	African Union
BEE:	Black Economic Empowerment
CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
CODESA:	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
CoRMSA:	Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa
CSVR:	Centre for the Study of Violence
DP:	Democratic Party
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
FRELIMO:	Frente de Libertacao de Mozambique (The Liberation Front of Mozambique)
GEAR:	Growth Employment and Redistribution
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IFP:	Inkatha Freedom Party
IOM:	International Organization for Migration
KZN:	Kwazulu Natal
NCHR:	Norwegian Centre for Human Rights
NKJV:	New King James Version
NUM :	National Union of Mine Workers
OAU:	Organization for African Unity
OVC:	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
RDP:	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RENAMO:	Resistencia Nacional Mozambicana (Mozambican National Resistance)

- SACC:** South African Council of Churches
- SADC:** Southern African Development Community
- SALDRU:** South African Labour Development and research
Unit
- SAMP:** Southern African Migration Project
- SAPA:** South African Press Association
- TEBA:** The Employment Bureau of Africa
- UDF:** United Democratic Front
- UHURU:** Campaigns for and achievement of national
independence in Africa especially in Kenya, Uganda
and Tanzania “Total Independence”
- UNHCR** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- WENELA:** Witwatersrand Native Labour Association

VI. KEY WORDS:

- Trauma
- Unemployment/Retrenchments
- Poverty:
- Housing and Homelessness
- Informal settlements and shack farming
- Social problems: family life, prostitution, crime, OVC's, street children,
- Culture shock
- Migration
- Economic migrants
- Refugees
- Xenophobia

VII) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

CHAPTER 1

This chapter introduced the subject of research. When South Africa eventually concluded the CODESA negotiations after many years of struggle against the apartheid system, the mood in the country was that life was going to change for better for all marginalised people. It was going to be the end of hardships. This was demonstrated by the huge turn up at the first elections that took place on the 27th of April 1994. There were high hopes that the new government was, indeed, going to address the injustices of the past and make life normal for all the citizens of the country.

The repeal of all the oppressive legislation of the apartheid regime, was seen as the right direction towards correcting the wrongs of the past. This situation led to massive migration from the rural homelands or Bantustans as they were known, at the time, to the cities of the country and Johannesburg being the hardest hit. This sudden migration is known as “Rapid Urbanization.” There was belief that life in the cities would be better and nearer to job opportunities. The results were massive informal settlements that mushroomed all over the cities. Indeed, the country was not prepared for this situation. This migration did not only happen inside the country, millions of foreigners poured into the country with the same hope of getting better life in the new South Africa. The chapter looked at three case studies that were used to bring home the message about the real situation of rapid urbanization.

Seventeen years later, the situation in the country seem to have worsed than it was before the 1994 dispensation. The high

expectations from the majority of the citizens and migrants had turned into frustration and poverty; and unemployment had escalated. The purpose of this research is to understand the extent of the problem of rapid urbanization and how the Church could be helped in addressing the situation of the people trapped in the cities of the country without the prosperity they had hoped to find.

Problem Statement:

The problem here, is that what people thought was going to develop into prosperity became misery. The research is aimed at exploring the issues that created this negative development in order to find way of dealing with them. The reality of rapid urbanization is that life is not as good as people from the rural areas perceive it to be. Life in the urban settings was far more difficult than it was in the rural areas. Poverty, unemployment, lack of housing, lack of basic services, lack of food, clothes, schooling for children, and lack of access to health facilities became the reality people had to face.

The chapter then developed the Aims and objectives which are:

- To explore the reality of rapid urbanization and its impact on people.
- Sensitize the Church to be aware of the plight of the people trapped in the situation
- To develop an action programme that the Church should follow

- To develop a counselling model.

CHAPTER 2

This chapter looked at the method that was used to collect information. The researcher used both the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. A number of documentations on rapid urbanization have been compiled by a number of writers throughout the world and in South Africa on issues relating to rapid urbanization. The research involved doing research in the libraries, the internet and other sources to find how the situation is affecting people.

Secondly, a questionnaire was developed and was distributed among the people in the areas earmarked for research. Interviewees were asked to give their opinions on a number of issues including housing, sanitation, trust in the government, and attitude towards immigrants, xenophobia, poverty and service delivery.

Focus group discussions involving a number of people and stakeholders in the areas under research were conducted. The researcher targeted people who lived in the 3 main townships, Dobsonville, Braamfischerville and Doornkop (Snake Park) and also five informal settlements; Tshepisong, Mathole Motshekga, Mhlangeni, Zandspruit and Princess Crossing.

The researcher discussed with women, men, youth, councillors, police, immigrants, faith-based leaders, refugees, asylum seekers and sex workers.

The researcher then did the research gap to ensure that the work is not a repetition of the already researched work, then argued the relevance of the research in the Practical Theology field.

CHAPTER 3

This chapter looked in details the issues related to rapid urbanization. It had to deal with the following topics.

The economic situation post-apartheid:

This was intended to understand how things were prior 1994 in order to make readers of the research understand why people feel they have been betrayed by the new government. It is evident that the situation presented by apartheid system was deceiving. Though it looked like things were better then, it is clear that the apartheid government had taken 87% of the land and allocated only 13% for the majority population into Bantustan's where there were no services. Whenever the previous dispensation referred to service delivery, it was for few people.

Unemployment and under-employment:

Employment, which is the key economic factor in the country has been declining even before the 1994 dispensation due to the sanctions that were applied to remove the apartheid government. The new government failed to reverse the trend and unemployment is currently calculated at between 40 – 45% depending on who announces the figures. The problem has been exacerbated by the influx of economic migrants who came from countries that were facing

economic meltdown. These foreigners are prepared to take any form of remuneration, and therefore, profit-driven employers prefer them over the local ones who are likely to affiliate to trade unions.

The problems of housing and homelessness:

One of the problems of the old South Africa was that housing for black people was not in the agenda of their development. The housing backlog for the ethnic group has always been a problem even before the influx of people into the urban areas. There was not enough land allocated for housing since the intention was to keep blacks out of the so-called “White South Africa.” The backroom accommodation made it look like there were not many people and when the group areas act was repelled, the explosion of overcrowding occurred and the need for land and low cost housing was evident. The government then embarked on the RDP programme to try to solve the problem. The rapid urbanization process made it difficult for the government to resolve this problem as the more RDP house they built, the more shacks propped up.

Informal settlements and “shack farming”

At the rate which the rapid urbanization process occurred, it was not easy for any municipality to cope with the housing backlog. People started invading municipality land and in some cases, even private land to erect makeshift structures as homes. There were no organized allocation of stands and therefore anybody could put a structure anywhere he/she deemed necessary. The settlements had no infrastructure such as sanitation, water, electricity and municipality services. A phenomenon called, “Shack farming” developed in the

outskirts of the cities, particularly those with private land that was used for farming. Owners allowed people to erect shacks on their land and charge them monthly rentals. The informal settlement became synonymous with rapid urbanization.

Poverty in the urban areas-cities:

The state of poverty in the urban areas is more severe than in the rural areas. Without money, which is earned through employment, one cannot survive. The problem of employment, as discussed above, makes it difficult to get even short term employment or “piece jobs.” When there is no money, there is simply no food in the house. In the urban situation people are often on their own, and they have no one to lean to when things become difficult. In the rural areas there are always relatives who sometimes help. The fact remains that there are many families going for days without any food.

The mushrooming of Pentecostal churches and ministries and their contribution to poverty:

Huge tents and big buildings are becoming the order of the day in urban areas. These churches are promising people quick solutions to their problems. They are promising those who are looking for jobs, that they will get the jobs if they became members. Unfortunately, such charismatic churches fleece money out of the pockets of poor people and only the church leaders are the benefactors. They buy expensive houses and Porsche cars while their followers rot in poverty.

Informal versus formal trade:

In the absence of formal employment, the alternative is informal trade in order to make money. The new government, seeing that it was unable to resolve the issue of employment, encouraged people to be involved in small business activities. Unfortunately, the competition for this business sector was enormous.

CHAPTER 4

This chapter dealt with the products of the situation as dealt with in the previous chapter. The problem of rapid urbanization is, in most cases, accompanied by traumatic issues that affect the people as conditions and services are lacking or inadequate. These problems are closely interrelated with social changes which lead to alterations to social structures, institutions, roles and relationships. The process of rapid urbanization is characterised by population concentration, overcrowding, obnoxious urban conditions, miscellaneous diseases, poverty, unemployment, crime, drug and substance abuse, prostitution, family disorganization etc., the list continues.

The researcher studied the following issues:

The effects of rapid urbanization on family life.

A typical family is the one that lives together with all its members present, i.e. father, mother children and family pets, all staying in one house, sharing food, and everything in the house. The rapid urbanization has resulted in many families disintegrating. Some family members cannot stay with the family because of the

accommodation problem although others do stay together but the situation is not conducive. In some cases, families of five to ten members share a two-roomed shack where there is no privacy and family life cannot continue in such conditions.

Social Problems:

Social problems are problems that affect the larger part of society and can be defined as such by the entire community. The term is used to indicate that something is wrong. For it to be defined as such, it must have characters of harming the society and not just an individual. Briefly stated, these are the social problems normally associated with rapid urbanization: Poverty, Chronic diseases, HIV and AIDS, Housing and homelessness, Orphans, Street children, Prostitution, Substance abuse, Crime and Culture Shock.

CHAPTER 5

This chapter looks at the way rapid urbanization affects foreigners. The research looked at the situation of economic migrants and refugees/asylum seekers and then treated the phenomenon of xenophobia.

Economic Migrants:

This refers to people who came into South Africa purely because they believed that opportunities existed for jobs that would, in turn, lead to better life. Even in this category, there was a need to classify them; there are legal economic migrants and illegal or undocumented

immigrants. The former is made up mainly of professionals who are able to get professional jobs and make a good living. These are teachers, university professors, medical personnel and technicians. The latter group is made up of low qualified people who are prepared to accept any form of job or remuneration.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers:

The history of this country was that South Africa was never a member of the global community and therefore international instruments for regulation of migration were not ratified until after 1994, in fact it was in 2002 when the refugee act was finally approved. Refugees never used to be recognised or given asylum in this country. When the South African government changed, refugees from warring countries decided to come over for a better life. They arrived in a situation where the government was not prepared for them and ended up in the cities of the country alongside South Africans in the informal settlements. Rapid urbanization situation affected them as well.

Xenophobia:

This unfortunate event that erupted into a full blown crisis in 2008, was a direct product of the rapid urbanization. Local South Africans, who had to share the informal settlements and other issues with foreigners, became impatient when they realised that foreigners were becoming too many. Competition for jobs and many other services made people to begin hating the foreigners. The perception that the government was not delivering on its promises brought about the perception that foreigners were doing better than they do.

CHAPTER 6

This chapter analysed the results of the survey that was distributed among the people in the informal settlements, including the existing townships. The survey was distributed to a number of people; women, men, youth, community leaders and religious leaders. In addition to the survey, focus group discussions were held with a number of people to deal with almost the same topics given in the survey.

Chapter six, therefore, concludes the research. It looked at the scope of the research, the statement of limitation and delimitation, and then analysed the questionnaire, the focus group discussions; and then conclusions and recommendations to the churches.

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¹ DRC – Democratic Republic of Congo

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