



PROSPECTING

- *programme & client* -
- *theoretical approach* -
- *precedents* -





UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA



05

programme & client

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Clarence squints her eyes as they adjust to the warm light of the hall. She smiles to see her children listening to her sister's tales of childhood back home. A bustle comes from the corner as two Malawian men argue over the fastest taxi route to their upcoming job interviews in the morning. The men come to an agreement and John returns to tailoring the trousers he received earlier today. The air is heavy with the scent of fresh biryani and conversations of the day's events and journeys. Spirits rise as a visiting jazz band from Atteridgeville begins their set for the evening. Clarence leans back in her chair relaxed, reflecting and recuperating from her day of exploring the city.

NETWORK INTERSECTIONS



South Africa is neither the end nor favoured destination for many foreign Africans living in the urban areas of the country. Due to its geographical location South Africa is more accessible than European or North American termini and is capable of facilitating the small to medium-scale commerce of immigrant economies (Simone 2008:83).

Even though the majority of economic immigrants aspire to achieve elevated status and buying power, this seldom happens. Relegated to a state of suspension by the legalities of the Section 22 permit, the norm instead becomes years of struggle in a string of low-income jobs where the majority of one's earnings are dedicated to care for a host of family members back home (ibid). Although immigrants may form groups to split living expenses, risk, and information, the possibilities for legitimate corporate action are often constrained. Widespread xenophobia often pressures visiting Africans into controlling their visibility and economic efforts. The result is an economy of tentative transactions built on levels of trust where each individual is in some way a competitor. Mutual cooperation thus becomes centred on self-protection, self-interest, and affiliations, rather than on continual investment in the promotion of a locale of permanent enterprise (Simone 2008:84, Bunn 2008:154). The challenge that arises from these relations lies in proposing a relevant architectural programme that is robust enough to accommodate these fluid economies while still contributing to the

Figure 5.1: An impression of the various network intersections evident amongst migrant communities.

local communities of South Africa and, more specifically, Marabastad in a meaningful manner.

Transnational Communities

economy of individuals

Generally, conventional national identity offers a finite framework for social and economic collaboration (Simone 2008:76). Although immigrant networks hinge on the continual stimulation of interdependency and reciprocal collaboration, these relations are more illusory than real due to the convoluted balance of dependency and autonomy between individuals (Simone 2008:83).

The notion of “community” amongst migrants where the financial obligation, ownership and mediations involved in sustaining a place in the economy are layered in complexity and intricately connected. Within this community the risks of constant movement and the precariousness of accommodation promote an entrepreneurial industry where a measure of security is encouraged by a sense that no particular individual has precedence over everyone else and that anything could happen to anyone (Simone 2008:80). Community building can therefore be viewed by stakeholders as an inessential authoritarian practice that diverts individuals from expanding the essential skills needed for survival. Inclined towards micromanaging a broad array of day-to-day economic and political associations to bolster

enterprise and public safety, community building projects prove ineffective in their approach, as survival in the inner city compels migrants to become opportunistic but also to conceal their intentions or abilities within the mosaic of mutually dependant relationships (ibid).

The dense intersections of role players from varied situations and countries allow differing patterns of camaraderie to surface, intensifying access to information, destinations, and support. Hampered by a shortfall of formal and systematic frameworks for investment these transnational economies of information, brought to the city by foreign Africans, remain largely unexplored in their potential, ideas, entrepreneurial experience, and networks (Simone 2008:84).

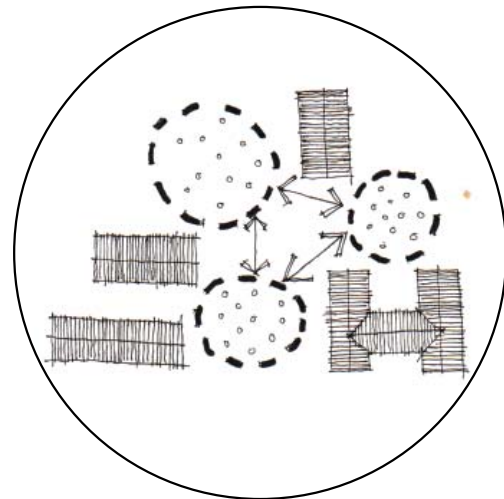
These malleable associations result in a braiding of social exchanges that is replicated throughout Africa. Income-sharing collectives and households exhibit an acute adaptability, changing according to need and split across distinct locations, their rationale strongly opposes the requirements typically addressed by planning and urban renewal (Bunn 2008:157). (1996:67) provides insight into these “changing conglomerates”: “children lodged with relatives and friends while their parents were mobile; adults moved between domestic units; people ate in different units to those in which they slept. The residents of the settlement had extensive movement histories, not merely indicating mobility at the regional level but also at the intra-settlement level.”

Bunn (2008:157) argues that the latent potential in blending trades, markets, and networks far surpass those from commercial activities insular to narrow national and ethnic groupings. The lattice formed between these interdependencies -and highly splintered social spaces augment each other in establishing an infrastructure for inventive fiscal transactions in Marabastad. People and the skills they may possess (formal postgraduate education, vast knowledge about trade, or street smarts) become infrastructure (Simone 2008:68).

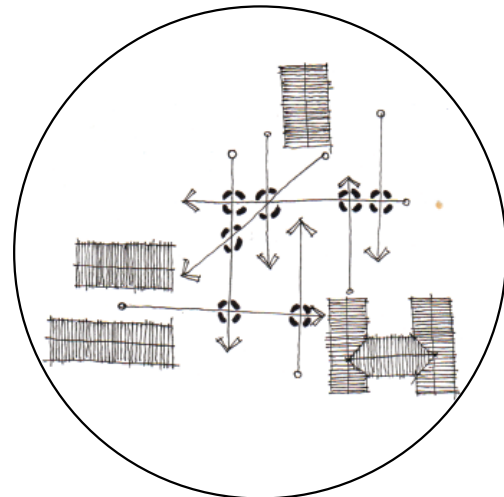
Invisible Infrastructure

information agency

Although migrants generally display resourcefulness in promoting their positions within an entrepreneurial industry, there are those who do not have access to the skills nor the information networks necessary to become self-sufficient upon entering South Africa. Furthermore, vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, many migrants (especially women and children) undergo traumatic experiences while on their journey. Fake employment offers, human trafficking and xenophobic discrimination all contribute to the many untold oral histories amongst migrants (Community for Media Development, n.d.).



Conventional approach to community building.

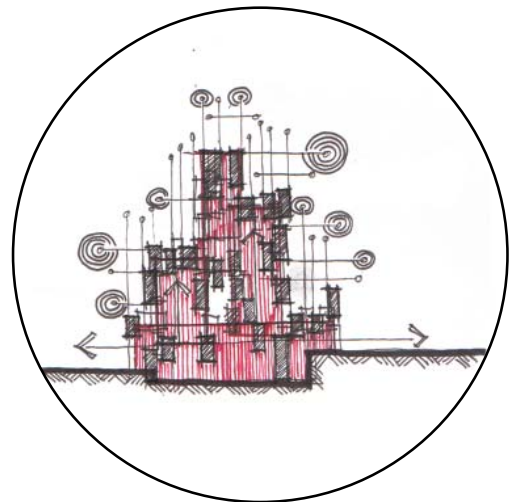
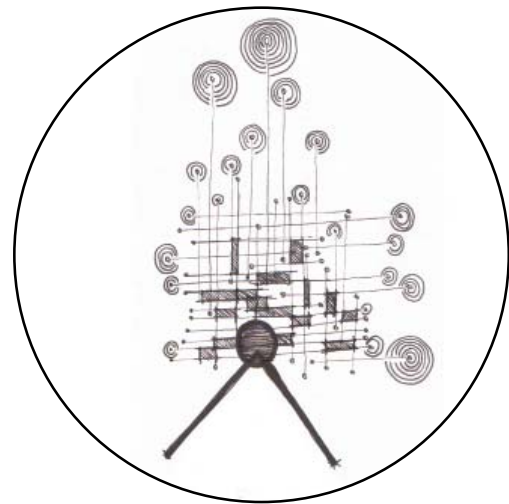


“Community” of network associations.

Figure 5.2: A diagram indicating the differences between the conventional approach to community building and that of network associations.

As documented by de Klerk (2015:20), there is already an extensive network of “soft infrastructure” directed towards alleviating the plight of the vulnerable citizens of Pretoria. Many social housing organisations, care centres, and shelters provide a range of facilities and support to refugees and homeless individuals however, a survey conducted amongst refugees and migrants revealed that many people do not necessarily know where, or how, to access these networks of information and assistance (Galabova 2012:29).

In developing an architectural programme for investigation, the extensive skills and knowledge that are intrinsic to the invisible infrastructure (Simone 2008:68) of migrants are intended to be extended and promoted to establish a mutually cooperative exchange. Here, exposed individuals seeking assistance may utilise the skills of knowledgeable individuals to improve their standing within the entrepreneurial climate. Those offering their services and dispensing their knowledge would, in turn, receive temporary employment and remuneration or further strengthen their self-made proficiencies while awaiting the outcome of their various residency applications. Through these exchanges and intersections the programme thus becomes an agency for information which enhances the economy of ingenuity already present while contributing to the local economy through education, training and social services.



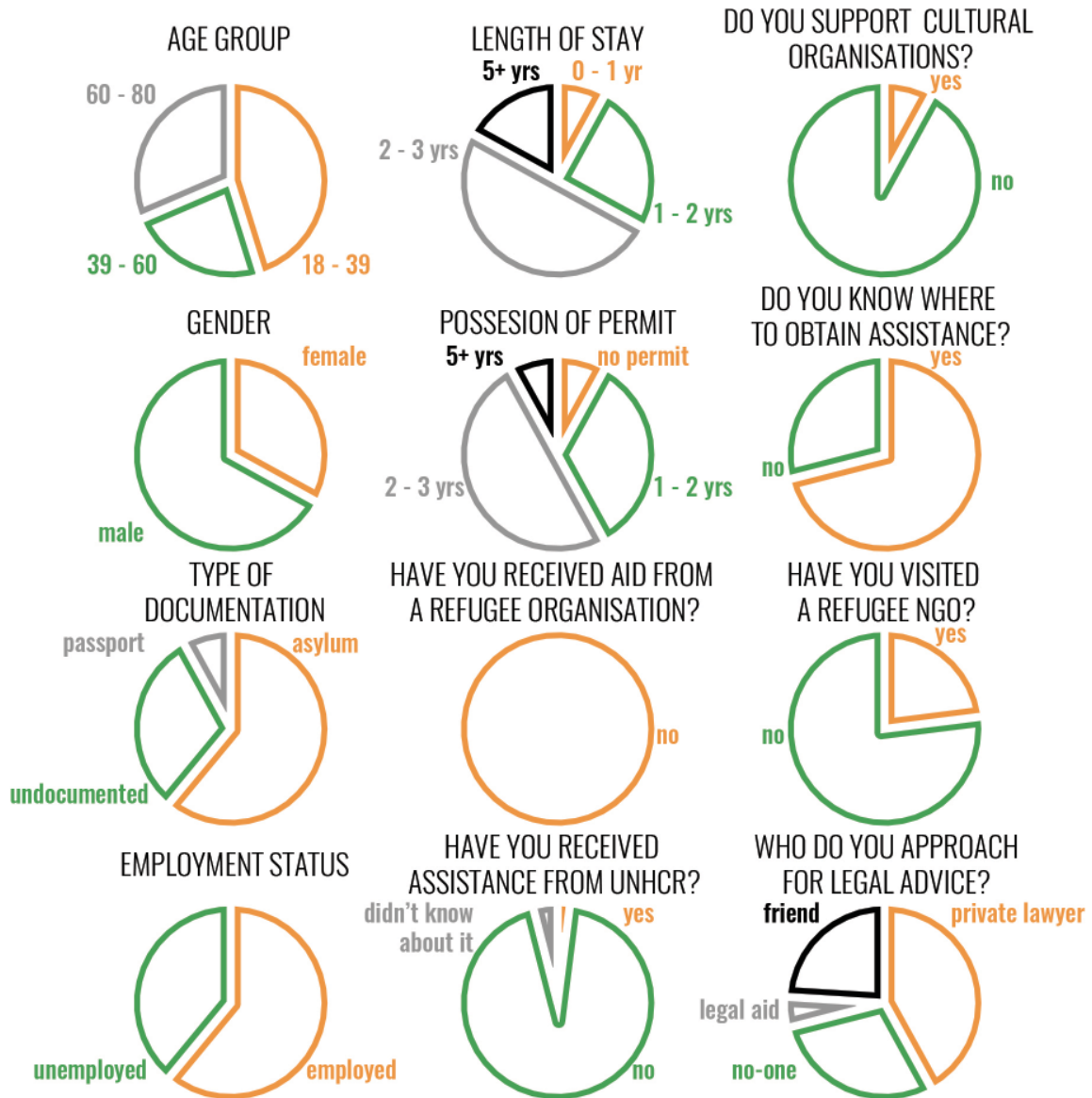
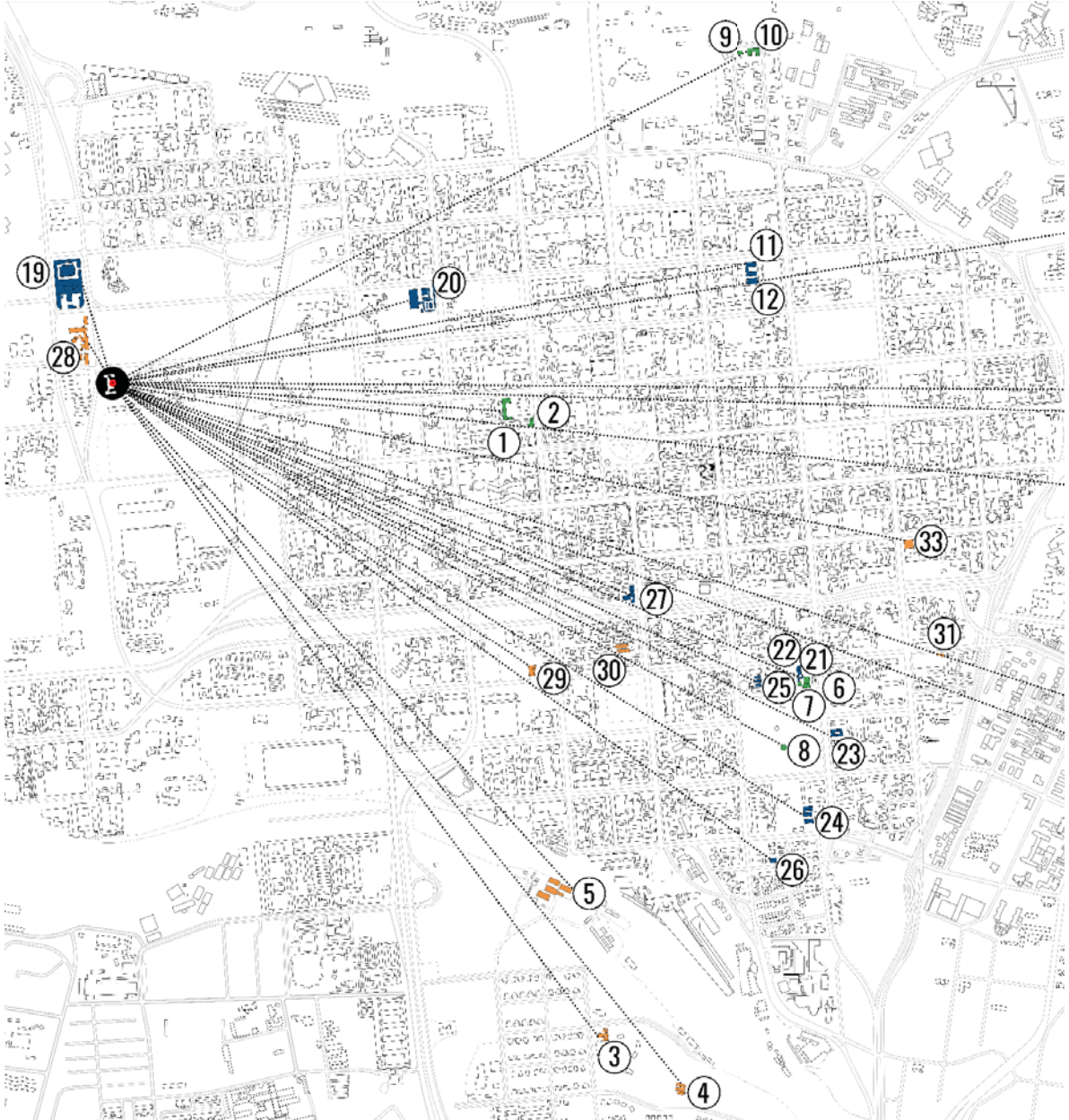
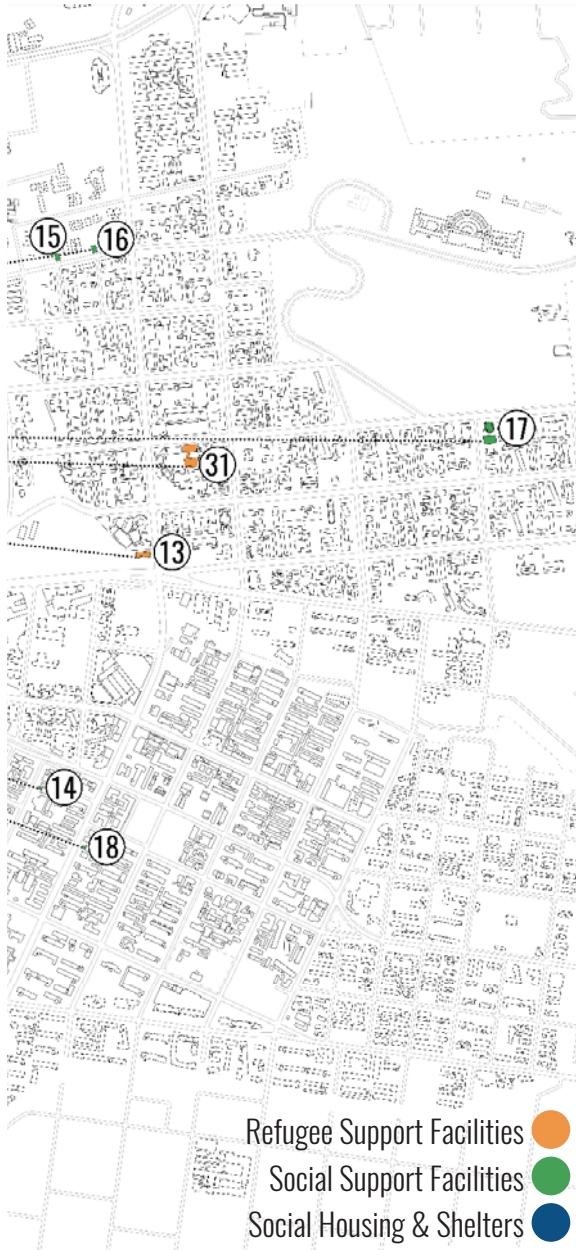


Figure 5.3: Results of a demographic survey conducted amongst migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in 2012 (Source: Galabova 2012:29 adapted by Author).



87 | **Figure 5.4:** Map of central Pretoria indicating the social support infrastructure in relation to the proposed site.



Legend:

Social Infrastructure Support Facilities

1. Sediba Hope
2. Pen drop-in Centre
3. Inkukuleko Community Centre
4. Crossroads Boys Shelter
5. POPUP
6. Tshwane Leadership Foundation
7. Yeast Housing
8. Akanani drop-in Centre
9. Gilead Community
10. Rivoningo Care Centre
11. Lerato House
12. Tau Social Housing
13. Crossroads Coffee Bar
14. Christian Social Council
15. Kitso Lesedi
16. Homeless Solutions
17. Compassion Centre
18. Tshwane Home of Hope

Social Housing & Shelters

19. Struben Street Shelter
20. Thembehle Village
21. The Potter's House
22. Litakoemi
23. Hofmeyer House
24. Kopanong
25. Living Stones
26. Tshwelelang
27. Eloff Building Housing Company Tshwane

Refugee Support Centres

28. Home Affairs: Refugee Reception Office
29. Xaveri Movement
30. South African Catholic Bishops Conference
31. Jesuit Refugee Services
32. Refugee Aid Organisation
33. UNHCR

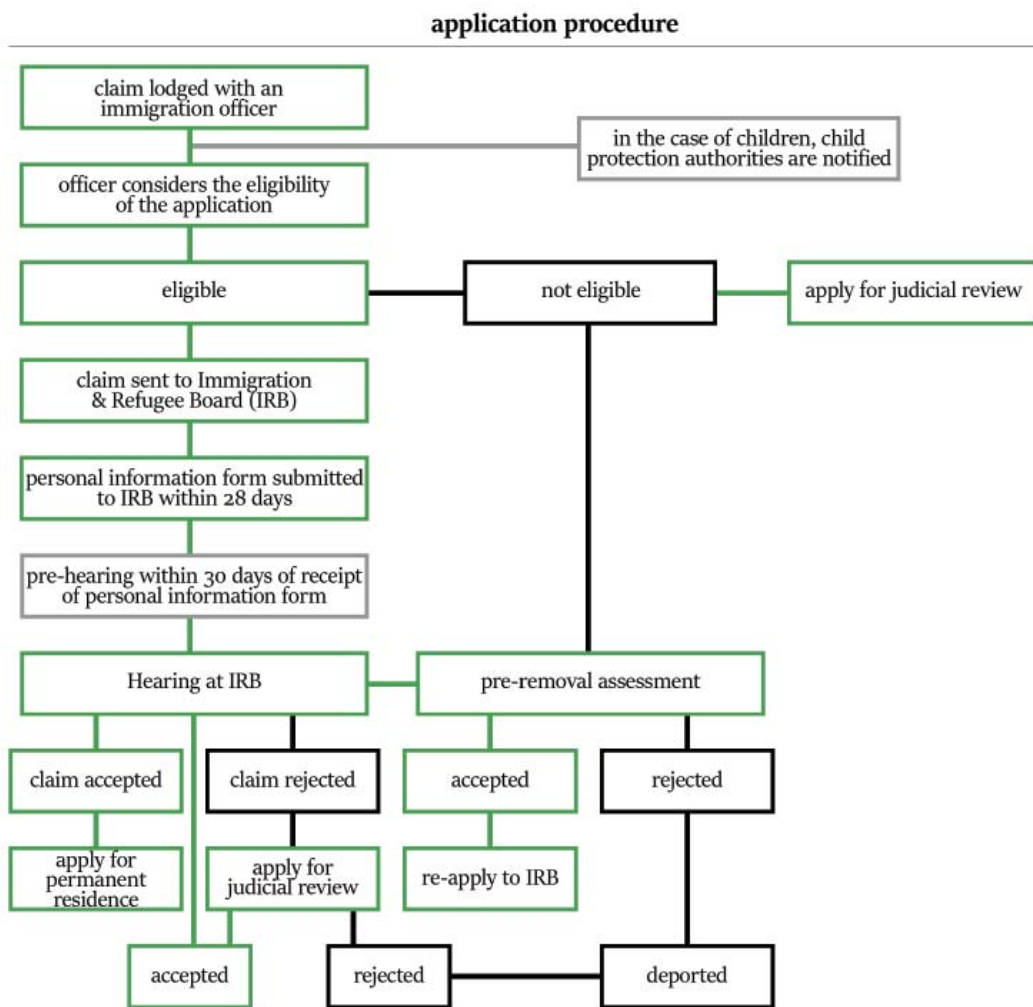


Figure 5.5: Flow diagram indicating the extensive bureaucratic processes undertaken by migrants to obtain refugee status in South Africa
 (Source: Garrett 2012: 31 adapted by Author).

Affiliated Aid

a collaborative of clients

In sourcing a client to fund the programme and its resultant architectural intervention, three main stakeholders were identified. A collaborative venture between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Youth for Survival, and Community for Media Development is proposed. With each organisation being focused on addressing the needs and safeguarding the rights of migrants, refugees and vulnerable individuals, the triad would be well suited at enhancing the impact and longevity of the programme.

According to the UNHCR (n.d) they are mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. The primary purpose of the international committee is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. It strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another State, with the option to return home voluntarily, integrate locally or to resettle in a third country. Through the implementation of the Global Strategy of the UNHCR, the programme will focus on the tiers of Public Health and Livelihoods. Under the tier of Public Health the programme is tasked with primarily providing access to all of food security and nutrition, water and sanitation services, as well as preventative healthcare services. Secondly, as part of the

Livelihoods tier of the strategy, the programme is tasked to ensure that all persons of concern are able to make a safe and sustainable living that meets their basic needs, contributes to their dignity, and provides for the full enjoyment of human rights (UNHCR, n.d.).

In order to avoid developing a programmatic response that risks becoming overtly top-down and absolute two local non-governmental organisations, more attuned to the everyday needs of their beneficiaries, would augment the policies of the UNHCR listed above by providing more tacit knowledge of assessing and providing for the community at hand.

As previously stated, the Youth for Survival non-governmental organisation already occupies the existing Old Native Reception Depot building. In line with the objectives set out by the UNHCR Global Strategy, the NPO seeks to improve both the livelihoods and welfare of susceptible individuals (primarily South Africans) through on-site training job training and skills development; providing safety for women and children in the form of counselling and legal advice; raising teenage pregnancy awareness; and providing nutrition with an on-site feeding scheme and food gardening programme.

The second NGO identified as a partner in the collaborative venture is Community for Media Development (CMFD). Specialising in producing high quality communication media, the organisation aims to induce social change through the transmission of information and

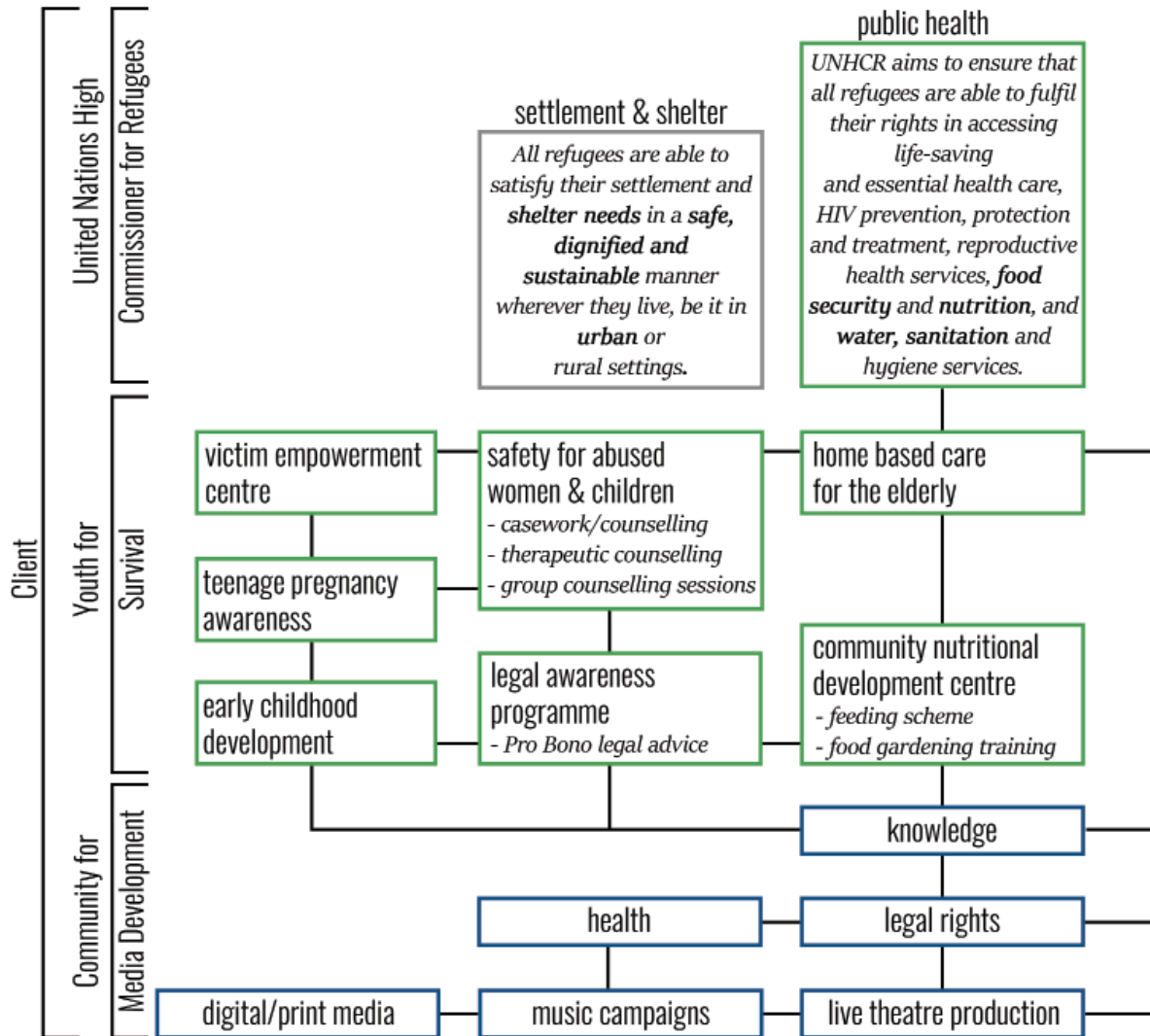
knowledge. Through outlets such as serial radio dramas, radio spots, digital stories, music, theatre and print publications the CMFD believes in facilitating the essential part of any development project, namely communication. Via tailored and focused messages relevant to intended audiences, effective communication and media efforts can assist participants in making informed decisions regarding their rights, health, livelihoods, and security (Mhagama 2004:28). Furthermore, by implementing a participatory communication model this element of the programme intends to employ media for public service to restore agency to a largely voiceless migrant community. This is achieved by addressing the following key aspects:

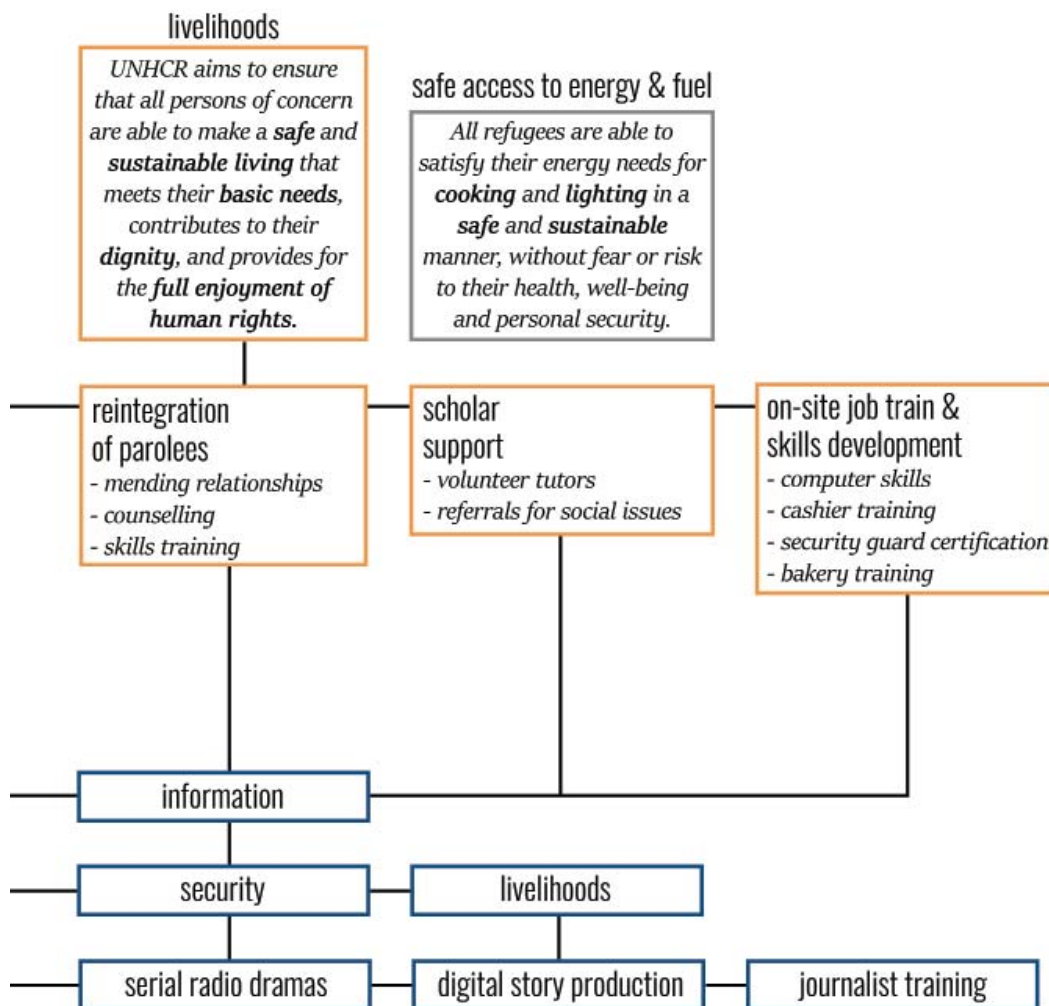
- The community own the content and process of communication,
- Previously unheard members are given a voice through communication,
- Communities become agents of their own change through the media produced,
- Negotiation and debate on issues that affect those involved characterise the communication process.





Figure 5.7: A diagram highlighting the collaboration between affiliated clients.







Thus, the information shared and transmitted through these participatory communication networks involves a reciprocal process in which marginalised individuals, who are attempting to mediate their position with development agents and the community at large, can take initiatives, share their ideas, define their problems and needs, and affirm their autonomy (Mhagama 2004:29).

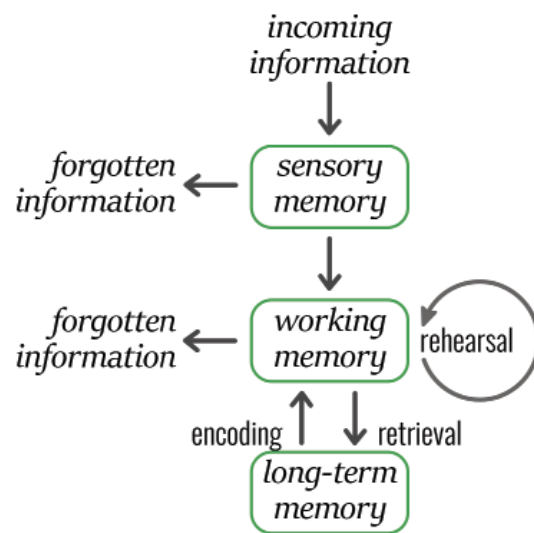
Useful Memory

translating information into knowledge

Considering the wide array of individuals that could potentially participate in the programme, the multitude of knowledge or skills that they may wish to share requires a flexible method of deciphering this mass influx of information. In facilitating this process of receiving information and translating it into useful knowledge the main elements of the programme are organised according to a cognitive approach on understanding how the human mind converts sensory memory into long-term memory or knowledge. Loosely based on the modal model of Information Processing Theory, refined by Atkinson and Shiffrin, the programmatic intention is to receive environmental information from external stimuli, encode it into short-term working memory and through a process of rehearsal, then be translated into long-term memory which can later be retrieved as useful knowledge (Shiffrin & Schneider 1977).

Drawing from these theoretical informants the programme and its requirements are thus coordinated into five main groupings: receptors, encoders/decoders, rehearsal areas, repositories and transmitters. Here, receptors in the form of public interfaces receive people, their stories, and their skills, where they are catalogued and recorded. Through a process of encoding/decoding these skills and information are put to use in order to assist others partaking in the programme. Through rehearsal these skills are taught to others to improve their individual standing within the entrepreneurial economy. For instance, migrants with post-graduate education could offer classes to those requiring assistance with the asylum seeker interview process or offer literacy classes. During this rehearsal process tacit skills are also used to convert sensory memory into repositories of identity (food, music, and media) for sale and distribution within the greater economy through transmitters (community radio station, publications and internet based communication). Although capable of effectively condensing information into knowledge, the implementation of the above-mentioned facets may adversely render the intentions of the programme into a overly intellectual endeavour, separated from the essential requisites of the migrant citizenry. To mitigate the risks of this occurrence, the constituent spaces of the programme are further distilled through a needs assessment process.

Appraised in relation to Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs the prominence and location of spaces were determined based on how users might be motivated to interact with the spaces to address their fundamental requirements for seeking refuge. Furthermore, in adjudicating levels of flexibility and adaptability, the five tiers of Maslow’s pyramid provide guidance as to which elements are more permanent. Thus, those parts that address the primary physiological needs of food, shelter and water become more fixed, as opposed to the higher tier aspects of self-actualisation, due to their ability to encourage more individuals over extended periods.



Culmination

intersection points

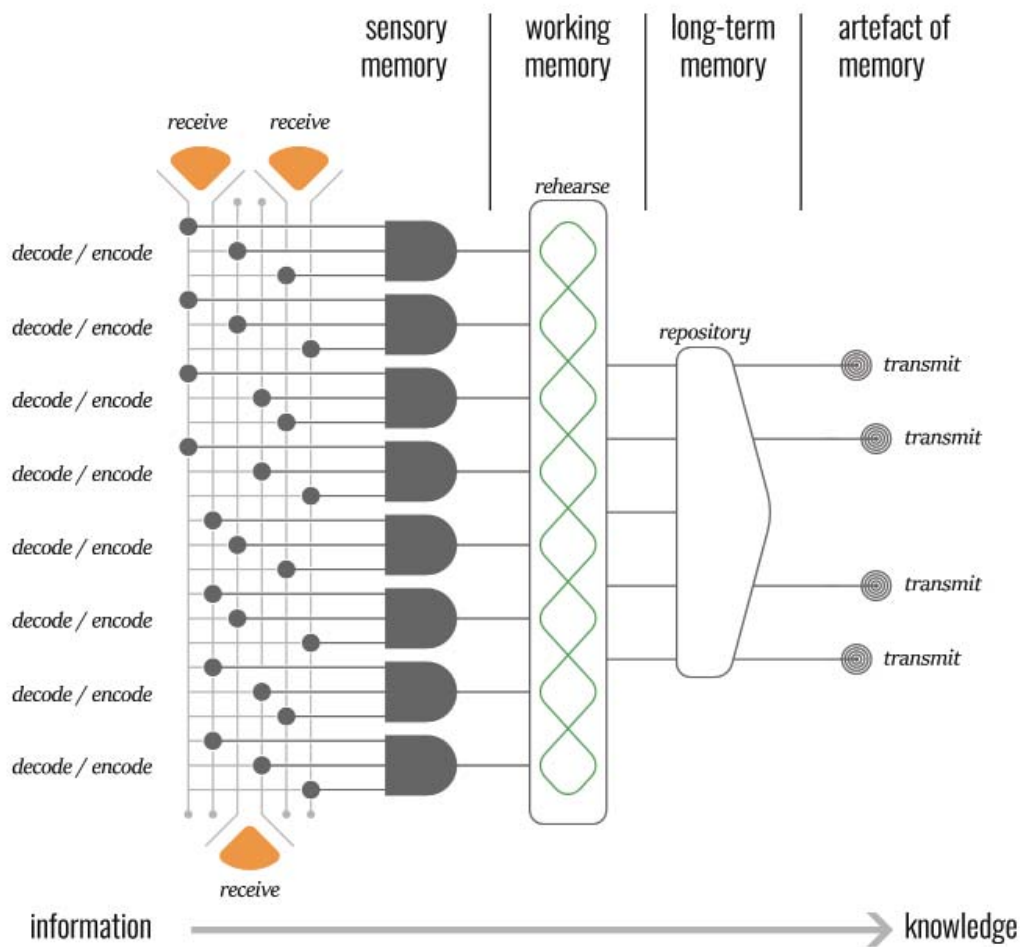
In summary, the resultant programme that develops from the above investigation becomes an imaginative supplement to migrant and refugee desire in Pretoria. The diverse interactions and daily exchanges of information and knowledge between users become an infrastructure in its own right. Through harnessing these invaluable communications between different individuals the programme not only has the capability of securing an elusive economy, but also provides a platform for expression and exposure for those largely ignored or misinterpreted by society.



Figure 5.9 (top): A diagram illustrating the Information Processing Theory model (Source: Shiffrin and Schneider 1977, adapted by Author).

Figure 5.10 (bottom): Maslow’s hierarchy of needs

(Source: Barraca, 2015, adapted by Author). <http://www.liveitloveitblogit.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Maslow.png>



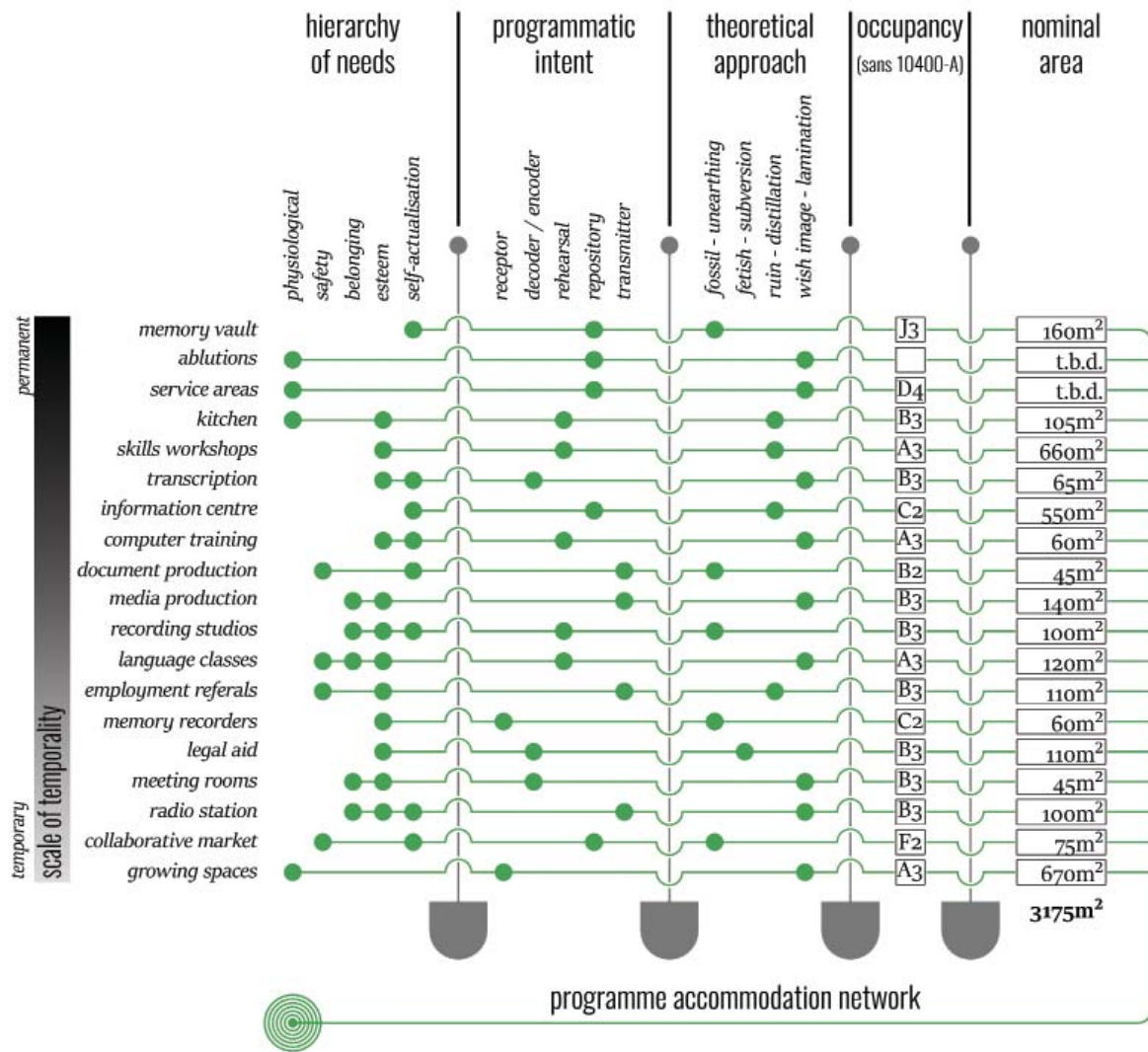


Figure 5.12: A diagram of the programme accommodation network.