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Enterprising Outsiders: Livelihood Strategies of Cape Town's forced migrants

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Geography

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ENTERPRISING OUTSIDERS: LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES OF CAPE
TOWN'S FORCED MIGRANTS

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

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Graduate Program in Geography
and Collaborative Program in Migration and Ethnic Relations

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

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Abstract

Although refugees and registered asylum-seekers have a legal right to work in South Africa, research shows that prevailing anti-immigrant attitudes and suspicion of these documents by South African employers makes employment extraordinarily difficult to acquire. Drawing from literature on both South Africa's refugee rights policies and its informal sector, this thesis investigates how in the face of such challenges, forced migrants in Cape Town secure their day-to-day livelihoods. The research is based on semi-structured, open-ended interviews with thirty-two refugees and other forced migrants who live and operate in the Cape Town area, as well as five key informant interviews with employees of refugee service organizations. The research finds that in order to even survive, participants must use a wide 'portfolio' of tactics – including moving between the formal and informal sectors, and drawing upon ethnic and community connections in order to locate work and gain a toehold in the South African economy.

Keywords: asylum seeker, Cape Town, entrepreneurship, forced migrant, informal economy, livelihood, migration, refugee, South Africa, xenophobia

Co-authorship Statement

Chapter 4, entitled 'Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Cape Town's Informal Economy' is a co-authored paper with Belinda Dodson.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

'The future of the world is unquestionably urban, and the trajectory of displacement is moving in the same direction' - Jacobsen, 2005, 40.

1.1. Introduction

This research focuses on the livelihoods of forced migrants working outside the framework of formal employment. In an effort to understand the complex ways that these forced migrants meet their daily needs, two linked questions guided my interviewing and analysis: First, what forms of employment or other income-generating activities do those engaged in the informal sector use to secure their livelihoods? And second, what are the economic, social and spatial factors that enable this employment?

It is important to explain two key terms at the outset. First, I employ the term 'forced migrant' in lieu of the much tidier 'refugee'. The reasoning for this is more fully explained in sections 1.6, but briefly, the definition of a 'refugee' has become a static, and out-dated term, which, particularly in the South African context, excludes those migrants, who, though forcibly displaced, may not be able to access or obtain asylum seeker or refugee status. Therefore, I employ the term 'forced migrant' rather than 'refugee' to reflect a diverse set of migrants that includes asylum seekers, refugees, those registered as visitors or using a ZDP¹ and those without legal documentation. Secondly, I employ the term 'informal labourers' to refer to individuals that are engaged in unstable work, whether as casual labourers without a formal contract, or as self-employed entrepreneurs.

¹ The ZDP permit lasted for four years (2010-2014), and was meant to regularize the status of Zimbabweans living in South Africa either illegally, or as asylum seekers. It provides permit holders with the right to live, work and study in South Africa.

Although current South African legislation reflects a refugee policy that includes legally recognized refugees as equal stakeholders in South African society, lack of access to the Department of Home Affairs to apply for refugee status, difficulty in accessing South Africa's banking system and the perception that foreigners 'steal jobs' ensure that in practice, many forced migrants, including legally recognized refugees, experience difficulty finding employment in the formal economy (CoRMSA, 2009; Landau, 2009; Mawadza 2008; Polzer & Landau 2008). This inability to access employment in the formal labour market drives many into the informal economy (Smit & Rugunanan, 2014). Perhaps in reaction to this, participants engage in a kind of 'identity economics' (Meagher, 2010), drawing upon shared nationality and ethnicity to access job opportunities, loans, and shared housing. It is this social connection to others, more than income, previous employment or skills, which helps to afford some measure of protection to the research participants from the financial and social uncertainty that governs their existence.

1.2 Context

Despite the majority of displaced people worldwide living in urban areas (Jacobsen, 2005), academic literature considering refugees in Africa focuses disproportionately on those living in formal camps (Bakewell, 2008; Gladden, 2012). However, unlike many other countries in Africa, South Africa contains no refugee camps. This makes all refugees in the country *de facto* 'urban refugees', many of whom find themselves in complex urban environments like Johannesburg and Cape Town (Vearey, 2008). While obtaining exact numbers for forced migrants is a difficult and politically complicated matter (Jacobsen, 2006) South Africa is host to one of the largest populations of asylum seekers in the world, with the UNHCR estimating that 243, 948 asylum seekers, and 65, 668 refugees currently reside in South Africa (2014). While refugees living in camps are forced to rely on humanitarian relief (Wagacha & Guiney, 2008), displaced persons living in South Africa are expected to become self-sufficient by integrating with their host population and earning a living (Landau, 2006).

Within the literature surrounding forced migration, scholars alternate between two positions: that forced migrants are vulnerable individuals in need of social support (c.f Rolfe et al, 1987); and, more currently, a guarded suggestion that urban and self-settled forced migrants are resilient economic actors, capable of securing their own livelihoods, without the support of host country and international aid (Jacobsen, 2005; Horst 2006; Campbell et al, 2006; Omata, 2013). With these two perspectives as my guideposts, I set out to discover how those forced migrants deriving their incomes outside of the formal sector were faring in the Cape Town economy.

1.3 The Livelihoods Approach

In order to do this, I used the ‘livelihoods approach’. With roots stretching back to the 1960s, this framework has been described as ‘people centred, non-sectoral and grounded in the multidimensional reality of daily life’ (Kaag, 2004: 1). One of the earliest uses of the term ‘livelihood’ was by Evans-Pritchard in his ethnographic investigations of the Nuer and the ways in which they made a living in the Nile Valley (1940). The foundation of the livelihoods approach was laid by the economist Karl Polanyi in his books *The Great Transformation* (1944) and *The Livelihood of Man* (1977)², wherein he proposed a break from mainstream, formalist economics towards substantivism, a view which took a human-centred approach towards economics, and which recognized the social, cultural and historical embedded-ness of how individuals secure their living.

By the 1980s, the livelihoods approach was an idea whose time had come. As Structural Adjustment Programs grew to prominence in 1980s in mainstream economic development thinking, Polanyi’s ideas converged with growing calls amongst policy makers and academics for a bottom-up and actor-oriented approach to development. Throughout the 1980s, as Robert Chambers began pioneering the livelihoods approach (Chambers, 1987; Chambers & Conway, 1992), economists turned their attentions to

² Published posthumously

the survival strategies of the poor as well as the informal economy (Schmink, 1984). The economist and philosopher Amartya Sen proposed considering actors' societal entitlements, rather than just their property, as a way of understanding poverty (1981). Sen's later focus on capabilities (1985) as a way of paying attention to what a person is capable of doing, and their own perceptions of what is desirable, joined with James C. Scott's analysis of Malaysian peasants' resistance to dominance through techniques of evasion (1985), further set the groundwork for an actor-centred livelihoods approach that highlights the diversity and multidimensionality of lived poverty.

With its focus on both individual strategies and structural influence, this framework lends itself well to considering the livelihood strategies of forced migrants who operate within a defined legal framework. When writing about livelihoods in the refugee context, Jacobsen defines this livelihood framework as:

... a consideration of the assets and strategies refugees use to achieve desired outcomes, and the institutional or structural context...processes, institutions and policies which constrains or enables access to these assets and strategies (Jacobsen, 2006: 279).

Consideration of the institutional context in South Africa is particularly relevant, as many migrants have difficulty accessing formal employment (Landau, 2007), and their tendency to work in the informal sector has been linked to their difficulty in accessing proper documentation (Crush, William & Peberdy, 2005; Landau, 2006). These issues of access to formal employment and documentation, and the significant effect they have on participants' livelihoods, is considered in Chapter 3.

Although refugees 'enjoy an independent legal personality' from other migrants (Feller, 2005: 27), in South Africa, given the difficulty of distinguishing between voluntary and forced migrants, discussions of refugees and forced migrants in existing research on migration in South Africa tend to be subsumed within a broader analysis of migrants in general (Friebel, Gallego & Mendola, 2013; Hunter & Skinner, 2003; Landau & Wa

Kabwe Segatti, 2009; Vearey, 2008). This thesis uses the livelihoods framework to consider the experiences of *forced* migrants, as distinct from migrants as a broad category. The livelihoods approach has been successfully applied in previous research to examine the specific social, economic and policy contexts in which migrants and refugees pursue their livelihoods in South Africa (De Vriese, 2006; Jacobsen, 2006; Vearey 2008). My research on forced migrants in South Africa continues in the same vein as these scholars, but focuses on the city of Cape Town, in the Western Cape, rather than Johannesburg in Gauteng Province.

1.4 Research Methodology

Data was collected in the course of four months spent in Cape Town, between mid-May and mid-September of 2013. In total, I conducted 37 interviews. Four of these were key informant interviews with staff at the following refugee service organizations: the African Disabled Refugee Organization (ADRO); the Agency for Refugee Education, Skills Training and Advocacy (ARESTA); the International Organization for Migration (IOM); and UCT's Refugee Rights Unit (RRU). A further key informant interview was conducted with the Director of Fundi, a not-for-profit labour placement organization.

Most importantly, I conducted 32 semi-structured interviews with forced migrants living and working in the informal sector in the Cape Town area. Participants came from Malawi (1), Nigeria (2), Republic of Congo (2), Somalia (4), Zimbabwe (5), and Democratic Republic of Congo (18). Despite my best attempts to sample participants from a variety of countries of origin and forms of employment, my participants skew heavily towards the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This is due to DRCs significant representation amongst forced migrants in the Cape Town area. In order to make a gendered analysis possible, I made every effort to have an equal gender split amongst participants. For reasons I will discuss in later chapters, it was more difficult to find women respondents, and so I was only able to formally interview 13 women for this research. Consideration of gender, and how it shapes livelihood choices and practices, is nevertheless a foundational concept of this thesis.

These interviews took me all over the Greater Cape Town area, from Bellville to Simon's Town and Athlone. While I sometimes interviewed participants as they worked, more often we would meet in a café over a cup of coffee to discuss migration histories, communities both in Cape Town and internationally, and their hopes and dreams for the future. I was occasionally invited into people's homes, either to share a meal or simply visit. These moments, when the recorder was not on or even present, often led to deeper insight into how participants were patching together their livelihoods. This accords with the feminist tradition that holds that equality, and even friendship, between interviewers and interviewees can increase trust and lead to more candid interactions (Kihato, 2013). The methods and tools of analysis used throughout the thesis will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The remainder of this chapter sets out some definitions and concepts that are drawn upon throughout this thesis. Following this introductory chapter and the description of methodology, Chapter 3 addresses the role of state structures and formal financial institutions in the livelihoods of Cape Town's forced migrants, particularly with respect to South Africa's migration regime. It delves into the nuts and bolts of the asylum seeker application and renewal process, and how this affects forced migrants' access to formal banking. The chapter demonstrates that, in addition to generally lowering forced migrants' quality of life, several structural changes to the asylum seeking process have severely frustrated forced migrants' abilities to sustain a livelihood and maintain financial stability.

Chapter 4 is devoted to detailing the kinds of employment forced migrants in Cape Town engage in. Drawing from life histories of participants, it teases apart the dichotomy between the formal and informal economy, in order to illustrate that successful forced migrants draw on opportunities from both sectors in order to gain financial stability. The chapter also highlights how country of origin, gender, and

previous education and skills have an impact on forced migrants' abilities to find and manage work in their host city.

Chapter 5 discusses the non-income related livelihood strategies of forced migrants. This is divided into two parts. The first section focuses on the roles of community organizations, which offer a semi-formal support network to many forced migrants. In the second section, I focus on individual coping strategies, and draw forward the theme of heterogeneous experiences and the concept of 'portfolios' in order to understand how some participants were able to stabilize their financial position, despite fluctuating incomes, while others continued to struggle.

In Chapter 6, my concluding chapter, I discuss the results as a whole in terms of the wider literature around forced migrants living in South Africa, highlighting some of my key findings, and drawing together some of the recurring themes. This chapter will also discuss the contributions that this thesis has made to the study of migration, and present areas for future research.

1.6 Background and Context

1.6.1 Definitions and Terminology

As an initial step, the meaning of various terms, such as *forced migrant*, *asylum seeker*, *failed claimant*, *Convention refugee* and *urban refugee*, must be clarified. Most broadly, a *forced* migrant is an individual who is engaged in movements that are ‘unplanned and unexpected’ but who will not necessarily be officially recognized as a refugee (Marfleet, 2007). The most widely cited definition of a refugee is the definition contained in the 1951 Geneva Convention, which states that a refugee is a person who:

[. . .] owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable to, or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (Article 1)

While procedures vary from country to country, forced migrants who choose to make a claim for asylum in a country under the 1951 Geneva Convention are called ‘asylum seekers’. Those asylum seekers whose claims are heard and rejected are called ‘failed claimants’ and only those who made a claim and are found to meet the criteria of the Geneva Convention are accepted as ‘Convention Refugees’ (Castles & Miller, 2009). While such distinctions may seem unnecessary, such classifications represent how the process of migration is becoming ever more complex, while at the same time demonstrates the international refugee regime’s attempts to manage newly complicated streams of migration (Zetter, 2007). Indeed, each category of migrant comes with a unique set of rights, and a different relationship between the individual and the state. Overall, the bulk of the literature on displaced persons tends to focus on refugees, and within this, the majority of analysis restricts itself to those refugees living in internationally-run, United Nations-appointed refugee camps (Gladden, 2012) Those refugees who live outside of camps are described as *urban* refugees, and are the focus of this investigation.

1.6.2 Research Site: Cape Town



Figure 1: Map of Cape Town, from McDonald, 2014: 152.

Like many cities worldwide, Cape Town has experienced extraordinary population growth in the past six decades, increasing from a population of just over 630,000 in 1951 to 3.7 million in 2010 (Quick, 1995; City of Cape Town, 2010). All poor newcomers to Cape Town, whether forced migrants arriving from other parts of the continent, or South African migrants from other parts of the country, must contend with the city's long history of economic, spatial and racial inequality and injustice. In Cape Town, South Africa's apartheid-era social planning and the city's own mountainous

geography and particular demography have together

produced a hyper-segregated city (Western, 1996). Indeed, although Cape Town's economy is varied and growing, much of the wealth continues to be concentrated in the wealthy and historically white northern and southern suburbs (de Swardt et al, 2005). Parts of Cape Town, such as Camps Bay and Constantia, are overtly wealthy, with ice-

cream shops, luxury hotels and fine restaurants. By contrast, Cape Town's townships³ and informal settlements, located in the marshy, undesirable land of the Cape Flats, are impoverished, with high unemployment, poor service delivery, and the highest murder rates in South Africa (Lancaster, 2013).

While the end of apartheid and the beginning of universal suffrage marked a hopeful time in history, inequality and segregation have in fact worsened since 1994, leaving South Africa with the highest income inequality in the world (McDonald, 2014: 148). Wealth disparity between different racial categorizations persists – with the median income of a white South African being approximately 5.2 times that of a coloured South African⁴, and 11.4 times as much as a black South African (Liebbrandt et al, 2012). This has serious implications for Cape Town, where less than a third of residents are black African, half are coloured, and a full 20 percent are white. This is dramatically different from national demographics, where 80 percent of South Africans are black. This, along with racially segregated median incomes, has contributed to Cape Town being identified as the most unequal city in the world (McDonald, 2008).

In Cape Town's townships and informal settlements, jobs are scarce, and service delivery is poor. For those South Africans living in townships, mainly black and coloured, securing their own livelihoods is difficult enough, and leads many of them into the informal and survival sectors (de Swardt et al, 2005). The influx of migrants, in

³ In the South African context, *township* or *location* refers to the settlement areas found on the outskirts of urban agglomerations. Created in the apartheid era to segregate non-white labour, townships continue today to house the majority of South Africa's poor black population.

⁴ Prior to majority rule in South Africa, segregation was divided into four categories, that is white, Asiatic/Indian, Coloured and African. The term 'Coloured' is used in this sense to refer to South Africans of mixed ancestry from Europe, Asia and Khoisan people who originally inhabited the Cape region. While the idea of reified racial terms is extremely problematic, these terms are still used in social science literature to talk about the very real socio-economic differences between different populations in South Africa created under apartheid, and for this reason, are used within this thesis as well.

addition to the traditionally marginalized nature of those living in Cape Town's townships, has further fuelled discontent, most notably in protests for short-term service delivery (Turok & Watson, 2001).

When forced migrants arrive in Cape Town, ready to settle down, earn a good wage and find a peaceful place to live, they do so alongside many South African citizens who, more than twenty years after the end of apartheid, continue to be economically disenfranchised themselves. How migrants cope with this wealth and spatial disparity, and how they relate to South Africans that are disenfranchised like them, is examined in detail in Chapter 5.

1.6.3 Migration to South Africa

As the only country on the continent to undergo significant industrial growth and



Figure 22: Map of South Africa and region, © OpenStreetMap contributors

development, migration to South Africa has changed since the end of apartheid in 1994. There has been an increase in temporary (regular and irregular) cross-border movement to South Africa and from its neighbouring countries, and South Africa attracts many economic migrants from across the continent (Massey, 2006).

South Africa has also become a destination country of asylum for asylum seekers and refugees from range of countries, predominantly in Sub-Saharan Africa. As a dominant regional economy, South Africa is

the heart of a new 'migratory sub-system', which draws migrants from across the continent into South Africa (Massey, 2006: 57). As such, South Africa's own path to democracy and a more racially equal economy is tempered by the challenge of accommodating the many migrants that move to the country's cities both for economic and other reasons. This is exacerbated by the fact that Southern African borders are long, lightly policed and, because of their relatively recent colonial origins, have little cultural meaning or significance for those living near them (Crush, Williams & Peberdy, 2005).

When considering South Africa's current migration situation, it is important to understand its history of migration. More than 150 years ago, in the diamond mines of Kimberley, South African migrant workers were joined by men recruited from the countries now known as Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and sometimes Tanzania. In 1886, gold was discovered in the Witwatersrand, and even more cheap labour was imported, in order to work the mines and farms of the growing settlement (Crush, Jeeves & Yudelman. 1992). This discovery forever changed the pattern of migration in the sub-continent, creating enduring forms of legal cross-border migration in the region (Crush, Williams & Peberdy, 2005).

By 1994, black foreigners who wanted to work outside of the mining and agricultural sector in South Africa were finally eligible to do so (Crush & Ramachandran, 2010), and so, along with newly mobile black South Africans, were able to settle in the now desegregated areas of the cities. Since then, migration to South Africa has become increasingly urbanized. While some migrants still work in farms near the border and in gold-mining towns, the urban agglomerations of Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town and Pretoria attract the majority of migrants (ibid). Long-standing patterns of circular migration continue, but there has also been a growing trend in South Africa of cross-border migrants staying for longer periods of time, and creating chain migration by establishing transnational households (Landau, 2008:35).

The end of apartheid in 1994 led to South Africa finally becoming a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention. In conjunction with the shifting political and social situations in neighbouring countries, this has led to many forced migrants coming to the country to seek asylum. In the 1990s, unrest and war in Mozambique and Angola was the main origin of refugees. More recently, the main countries of origin for forced migrants are Congo-Kinshasa (i.e. DRC), Somalia, and Zimbabwe. While exact numbers are difficult to obtain, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees has recorded 309,616 refugees and asylum seekers living in South Africa (UNHCR, 2013). These numbers have swamped South Africa's refugee determination system. There are about 300,000 claimants of which only 65,668 are recognized refugees, while 243,948 are asylum seekers awaiting determination (UNHCR, 2015). Demographically, asylum-seekers come to South Africa for strategic reasons, including a desire to avoid living in camps or being restricted to non-urban, rural areas (Landau, 2008:34). The stress placed on the refugee determination system, and the resulting chaos in South Africa's migration management, is discussed in Chapter 3, along with its implications for forced migrants' livelihoods.

1.6.4 Xenophobia

This influx of cross-border migrants must be considered alongside the mobility of South Africans themselves. Many South Africans, living in the inner-cities and informal settlements of South Africa's urban centres, are themselves transient or newly arrived, and may not necessarily feel more of a sense of connection to the city than the non-citizen migrants who live among them. Added to this, while regarded as a land of opportunity for many on the continent, South Africa remains the country with the highest wealth disparity in the world. Many of the challenges that forced migrants face, such as securing formal employment, dealing with crime and securing financial credit, are challenges faced by poor South Africans as well. This can cause poor South Africans and non-citizens to see each other as competitors in the scramble for scarce

material resources and economic opportunity. This is a tension that has been identified as one of the driving factors behind xenophobia (Dodson & Oelofse, 2000). Xenophobia is a term that refers to an intense and sometimes irrational dislike of outsiders, and is an integral part of the vocabulary used to discuss citizenship and belonging in contemporary post-apartheid South Africa. For migrants living in South Africa, experiences of xenophobia are a defining factor in everyday life that affects all aspects of day-to-day existence (Crush et al., 2008; Dodson, 2010; Matsinhe, 2013).

The problem of xenophobia in South Africa, although discussed academically as early as 1998, has gained particular relevance since the violent riots and xenophobic attacks in May and June of 2008, which started in Alexandra township in Gauteng Province and spread across formal and informal settlements in major cities across the country, including Cape Town. These riots involved mass looting and the destruction of foreign-owned shops and homes. Sixty people were killed and over a hundred thousand people were made homeless (Dodson, 2010; Friebel et. al., 2013; Matsinhe, 2013). These attacks, in addition to violent killings by public stoning and immolation, shocked the world and South Africans alike. They cast a shadow even today; amongst forced migrants participating in this study, the events of 2008 were often used as a signpost in recounting their own experiences in South Africa, and held an understandable significance in their narratives of belonging. For their part, many South Africans made frequent reference to Mandela's anticipated death as a possible trigger for a second round of attacks, an event that did not come to pass. In January and February 2015, another spurt of violence, also targeting foreign shopkeepers, broke out in parts of Gauteng's Soweto township. This violent outbreak of looting was sparked by the fatal shooting of a 14-year-old boy who was caught stealing from a Somali operated *spaza*⁵ shop (Al Jazeera, 2015). Looting and riots have spread across Soweto, with Somali, Ethiopian and Pakistani owned shops being targeted. In addition to the considerable loss

⁵ The term *spaza* shop is a commonly used in South Africa to refer to an informal convenience store.

of income by the destroyed shops, one Somali shopkeeper in Bloomberg was set alight by a petrol bomb (Mail and Guardian, 2015). Such tragedies, and the underlying tension they reflect, have become characteristic of the broken relationship between foreigners and South Africans in South Africa's townships.

Such is the force in the public imagination of these attacks that the academic interest in topic of xenophobia in South Africa has since grown across a variety of different disciplines. There is a rich vein of academic writing which debates the origins and causes of the 2008 attacks, and similar outbreaks of xenophobic violence. But, as Dodson notes, while the xenophobic attacks of 2008 were deeply concerning and problematic, 'they should not have struck anyone as a surprise' (2010:4) as violent encounters against foreigners had been well documented in the years leading up to the attacks (c.f. Mattes et al. 1999). Indeed, it was not the attacks themselves that were unanticipated, but rather their intensity and scale (Crush et al, 2008).

Migrants in South Africa live under a near-constant threat of violence of various types and degrees. While most participants spoke of comparatively non-threatening experiences of xenophobia – such as being referred to as *makwerekwere*⁶ or being threatened in joking tones, the impact of these experiences is amplified by fears of more severe attacks, which can financially cripple targeted shop-owners. This threat, and the general climate of hostility that many participants reported as their own experience, has led many migrants to develop a series of coping mechanisms, which will be described and explored in Chapter 5.

⁶ A term used to derogatorily refer to speakers of non-South African languages.

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The main findings for this thesis are drawn from interviews with thirty-two refugees and other forced migrants who live and earn a livelihood in the Cape Town area. While by no means intended to be a representative sample, effort was made to include a range of participants, with the eventual sample representing the six different countries of Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (18), Zimbabwe (5), Somalia (4), Congo-Brazzaville (2), Malawi (1) and Nigeria (2). In order to qualify for the study, participants had to be over 18, engaged in non-formal or non-regular work, self-identify as a forced migrant, and feel, for their own security, that they had had to emigrate. Although their precise legal status was not determined, owing to its obvious sensitivity, all identified themselves as forced as opposed to voluntary migrants. Respondents included recognized refugees and formal asylum-seekers as well as migrants outside the formal asylum and refugee determination system. These interviews were augmented by key informant interviews (5) with refugee service providers and visits and group discussions with community ethnic organizations.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first details the epistemological and methodological foundations of this study. The second contains a description of my study design, including sections detailing selection criteria, sampling and the interview process. The third section discusses the relevant research challenges and ethical issues, and ends in discussing my analytical processes in writing the thesis.

2.2 Epistemological and Methodological Foundations

Research in the field of migration studies adopts a wide range of theoretical, methodological and disciplinary approaches, leading to intense and extensive debates. This is articulated in the South African context by Jacobsen and Landau (2003), who

call for an empirical and scientific approach to the subject, critiquing many of the small-scale projects on forced migration as haphazard and unrepresentative (2003). The more quantitative, larger scale, survey based research, such as the research provided by the Southern African Migration Project, has obvious benefits and produces a great deal of information that is useful in understanding the bigger picture of migration in the region. Yet despite the study of South Africa being ‘awash with statistics’ (Seekings, 2006: 1), data regarding how many migrants live in South Africa has been described as ‘scanty, patchy and skewed’ (Blaser & Landau, 2014: 15), mostly due to the country’s inadequate data collection systems (Crush, 2011).

In partial reaction to this sentiment, Matthew Sharpe (2012) and Graeme Rodgers (2004) amongst others have highlighted that within the field of migration in Southern Africa, the majority of research has indeed been large scale and quantitative, and that there has been a dearth of qualitative case studies on migrants in South Africa (Rodgers, 2004). In response to this gap, and recognizing that ‘people are the experts in their own lives’ (Boyden & Ennew 1997: 73) this thesis uses qualitative methods, in the form of semi-structured, in-depth interviewing, in order to recognize forced migrant experiences. In executing my study, I was influenced by feminist discussions of methodology (Kobayashi, 1994; England, 1994; Sundburg, 2003; Sharp, 2005) that argues that collaborative and personal relationships between researchers and the communities they study can strengthen research and produce valid, co-constructed knowledge.

Another key aspect of a feminist approach is the idea that research is not neutral, and positionality is a key consideration. Fieldwork is ‘embodied, messy and complex’ (Sharp, 2005: 305). Who we are, and what we look like has an important and key role to play in determining the kind and quality of information we as researchers receive (2005). In this spirit, the following is a brief description of my personal and academic background. I first visited Cape Town as a visiting student at the University of Cape

Town in 2010. While I did not complete any formal fieldwork on the topic of migration and xenophobia, my time in South Africa awakened me to some of the challenges that African migrants living in Cape Town faced. When I returned to my undergraduate studies at Mount Allison University, I decided to focus my Honours thesis on the contribution that women made to the liberation struggle, and the representation of their experiences in South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. These two experiences awoke me to the tremendous political and economic transformation that the country is currently going through.

In the following year, between my undergraduate and my graduate studies at Western, I worked as a refugee settlement worker and human rights advocate at a Romero House, a shelter and community centre in Toronto. Living and working with individuals in the midst of major life changes made me witness to what a frustrating and bewildering process the Canadian refugee determination system can be. My time at Romero House made me aware of the interplay between institutional structures and the individual. I had witnessed firsthand the frustration and even despair that seemingly routine bureaucratic hurdles can produce, and I was eager to consider them more fully in an academic context. Given my previous experience and interest in South Africa, and my new understanding of some of the issues asylum seekers and refugees face, designing a research project around these two research interests, in a city I was already familiar with, seemed like a natural decision.

In Cape Town, I was, and looked like, a 'foreign' researcher in almost every sense of the word. As a white, Canadian-born scholar operating out of a Canadian university, it is clear that the research I have conducted, and the data I have produced, is the product of, and subject to the frictions of my status as an 'outsider'. Within the context of South Africa, a country with a set of complicated and, to an outsider, bewildering attitudes towards race and social status, my position as a young, female researcher from Canada, working with forced migrants of variable legal statuses, ages, professions and countries

of origin, has meant that a high degree of reflexivity and patience have been essential in disentangling the web of social interaction that such research entails. In her work with Congolese refugees living in Uganda, Clark-Kazak writes about the *mzungu*⁷ effect. Because foreign researchers are seen as having influence and access to resources, participants and Ugandans would often treat her deferentially (2006: 30). While this was not as apparent in my own research, I suspect that my status as a Western researcher, from a country with a highly desirable refugee resettlement program, may have lent me, and my research enquiries, more credibility than deserved (see 2.5). While the *mzungu* effect had undoubted positive effects for my research, my position may have also been beneficial for participants. Community ethnic organizations were eager to speak to me, and wanted to use me as a mouthpiece for raising awareness about what was happening to forced migrants living in Cape Town. These issues are explored in greater detail in section 2.4, entitled ‘Research Challenges in the Field’.

2.3 Study Design

Data collection for this research was divided into three different stages: semi-structured interviews with several key informants (5) and a range of individual migrants (32), and finally, visits and discussions with local ethnic organizations (5). The following section describes each of these stages in turn, outlining the process as well as the positives and negatives of each method.

2.3.1 Semi-structured Interviews with Key Informants

An important preliminary stage of my research was making contact with refugee service organizations operating in Cape Town. In my first two months in the city, I contacted

⁷ *Mzungu* is a Swahili word that literally translated means ‘European’, but is widely used to refer to all white people in East Africa.

ten different refugee-service and advocacy organizations⁸, and was able to arrange in-depth interviews with five different organizations. These in-depth interviews were designed to gain a sense of the institutional landscape as it pertains to refugees and to gather practical information about which, and to what extent, programs support refugee livelihoods in Cape Town.

I found that refugee-service organizations, with small budgets and staffs, are under a great deal of pressure to provide for the needs of the many refugees living in the city. In addition, some organizations, such as The Scalabrini Centre, are frequently approached by students eager to interview refugees for academic credit, and are consequently overwhelmed. Unsurprisingly, given this fact, not all organizations were willing to meet with me for an interview. Despite this disappointment, the interviews I did manage to secure yielded extensive information on the wider official policy and political-economic context of refugee rights. Such interviews provided an opportunity to draw upon informants' expertise in the sector, which played an early role in helping me understand the links between government policies and the actions of individual participants.

Two of the organizations I worked with, The Agency for Refugee Education, Skills Training & Advocacy (ARESTA, located in Athlone), and the Fundi Network, a non-profit employment agency (in Mowbray), were integral in helping me with my data collection. Both organizations not only provided very helpful information in their own interviews, but also introduced me to potential participants, and offered their own office space as a safe and neutral place to conduct my interviews. This assistance strengthened my research in two main ways. The first was in establishing trust with participants. As the majority of interviewees were located through these two organizations, it immediately gave me, as a researcher, more credibility than if I had approached participants on the street. Staff members of both organizations seemed to

⁸ CTRC, ARESTA, ADRO, Scalabrini, PASSOP, IOM, UCT's RRU, LHR, AFRISA, Fundi, Catholic Welfare and Development, Adonis Musati Project

be well liked by participants, and in vouching for me and my research intentions, they lent a more relaxed air to the entire process which facilitated candour. This form of introduction was also ideal because of its discretion. Potential participants were approached and invited to be involved in the research in a space that was foreigner positive. While on the street or public areas, a young, white woman speaking at length with a hawker or casual labourer may possibly expose participants to unwanted attention, conducting interviews in this office space gave another layer of privacy and discretion to the interviews. There were some shortcomings to this approach as well. One aspect was the relatively open layout of the Fundi office, which meant that sometimes there was a stream of people passing through, which could occasionally disrupt conversations. Additionally, given the presence of Fundi staff nearby and lack of privacy, participants may have felt pressure to speak positively about Fundi and conceal more personal details for fear of being overheard. While introductions through ARESTA were extremely helpful in making contact with participants living outside of Cape Town (that still used Cape Town services), this recruitment method may have biased this part of the sample towards better connected and savvy migrants already involved in social service programs.

2.3.2 In-depth Semi-Structured Interviews with Forced Migrants

The most data rich portion of the research process were the in-depth interviews conducted with 32 Cape Town based forced migrants, representing men and women and a range of neighbourhoods, livelihoods, income levels, ages, and home countries. The in-depth interviews were designed to meet the following key objectives: (1) to gather detailed information about the manner in which forced migrants in Cape Town earn their livelihoods; (2) to provide background information through the exploration of informants' life histories, especially pertaining to their decision to leave their home country and how they came to settle in Cape Town; (3) to identify the factors that

enable and constrain the livelihoods of forced migrants, especially those engaged in informal or insecure employment .

Sampling and Making Contact

In order to be included in the study, individuals had to self-identify as forced, as opposed to voluntary migrants, and be based in the Cape Town area. Given how little is known about their ‘numbers, profiles, status, location and livelihoods’ urban refugees are considered a hidden population (Pavanello et al. 2010: 11), and as no sampling frame exists from which to sample randomly, participants were chosen purposively through reverse snowball sampling. Participants were contacted in several different ways: 1) through introductions by way of Fundi and ARESTA; 2) ‘cold’ introductions by approaching potential participants in public spaces such as their places of work; 3) reverse snowball sampling from initial contacts. This process is described in greater detail below. Given the increased precarity of migrants, special attention was paid to ensure introductions and interviews were discreet and did not openly identify forced migrants as such to casual passers-by.

In order to locate a range of participants from different countries and different economic niches, and to achieve a relatively equal gender balance, I used a variety of recruitment strategies. Interviews with key informants at ARESTA and Fundi were essential in providing introductions to the first set of forced migrant participants, who were migrants using these organizations’ services. In order to locate the majority of the remaining participants, directed snowball sampling was used from this group, particularly to find more female participants, by emphasizing to pre-existing participants that I was looking for participants. This method of sampling did not pick up much momentum until the very end of my fieldwork, when I had already reached my target interview numbers. Because snowball sampling did not prove entirely effective in producing a diverse body of participants with different occupations, countries of origin, or for that matter, many women, additional participants were identified and recruited

through day-to-day conversations in the course of buying vegetables or artisanal crafts. I would take advantage of the typical small talk that ensues in such transactions to steer the conversation towards my research, and mention that I was looking to speak with forced migrants about their livelihood experiences. This was an effective strategy, as it allowed potential participants to reveal themselves as forced migrants on their own terms, by either expressing interest in an interview, or declining the invitation by responding or ignoring the subtle invitation.

I made initial contact with participants over the phone or in person, where I could ensure that possible participants fit the selection criteria. Together, we would arrange an interview place and time in an area that was already known and considered to be convenient and safe by both parties. Interviews were either conducted at a café or restaurant, at the participant's place of work, or in the office spaces made available by both ARESTA and Fundi. Interviews were conducted in English, sometimes with an interpreter, arranged by the participant.

Inclusion Criteria

From among potential participants, I determined which of them qualified as forced migrants by asking if the participants felt they 'had to leave' their country. This question was simple by design, as it invited participants to offer their own explanation for why they came to South Africa. In one case, this led me to disqualify a participant from Cameroon who explained he came to South Africa for business purposes to 'make it big' and in several cases, led me to include Zimbabweans in the study who were either on visitor's visas, or Zimbabwean Special Dispensation permits (ZDP)⁹, but had been forced to leave Zimbabwe due to the past decade of political violence, instability and economic crisis. Although many Zimbabweans are unable to stay in Zimbabwe safely, their situation is generally oversimplified, and framed as 'economic migrants' to

⁹ The ZDP program lasted for four years (2010-2014), and was meant to regularize the status of Zimbabweans living in South Africa either illegally, or as asylum seekers. It provides permit holders with the right to live, work and study in South Africa.

South Africa. This situation of Zimbabweans in South Africa was a main reason I in choose to employ the term ‘forced migrant’ rather than the more restrictive term ‘refugee’ in this study.

The second aspect of inclusion was spatial. Participants had to be based in the Cape Town area. While I did not anticipate this being a problematic criterion, it was a term that had to be slightly redefined. Originally, I envisioned this to mean participants living in the Cape Town area, but the current bureaucratic situation caused me to revise this criterion. Because few social services are available to refugees in the rest of the Western and Northern Cape, asylum seekers and recognized refugees from both regions must travel to the Cape Town area in order to receive most settlement assistance, and in order to renew their permits at the Cape Town Refugee Reception Office. For these reasons, I determined inclusion on a case-by-case basis. If individuals were using Cape Town based support organizations, or were renewing their permits at the Cape Town office, I considered them to be ‘Cape Town based’. As a result, this research draws on interviews with participants based as far away as George – an almost five hour journey by bus.

The third and final aspect of inclusion criteria was that participants had to be working outside of regular, formal employment. Due to the types of labour that most foreigners tend to engage in – working as hair stylists, tailors, hawkers and *spaza* shop owners, or as a part of the casual economy, this employment tended to be much more visible than other types of labour, and was often the easiest criteria to fill.

Interview Process

Typically, I would meet and speak with participants at least once before I returned to conduct a formal interview. Not only did this create a better rapport from the outset of the interview, but it also meant that, where possible, I could prepare an interview guide with some background information about the relevant participant in mind (e.g. age,

gender, income, place of residence, time in the country). Interviews were conducted using an interview guide of open-ended and adaptable questions, and for those I met for the first time during an interview, these questions were tailored to individual participants' characteristics and circumstances as the interview proceeded. Tailoring the interview guides to each participant facilitated discussion of issues that were pertinent to his or her own experience. After preliminary questions that established nationality, livelihood strategy and age, the approach for the bulk of the interview was to frame participants' migration experiences chronologically. This meant beginning by asking them about their decision to leave their home country and the process by which they came to South Africa. Questions gradually traced forwards in time making a note of changing locations, social connections and employment before arriving at the present day. Once the interview had reached the present time, I would then proceed to questions of current residence and employment. This chronological approach proved helpful and effective, as it allowed participants to become storytellers who could shape the narrative of their experiences as migrants and refugees, rather than simply 'interview subjects'. This tended to produce a more coherent narrative that contextualized participants' present livelihood strategies within a wider history of migration. By the end of the interview, when a rapport had been established, more personal and abstract questions could be asked and addressed with more candour, such as their impressions of South Africa, their struggles in the country and their hopes for the future.

While most interviews were conducted in English without an interpreter, there were several occasions when migrants who wished to speak to me arranged their own interpretation. For those participants who expressed an interest, I was able to return to conduct interviews over several days, or drop by for a quick visit. This in turn produced a different kind of data from the once-off interviews, as a deeper relationship was built up, leading individuals to share detailed, useful knowledge, unique to research relationships built upon trust (Agadjanian and Zotova, 2012). These strong relationships

paid off, not only in helping with my snowball sampling, but also in leading me to unexpected avenues of data collection.

2.3.3 Visiting Ethnic Community Associations

The final data collection method employed was unplanned. After almost three months of collecting research through key informant and participant interviews, my research took a new turn, prompting me to include data that I recorded while attending and participating in ethnic community group meetings as an additional source of data. Over the course of my interviews and informal visits, I built a friendship with a Congolese family who lived in the neighbourhood where I was staying. Unbeknownst to me, the father, Bondeko was considered an elder amongst Congolese from eastern DRC, having employed and financially supported many Congolese newcomers in the ten years since he had come to Cape Town. I had befriended a ‘gatekeeper’ participant with a wide social network. Whether as a thank you for my (trying to) help with paperwork, or out of pure generosity, Bondeko arranged for and escorted me to meetings with five different (predominantly Congolese) ethnic organizations over the course of two weeks across Cape Town.

Conversations were unstructured and guided by community leaders. Aside from taking notes and audio recordings, my participation was confined to asking clarifying questions, and suggesting new conversational directions. Many of the individuals in these meetings I spoke with were highly connected with members of their own community, and were able to share their feelings about what should be the priority for refugee rights advocates. As many of the community leaders had lived in the city for longer periods than most of my individual participants, they had a different perspective to share, and were better informed about livelihood opportunities for forced migrants. The results of these conversations form a substantial part of Chapter 5 of this thesis.

2.4 Research Challenges in the Field

As many participants were employed on casual or short-term work contracts, one of the most common problems was securing an interview time and location. As participants could be called in for work at any time, many interviews were arranged at the last minute, often on Saturdays and Sundays to better fit the work schedules of participants. These days were so popular that it sometimes necessitated multiple interviews in the same day, which was an extra strain on scheduling and conducting interviews.

Another challenge was differing expectations between participants and myself. As forced migrants in Cape Town receive little financial support from public institutions, and no support from the South African government, building strategic relationships – either with other migrants, South Africans or researchers – is part of basic livelihood strategy. In such circumstances, there is a chance that researchers can raise unrealistic expectations of help (Clark-Kazak, 2009). I did my best to mitigate these expectations by explaining my position as a student and that I was there to learn and record migrants' experiences. Due to the intimate nature and subject of the interviews, there were several occasions where current serious personal issues were brought to my attention. Given my outsider status in the city, without power, social networks, or organizational affiliation, my primary means of providing support in these situations was to listen and affirm the struggles that I was told about. In some cases, I was able to suggest that the participant access financial or job-training support through Cape Town based organizations. In two cases in particular, I facilitated access to mental health services and English classes. While I would never condone research that was extractive, participants involved in the study did not gain any direct benefit from participating, whereas I gained data used to complete my Master's degree.

2.5 Confidentiality and Privacy

The entire research design, from the initial stages, was planned to minimize risk and inconvenience to participants. At the start of each interview, a brief introduction to the project and its objectives was made, emphasizing the voluntary and confidential nature of the interview before it formally began. Oral and written explanations of the research and its objectives were provided to participants, but in order to maintain confidentiality, no names or signatures were recorded. While Cape Town is considered a relatively safe city in South Africa, this security is contingent upon who you are, where you are, and even what time of the day it is. For this reason, a variety of strategies were used in order to mitigate any likelihood that speaking with a researcher would mark interviewees as outsiders beyond what their typical street presence in the city would have done. When arranging and conducting interviews, all reasonable steps were taken to ensure that participants were not inconvenienced and endangered. While participants were not financially compensated for their time, funds were provided to cover transport to and from the interview site. When arranging interview times, an elaborate system of ‘missed calls’ was used so that I could absorb the majority of airtime costs. When, as in most cases, participants chose to meet in coffee shops or restaurants, I covered the cost of the refreshments, normally coffee or tea. Pseudonyms are used in this thesis. All interviews and the resulting transcriptions have been encrypted and kept in a secure electronic location only accessible by me.

2.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Audio recordings or detailed handwritten notes were made while conducting interviews with participants, key informants and in group meetings. There were several occasions when participants did not wish to be recorded, and in these situations, I took shorthand notes, which were then transcribed into structured field notes at the end of each day. During more informal interactions, notes were later written from memory. All audio

recordings were transcribed, and these, along with field notes, were uploaded into NVIVO. These were then coded into basic themes such as ‘housing’, ‘finding work’ and ‘xenophobia’. As organizing the data continued, I created more analytical nodes to reflect the deeper connections as they became apparent, such as ‘weak ties’, ‘strategic essentialism’ and ‘racial scripts’. I also tried to code and analyze transcripts with the eyes of a critical feminist geographer. Whenever possible, I have highlighted how men and women’s livelihoods are constructed differently. At times, this has been difficult. In the course of interviews, it was hard to introduce and maintain discussions about perceived gender roles and differences in households. While I sometimes observed gender dynamics that I viewed as problematic, this was often before or after an interview. Without direct participant quotes to cite, I sometimes found it difficult to include in my analysis in any substantial way. In the findings chapters of this thesis, when possible, I use quotations from these transcriptions in order to support my analysis. Because interviews were conducted in participants’ second (or third, fourth or fifth) languages, some conversations were circuitous and it was difficult to extract tidy quotations. In these cases, I have summarized their words to the best of my ability, drawing on interview notes and transcripts.

Converting the raw information into a cohesive thesis has been an emotional process. Many difficult memories that were shared, such as rape and violent robberies, were only peripheral to the central focus of the project: namely, the livelihoods of refugees. While there is a substantial literature detailing and discussing such issues experienced by other forced migrants, I still regret the fact that these experiences could not be better represented in this thesis.

2.7 Conclusion

My research yielded rich data that provides in-depth insight into the experiences and networks of forced migrants living in Cape Town. Although based on a small sample, and thus not strictly generalizable, their individual experiences are suggestive of

broader factors shaping the lives and livelihoods of forced migrants in South African cities. Methodologically, this section has demonstrated that investing in relationships with participants, and exploring their networks, can expand data collection in ways that were unanticipated at the outset. As presented in the three chapters that follow, participants' diverse views and circumstances make the case that livelihood strategies are heterogeneous, yet bounded by institutional structures, social barriers and lived poverty. The following section, Chapter 3, will contextualise forced migrants' experiences within the institutional structure of South Africa, drawing on data from migrant and key informant interviews, to demonstrate the ways in which these structures influence how forced migrant secure their livelihoods.

Chapter Three: 'State' Structures

3.1 Introduction

Issues of citizenship and belonging in South Africa are right at the surface of everyday politics and practice, ready to be read by anyone willing to pay attention. Perhaps one of the clearest examples of the country's true attitude towards foreigners is in South Africa's migration bureaucracy, which, through a combination of exclusionary and prohibitive practices explored below, has shunted forced migrants into the narrowest band of livelihood options available. In order to understand the interplay between legal status, formal banking and participants' livelihood options, this section explores how refugees and asylum seekers in particular are excluded from the mainstream South African economy by the practices of the Department of Home Affairs and their intersection with national banking and financial services. This chapter addresses each of these structures in turn, arriving at the conclusion that being outside of what Landau (2008) refers to as the 'ethos of control' in the South African system is a major source of difficulty and stress for participants, and thus pushes forced migrants into marginalized employment, either for low pay or in the precarious informal economy.

3.2 Understanding the Structures of Legal Status: Obtaining Legal Asylum in South Africa

This particular chapter, by necessity, focuses almost exclusively on the experiences of participants in the study who were refugees or asylum seekers. Of the 32 participants in this study, six were no longer part of the asylum system, having either naturalized (1), attained a work permit (1) or acquired a Zimbabwean Dispensation Permit. Under these migration classifications, it is much easier to maintain documentation and open bank accounts, and so these participants' experiences are considered in greater detail in Chapters 4 and 5. This section 1) sets out the refugee application process in South

Africa; 2) outlines legal challenges to current practice; and 3) identifies problem-points in the process for refugees, linking each of these factors to forced migrants' livelihood practices.

Under the Refugees Act 130 of 1998, when prospective asylees first enter the country, they make their initial claim at border offices such as Musina. They are then issued a Section 23 transit permit in order to go to the closest Refugee Reception Office (RRO) to have an admissibility interview. At this point, they are found either 'manifestly unfounded', or become asylum seekers, and are issued section 22 permits. After undergoing a second decision-making process, their claims are either rejected (after appeal) or accepted, and they are given Section 24 permits, which recognize them as official refugees under the protection of the South African state. This process can take many years to complete from beginning to end. Unless refugees are able to become permanent residents or attain refugee identification books, they must use these permits as their primary form of identification. Permits themselves are physically insubstantial - only a single piece of paper, which visually carry little authority, and can be easily lost or worn down. Sometimes they are destroyed by police interested in extorting bribes from 'undocumented' foreigners (Landau 2006), increasing refugees' precarity.

Obtaining this legal status, and maintaining the corresponding identity permits, is central to refugees and asylum seekers being able to live, work and study in South Africa. While the process of obtaining legal asylum is meant to be simple, asylum seekers in South Africa experience extreme difficulties during the application process (Handmaker et al, 2008; Vigneswaran, 2008). This process is managed by the "notoriously inefficient and corrupt" Department of Home Affairs (Hoag, 2011: 82), which is responsible for providing civic services to South African citizens and determining and administering the rights of all non-nationals to enter and remain in the country, including refugees (DHA, 2014). Current immigration legislation prevents lower-skilled African migrants from easily obtaining legal permission to stay in South

Africa, and so many use the heavily back-logged asylum system as a way of regularizing their stay (Mthembu-Salter et al., 2014).

The process of applying for asylum is a complicated one, including many steps and hurdles along the way. The remaining part of this section is divided into three categories identifying and describing the main challenges participants face when applying for special protection in South Africa, linking each set of obstacles to participants' struggles to secure their livelihood. They are: 1) backlogs; 2) lines and treatment; and 3) renewal of permits.

3.2.1 Backlogs

While DHA policy maintains that individuals with Section 22 Asylum-Seeker permits are to receive their status determination within thirty days after submitting their claim for asylum, massive backlogs of almost a quarter of a million undetermined asylum applications render this impossible (UNHCR, 2015; Landau in Handmaker et al, 2008). This backlog means that applications for asylum rarely get processed in a timely manner, leaving many refugees 'stuck' with a Section 22 permit for extensive periods of time, often for years. This requires frequent renewals and limits the rights that are afforded to the applicant (Belvedere, 2007; de la Hunt and Kerfoot 2008; Handmaker et al., 2008; Vigneswaran 2008).

The bureaucratic lag continues after an asylum seeker is officially recognized as a Section 24 refugee, slowing access to other forms of legal documentation, like permanent residence and refugee identification books that carry more legitimacy in the South African economy. While technically refugees are able to apply for permanent residence, "the obstacles effectively serve as a prohibition for doing so" (Landau in Handmaker et al, 2008: 27). These backlogs render forced migrants unable to access more credible documentation or permanent residence – that would reflect their extended stays in South Africa, and make them more credible in the eyes of South African

employers. Further, while refugees are entitled to refugee ID books, the backlog on this processing has been so severe, that they are extremely uncommon. I did not meet a single refugee possessing one in my four months of fieldwork. This is problematic, as beyond their Section 22 or 24 permit, many forced migrants do not have official identity documentation, such as a passport, and so lack credibility within South Africa and are also unable to travel legally in the region.

3.2.2 Lines and Treatment

South African citizens, and those migrants with study, visitors or work permits, file their paperwork at the Department of Home Affairs office, conveniently located in Cape Town's downtown core. While the building is crowded and the process is slow, dealing with paperwork as a non-forced migrant is fairly straightforward. By contrast, the Cape Town Refugee Reception Office is located on the edge of downtown, in a nondescript building in very bad repair. The first thing that is immediately obvious is the long lines of people waiting to be let into the building. Tourists and immigrants at the downtown Home Affairs office are able to take a number and sit in a waiting area to wait for their time to speak with an official. By contrast, refugees and asylum seekers must queue outside the RRO, and are only let into the building in groups of ten or fewer. These lines are a defining feature of the process: in order to claim asylum, the first step is getting into the building. Lines to access RROs are often extremely long, with hundreds waiting to be seen – only an estimated 30 percent of those in the line are able to speak with an official on their first visit (Amit, 2012). Those who are not seen by a refugee reception officer must either return later, risking being stopped without documentation by the police, or sleep overnight outside of the RRO (Vigneswaran, 2008).

This was often spoken of as one of the most challenging parts of life in South Africa, as those waiting in line often have to contend with poor weather conditions, the threat of theft or rape, and extortion by police or security officers monitoring the lines (Vigneswaran, 2008). For young, single men like Yves, queuing in this weather is

degrading:

In winter and its raining, you're standing outside [and] fighting in the queue... last time I was there for 4 in the morning until 4 p.m. - I didn't get help. And it was raining. And I was like, what I am doing here?

For other participants, particularly those with children, the experience was more traumatic. I met Mosi, a casual labourer and single father of 3 daughters (aged 6, 7 and 9) in June, when he was barely earning enough to feed his children. When I ran into him a few weeks later, he was in even more emotional turmoil than when we first met. While there were several major issues going on in his life, in our conversation he kept returning to how, on a recent particularly chilly day pouring with rain, RRO officials would not allow his daughters to stand under the building's overhang while he queued to have their permits renewed, forcing them to stand for hours in the cold rain with him. He was outraged that the officials would allow children to suffer like that, and compared refugee and asylum seekers' treatment by officials to that of animals.

By reason of sheer numbers, experiences like Yves' and Mosi's are the rule, rather than the exception. In one study undertaken in Johannesburg, it was common for respondents to return multiple times in order to have a single issue resolved, with an average of three visits being required (Amit, 2012). One of my research participants, Ecclesiaste, an asylum seeker also from DRC, reflects on the number of people waiting outside of the RRO in Johannesburg, in his two-month attempt to lodge a claim;

Why wasn't it working? Because there's a lot of people, you have to be in the line, you have to sleep there... you'll find people that sleep there for three weeks, and I did try once in Pretoria, but it was hard to get it there also. There were thousands of people.

Despite Mosi and Yves' experiences, Cape Town's RRO is in fact considered better than Johannesburg and Pretoria, and the comparative ease of filing paperwork may be a factor that draws some forced migrants to settle in Cape Town. Ecclesiaste remembers;

I had friends, they told me, in Cape Town you can get papers easily... and I can get easy job...in Cape Town, the first day I come here, the next day I went Home Affairs and I did get my papers.

These issues, and particularly the long wait times, are attributed to a combination of corruption and lack of capacity of the various RROs (ibid). It is obvious that it is not only the amount of time it takes to begin a claim or to renew a permit that is the issue. Participants made clear that they felt that their treatment at the RRO is degrading and sometimes dehumanizing, and in some cases it was obviously a source of deep emotional pain. This came to a head in the middle of my fieldwork, in a series of violent confrontations between Home Affairs officials and migrants at RROs. In late May 2013, security officials outside of the Cape Town office physically beat, pepper sprayed and used stun grenades and a fire hose over three days to control a crowd of approximately a thousand attempting to renew their permits (Amnesty International, 2013).

All participants' voices shared in this chapter have been male. This is because there was a gendered dimension to these protests, and to the DHA experience overall. A survey administered by ACMS researchers, across four RROs (Cape Town, Musina, and two in Pretoria), found that 70% of those using RROs are men, while only 30% are women. Outside of the RRO in Cape Town, refugees are divided into two lines according to gender¹⁰. This gender division was noted by male participants. As Ecclesiaste recounts:

¹⁰ While I never found an official reason for this divide, it was suggested that this may be because the men were seen as too violent, and were pushing in front of women in the line.

Imagine, I come from Swellendam¹¹, just to come to Home Affairs. It's raining [hard] like this, you are in the line, and then they just get women inside, they get the paper, but you men, you must go. The time is finished, you stay there in the morning, you stay there from 6 o'clock [a.m.] to 5 [p.m.], there is nothing. I really don't know how many woman they take, But woman, they can come any time, they get papers, but men, they have to stay in the line.

Despite the fact that the men's line is always much longer, in the week leading up to May's events only women and children had been allowed inside the center, causing increasing anger and anxiety amongst male asylum seekers and refugees, many of whom had had their permits expire while waiting (Amnesty International, 2013). While this thesis demonstrates that female participants face a series of hurdles that few male participants do, such as lesser ability to borrow money or maintain wide social networks, in legal paperwork they seem to have a slight advantage. While women also waited in lines for hours, and are undoubtedly also mistreated by an unjust system, they did not share stories of the same magnitude. While the ACMS study is thorough in its investigation of migrant experiences of RROs, their data is not gender disaggregated. In light of my findings and the cause of the May 2013 events, I suggest that more research into the gendered experiences of the asylum system in South Africa may produce interesting results.

3.2.3 Renewing Permits and Employment

For those who already have documentation, renewing documents is also a lengthy undertaking. While the DHA specifies that Section 24 permits be renewed every two years, and Section 22 each year, agents working at the RROs continue to specify one to three month renewal periods for the Section 22 permits, regardless of a lack of legislation prescribing the validity period for the permits. Such short renewal intervals

¹¹ Approximately two and a half hours away by bus.

require those holding such permits to leave work frequently, often for several days at a time. This is particularly cumbersome for refugees living outside of Cape Town whose claim is lodged at the Cape Town RRO. Refugees told me about their high transport and lodging costs, and reported acquaintances who had travelled from as far off as Port Elizabeth in order to renew their paperwork. Amongst my participants, at one time, Somali *spaza* shop owner Mahmoud had to travel all the way from George every three months in order to renew his permits.

Like many, Ecclesiaste's troubles from constant renewals spilled over into his employment. He received a spate of short permit renewals: "they give me just three months, two months, last past month, they give me two days, four days, one week, one month. And then after that one month." He knew that his frequent absences at work made him seem less dependable and more demanding to his employer: 'every month you have to tell them 'I'm going to Home Affairs, I'm going to Home Affairs' and they're telling you 'no''. Currently waiting for an appeal of his negative asylum decision, Ecclesiaste has spent parts of his time in Cape Town undocumented. He explained that when his boss called him into work on the days he had off, under threat of losing his job, he opted to work, rather than wait to get his papers renewed:

For extension, you don't get your paper, they tell you have to go home. Then you're working, sometimes they [RRO] call you, but you have to go to work. But if you stay for a week [at the RRO], you don't go to work, you don't eat. You have to pay rent, and rent here in Cape Town is so expensive. If you don't work, they [landlords] chase you out.

Fearful of losing his employment, Ecclesiaste chose to let his paperwork expire. Not only could he be jailed or deported if discovered, but it is also an expensive problem to fix:

If your paper expired more than a week, you have to pay a fine. I did stay two years with my paper [expired]. [I was] looking for that two thousand five

hundred [Rand¹²] to be able to pay. I did, last year, I paid that money. I fixed my paper. Because I can't work without the paper.

Amongst others, the above accounts of both Mahmoud and Ecclesiaste overwhelmingly link the access to legal paperwork with participants' livelihoods. For self-employed small business owners like Mahmoud, the time spent in line represents lost revenue because he is not there to open his shop. For those seeking to work for an employer, or in the casual labour industry, waiting in line impedes their efforts to find jobs, and endangers employment they have managed to secure, making them less desirable as they appear to be less dependable and available to work. As demonstrated by Ecclesiaste, such frequent renewals and the long wait to receive them may force some employed migrants to choose between renewing their papers or keeping their jobs. The legal precariousness caused by such frequent and time consuming renewals detracts from the little currency that Section 22 and 24 permits hold with South African employers. What is more, it impinges upon refugees' abilities to find formal employment, by engaging permit holders in a constant cycle of queuing and waiting, in order to maintain their legal right to reside in South Africa. As the following section on access to formal banking notes, these issues bleed into other aspects of refugees' lives, and infringe upon their ability to participate fully in the formal South African economy.

3.3 Access to Formal Banking

Since 2010, with a change in banking legislation, bank accounts can be opened in South Africa without the green bar coded identity document held by South African citizens and permanent residents (FICA, 2010). For refugees and asylum seekers, this FICA amendment, which appears progressive and useful on paper, has been stymied by the continuing requirement of a valid Section 22 or 24 permit to open a bank account. By binding access to formal banking so closely with migrants' legal status, the problems

¹² At the time of fieldwork, the conversion rate between the Canadian dollar and South African Rand was 10 ZAR to 1 CAD.

that migrants experience at RRO offices in obtaining and renewing their permits trickle down into their access to banking, making opening a bank account difficult, time consuming, and in some cases, virtually impossible. This section describes how this process works and what makes it particularly difficult, and then explores the main livelihood implications of this issue.

3.3.1 Opening an Account

In South Africa's official regulatory process, if refugees and asylum seekers wish to open an account, Section 22 and Section 24 permit holders must come to a bank with their official permits and proof of residence. Before the bank account can be opened, applicants must obtain a form from the bank, which they must then take to the Department of Home Affairs for the purposes of verifying that the applicant is legitimate. The form is then left at the DHA, and eventually mailed or faxed back to the bank branch where the applicant has begun to open their account. While the DHA claims that this process takes around two days, this is impeded by the same challenges at RROs listed above, and in reality often takes several months before the banks receive verification from the DHA¹³. For this reason, only those who are extremely determined to open an account are able to do so. Amongst my group of participants, those with ZDP papers, and two Congolese men were the only people with accounts.

The bank account, once approved, is linked to the expiration date on the permit, and it, along with any assets in the account, is frozen one month before the next expiry date of the individual's permit. This process, onerous in itself, is compounded by the short renewal periods that Section 22 permit holders receive, making it nearly impossible for asylum seekers with short renewal periods to maintain a bank account (Hoeflich, 2014). Once an account has been closed or frozen, a time consuming, Kafka-esque process is necessary in order to open it again. Ecclesiaste's story demonstrates the process:

¹³ This process was explained to me by participants, and by key informants at both UCT's Refugee Rights Unit and ARESTA.

E: I did have a bank account, but, they did close it because my paper expired for two years. I did have money inside, but the bank closed it. At Home Affairs I go to pay 2500 rand, I did have a bank account, FNB, I put money inside my bank account. I did use a card. By then, my paper was already expired. I go to the bank, they tell me I have to fix my paper, I have to pay again 2500, pay in Home Affairs. After two years, the time I go to pay that money, I go there with my bank, they don't recognize, the bank account is already expired.

MN: How much money was in there?

E: 2,300 [rand]. They tell me that money did finish with monthly fees and bank fees. And then the bank closed it. I wanted to open another account. They said they can't. So now? I don't have a bank account.

The most common response to these challenges is through evasion. The majority of participants, those who worked in the cash and informal economies hawking and trading, artisans and hair stylists, did not need an account, and therefore avoided it. But some participants, particularly those involved in casual or temporary employment, including those at Fundi, needed access to the formal banking system. In response to this need, participants used a series of tactics and strategies in order to perform necessary banking activities, which are further detailed in Chapter 5.

3.3.2 Implications of Lack of Access to Banking

Lack of access to banking has non-monetary costs as well as livelihood implications. Work on forced migrants' access to financial services has not been substantially updated since 2005 (cf. Jacobsen 2005, Jacobsen & Bailey, 2004), and focuses on the link between exclusion from banking and opportunistic crime. Criminals know that foreigners have irregular access to banking and so choose them as targets, knowing they

are more likely to be carrying cash (Jacobsen & Bailey, 2004). Criminals are not the only ones who take advantage - law enforcers have also been known to target migrants for arbitrary arrest based on the assumption that they might not have status in South Africa. Police, also aware that non-nationals have difficulty opening bank accounts, deliberately hassle migrants because they know they are more likely to get a bribe out of a migrant (Landau, 2008).

There are other costs to being excluded from banking which can also insidiously affect the stability of participants' livelihoods' in the long term. Lack of access to banking impedes participants' ability to be paid for their labour, build their credit scores and access loans; it also prevents them from presenting themselves as fully included in the local and global financial economy. These frustrations and lost business opportunities represent an incalculable economic and social obstacle, and were explained to me most clearly by a Congolese couple who had been living in the Western Cape for over a decade. Together they opened and operated a well-located and profitable hair salon in central Fish Hoek, where in addition to themselves, they employed two staff members. Through a series of savvy business operations, they have been able to open a second business, a convenience store next to the salon. Although they have been able to build two profitable, brick and mortar shops, because of their refugee status, and 'personal'¹⁴ bank accounts they are unable to get a home mortgage, which in turn, makes it impossible to buy property.

Instead of buying a house, which would enable them to provide a home for their five children while building their equity and renting out additional rooms for a profit, they are forced to rent, struggling to find a landlord willing to rent to a large, non-South African family. The couple compared continually paying rent on a month-to-month basis to 'pouring your money into the ground'.

¹⁴ Refugees and asylum seekers are not eligible to open business bank accounts.

This connects to a wider point about how those in the informal economy manage their assets – which is to say they keep it in material goods, rather than cash. To an outsider, it may seem like small business operators, such as *spaza* shop owners and the couple above, are wealthy because their businesses are well-stocked and well-run, but this is often far from the truth. In reality, for many, these shops represent all of their savings, or are even bought from loans. Ali Mohamed, a Somali *spaza* shop owner operating out of Mitchell’s Plain, explains this misconception:

"AM: if they see Somalian, they think they've got money...[but] if you sell sweet and ...small groceries... you can get per month, ... two thousand or three thousand. Then, early in the morning, you wake up, you try and buy some stock. The people, they see this money and they think that you've got a lot of money."

Now, consider the current socio-political climate in South Africa, and the fact that in both 2008 and 2015, xenophobic attacks and looting were directed at foreigners and foreign operated businesses, which completely destroyed targeted shops. While South Africans or permanent residents are able to convert their wealth into real property, forced migrants can either deposit it into a bank account, which they may have trouble accessing at a later date, or invest it back into their business – which, given the likelihood they will be targeted for robberies or, in extreme cases, looting, can create its own risks. Considered alongside the prospect of a house, an asset with a steady value, the asset range that forced migrants have in which to invest their capital is confined and precarious.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the system of regulations that determines forced migrants’ access to both legal status and formal banking opportunities. The Department of Home Affairs’ extensive backlog of applications, long line-ups and too-frequent renewal periods negatively affect participants’ abilities to obtain and retain

employment. These difficulties in maintaining legal status trickle down, affecting participants' abilities to maintain sustained access to formal banking. Together, these twin institutions preoccupy participants' time, ensuring that they lose value as potential employees and become more appetizing targets for opportunistic crime. This, paired with a disinclination on the part of many employers to hire foreigners, ensures that forced migrants are pushed to the margins of the South African economy, and compelled to engage in low paid, precarious work or enter into the informal economy. A description of the nature and types of this work, including the various sectors participants from different countries of origin engage in, is the focus of Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Cape Town's Informal Economy

Madeleine Northcote and Belinda Dodson¹⁵

4.1 Introduction

Refugees and asylum-seekers who come to South Africa from elsewhere on the African continent engage in a number of different occupations and forms of employment in order to earn a livelihood. Although some are in formal employment, many earn their living in insecure, informal employment -- such as casual labour in construction or domestic service -- or through entrepreneurial activities as traders, artisans or providers of various personal services. Refugees and registered asylum-seekers are legally permitted to work in South Africa, but even with valid documents, formal employment is difficult to secure given prevailing anti-immigrant attitudes and South African employers' suspicion of documents such as asylum-seekers' permits, as discussed in Chapter 3 (Handmaker et al. 2008; Landau & Wa Kabwe Segatti, 2009). Forced migrants thus commonly resort to marginal informal economic activity such as street trading, tailoring and the creation and the sale of curios and beadwork, often in co-ethnic networks. Forced migrants' livelihoods commonly straddle, and indeed challenge, the division between formality and informality. We find that many migrants combine formal and informal employment, or use gains from one to attain entry into the other. For some, working in the informal sector can be a stepping-stone to more formal and secure employment, while for others it remains a survivalist trap from which they are unable to escape. Through participants' stories it is clear that factors such as social support, past education, and above all gender, determine which sectors individuals choose, and their success within them. A complex amalgam of factors structures the

¹⁵ A version of this chapter has been accepted for publication in a forthcoming book entitled *Urban Informality and Migrant Entrepreneurship in South African Cities* edited by Jonathan Crush and Abel Chikanda.

range of livelihood strategies available to migrants, and their choices must be understood within the context of personal history, local and transnational social connections, and the legal and political frameworks of South African society. A final, section of this chapter discusses the effect that business robberies have on migrant businesses, as well as on the physical and emotional well-being of the Somali traders affected.

4.2 Migrants' Livelihoods

Amongst the forced migrants interviewed for this study, four broad categories of occupation were identified. First, there is employment as casual or day labour, notably in construction and gardening for men and domestic work for women. Second, there are various forms of trading and hawking, from roadside stalls and itinerant trading to more fixed establishments known as *spaza* shops. Third, there are various forms of artisanship in the manufacture of crafts such as beadwork, wire and metalwork, woodcarvings and paintings. Fourth, there are personal services such as hair braiding and barbering, often to clients who are themselves migrants. The sections below detail each of these livelihood categories, drawing on the experiences of individual migrants to highlight the strategies adopted and the opportunities and obstacles encountered.

4.2.1 Day Labourers and Casual Workers

Casual labour is used to refer to informal work that is performed for an employer but without the rights associated with formal employment, such as sick leave, paid leave, or a formal contract (Devey et al., 2006). The term 'day labour' is used to describe a job-seeking practice in which workers search for work on a day-to-day basis, in both the formal and informal sectors (Blaauw & Krugell, 2014). These search strategies include posting personal advertisements on public notice boards and private mailboxes, using employment agencies, asking door-to-door and, most visibly, standing at roadside labour recruitment sites. Casual and day labour are important sources of income for many South African nationals as well as international migrants. A previous study in

Cape Town showed that employers picking up labour at roadside sites tend to prefer foreign nationals (Sharp, 2012). Similarly, a study in Pretoria found that Zimbabweans, who on average had higher levels of human capital and English language skills, were able to earn more on a day-to-day basis than their South African counterparts (Blaauw et al., 2012).

Certainly, day labour still was or previously had been a major source of income for many of the participants in this study. While some were able to move from casual and day labour into more secure and formal employment, the ability to make this transition was heavily mediated by an individual's social position. Claude, a migrant from Congo-Brazzaville, for example, first came to South Africa as a refugee more than twelve years ago. Beginning by retrieving carts at a grocery store, he moved on to work as a car-guard and eventually a security guard while going to college in Cape Town to get a qualification in electrical engineering. After graduating, he began working for an electrical company and then eventually, through the Fundi Network, a labour recruitment and training organization, built an independent electrical contracting business. The turning point came when he was able to buy a truck:

Three years ago...I had small car - and that car was giving me a lot of problems. And the guy said to me, 'like this you can't make it. In order to make it, you must get a truck. But to get a truck is not easy, so the money that you make, you must keep it away, because you are living in my place, so don't pay rent, and that money you can save, and then, until you can get the money that will allow you to buy the truck.

The generosity of his friend, along with substantial remittances from family in Brazzaville, thus allowed him to save up to buy a truck, a key step in the transition to self-employment and even becoming an employer himself. At the time he was

interviewed, he was making use of the casual labour system to hire employees for his own business.

By contrast, Mosi, a single father of three from Goma, DRC, had failed to secure even a subsistence income having arrived in South Africa in 2005. At the time of the interview, he was still earning less than the bare minimum to support his family. A key means of survival was the generosity of fellow Congolese – one woman in particular allowed him and his young daughters to live with her family and contribute what he could to the rent whenever possible. He continued to have little success obtaining formal employment based on his office work experience. Furthermore, the casual jobs he did obtain as a painter, also through the Fundi Network, never translated into longer-term projects. Since painting is a job that utilises common skills, he competes with a large pool of applicants for each job. Painting is a low-paying occupation – at R250 per day compared to an electrician or carpenter’s R350 per day. Finally, as a refugee from war-affected eastern Congo, Mosi had endured considerable trauma in his personal life, having lost most of his immediate family in the DRC to a combination of war and illness. The effects of this loss, paired with the added strain of caring for his young daughters, caused him extreme mental anguish, which undoubtedly interfered with his ability to find and secure work.

Raphael, a 28-year-old participant from Kinshasa, DRC, had come to South Africa just a year previously in 2012, with only a basic understanding of English. He occasionally received remittances from his sisters, who live in Europe, in the form of cologne, electronics and cash. When he was first interviewed, he had steady employment through the Fundi Network as a painter and general labourer, and attended free English classes in the afternoons at a local refugee aid organization. In the following year, he went through a series of jobs but in an upward trajectory. He began working in a private security firm, which eventually led him to a hospitality-training programme. He was able to do the programme because the owner of the house where he worked as a security

guard gifted him a lump sum of R1500 for tuition, an amount he would have had difficulty in obtaining otherwise. That programme resulted in him finding work as a waiter in a high-end restaurant in Cape Town's Southern Suburbs where he had been fully employed for several months.

Joy, a twenty-year-old mother from eastern DRC was one of the most precarious labourers interviewed in this study. A survivor of rape while still in the Congo, she came to South Africa to join her sole remaining family member, and now supports her two-year-old daughter out of the money she earns working two days a week as a domestic worker in Woodstock and Paarl, each for R150 per day. She shares a room in a rented apartment with eight other individuals and pays rent monthly. Unlike the previous male respondent with three children, she did not receive much support from community members in looking after her daughter. This difference in community support may be gender based – while single parenting as a father is seen as an aberration, hers, despite resulting from an unwanted pregnancy, does not. A sentiment expressed by many of the Congolese women interviewed was that 'to be a woman, you have to learn how to suffer.' The lack of support had a direct effect on her employment prospects. At the time of the interview, she had recently turned down a job in a restaurant washing dishes because transportation and child-care costs would have outweighed the additional income.

What these individual stories illustrate is the considerable heterogeneity of experience amongst this group of 'refugee' labourers. While two were able to build and then leverage their social and kinship networks financially, and successfully move from insecure or undesirable work into more secure and higher earning jobs, the others have so far been unable to move beyond casual, low-status employment, and seem trapped in precarious labour. Those who arrived in South Africa without dependants, and were well-educated, urban and middle-class could draw on family members for financial support. Each had also a 'lucky break' through a generous friend or employer

providing a 'rent holiday' or financial assistance for skills development or business investment. The others lacked the same social capital or connections that could provide a launching point into formal employment. Further, there is a clear gender bias in how success is attained. In contrast to the casual jobs that the men were able to secure, work as a domestic labourer was comparatively socially isolating for the woman involved. Male participants commonly worked as part of a team, such as on a construction site, thereby allowing them to build their language skills and open up a web of possible social and business connections. Domestic labour such as washing dishes, doing laundry and cleaning homes do not offer these same possibilities. Particular home country experiences are also an important consideration, as some had experienced severe personal trauma related to the conflict in eastern DRC. Although the stories above are all drawn from refugee narratives, casual labour is therefore used by individuals to varying effect, based upon the other resources on which they are able to draw. The evidence suggests that it can, in conjunction with social capital, individual ambition and sheer good luck, act as a stepping stone to more secure, formal employment.

4.2.2 Hawking and Trading: Street-Side Stalls to Spaza Shops

Perhaps the most visible livelihood strategy in which migrants engage is hawking and various forms of street-side selling. This is undertaken either on foot or out of stalls that line roadsides carrying heavy pedestrian traffic, such as near taxi and bus ranks. Passers-by have access to a series of hawkers' stands that sell an ever-changing combination of sweets, cigarettes, and fruit and vegetables, as well as cosmetic and hygiene products, clothing and shoes. Artisanal craft traders operate from various sites including traffic intersections, tourist destinations, or in markets that have themselves become tourist destinations such as Greenmarket Square, located in downtown Cape Town. Another common migrant trading enterprise is the '*spaza* shop', the small convenience store found in informal and low-income residential areas of South African

cities. These forms of retail activity are variously complementary, collaborative, or in competition with those of South African nationals. This has sometimes made the migrants targets of xenophobic violence (Crush et al., 2008; Charman & Piper, 2011, 2012; Gastrow, 2013). Other constraints include the pressure to remit money to family members in their countries of origin and the extra time required to keep their refugee papers and asylum-seekers' permits up to date. As with the casual labour livelihoods described above, factors such as family relations, gender roles and sheer good (or bad) fortune also affect the success or otherwise of their businesses.

Outside a Shoprite supermarket in Mowbray – a neighbourhood near the University of Cape Town – are a series of hawker and vegetable stands. Angela and Priscilla, two Zimbabwean women in their late twenties operate vegetable stalls, and were doing a brisk trade during the early afternoon when they were interviewed. Their livelihoods are based on low-margin trading: buying bunches of various greens for six rand and selling them for seven, thus making a one rand profit on each transaction. Because the margin is so slight, ensuring a high number of sales each day is crucial. As one explained, 'when you don't open, you lose money.' The need for a high daily sales volume is threatened by the bureaucratic requirement for refugees and asylum-seekers to return regularly to the Department of Home Affairs where they initiated their claim in order to renew their permits. The length of time between renewals depends on the individual case, and can range between one day, in extreme cases, to just once a year, as determined at the discretion of the immigration officer. The majority of participants renewed their papers every two to six months. This has a serious impact on income earning, as each day spent queuing at Home Affairs means a day not spent working, and thus not earning any income. The two women also spoke about the long hours, high expense and hard labour involved in acquiring their produce: a twice-weekly event which involves travel by train, bus and by foot in order to transport the sizable bags of greens back from the local markets in Ottery and Epping to Mowbray. Both women had found their vendor locations through word-of-mouth networking, and rental of the space

was managed through verbal agreement with the ‘owner’ of the space, who rents the space from the city in his name. They stored their produce nearby which, along with rental of the space, cost them R550 every month – a considerable amount, given that each woman estimated she only made R2,000 after expenses each month.

Asked where they would like to be in five years, both women said they hoped to be doing something other than selling vegetables – although it provided an income, it was not a ‘good job.’ For many migrants, running a marginal stall or a shop is still preferable to being an employee. Angela had left her previous job working at a guesthouse in order to deliver and look after her second child and was optimistic about her new trade as a vegetable seller:

Here is better... it’s better to get my three hundred or two hundred a day... than to get three-fifty a week... they don’t want to increase the money –that’s why this is better for me.

The freedom of self-employment is compromised by the inherent uncertainty of running a business. While earning two or three hundred rand a day may seem to be a healthy income, day-to-day income fluctuates widely. Most participants highlighted that at the beginning of the month, when paycheques are received, sales are high and business is good, but by the end of the month, when earnings have been spent, sales taper downward until the next month’s pay period.

The need to work, in order to survive in South Africa but also to remit money home, is an intense pressure that trumps everything else. An illustrative example is Fowsiyo, a 26 year old Somali woman, who sent her young son back to Somalia so that she could open up a shop and start remitting money to relatives:

[My husband] told me, you can't work if you have a small kid – you can't work outside [but] he doesn't have enough money to give me – he's paying rent, and then he's paying pampers, milk, food. Whatever he had he gave me, but I don't have money to send to my family, and so the family suffered in Somalia. I sent [my baby] to Somalia. My baby is now staying in Somalia. My mom took the baby and then I can work hard. I'm a strong woman, I get everywhere to buy stuff, I have money to survive, and then I will rent house. But now I am living in only room, by myself.

The pressure to support her family in Somalia, including her mother and eight younger siblings, was sufficient for her to ignore cultural expectations that a young mother should stay home and care for her children and instead open up a shop. Her decision came at a price. Not only was her young child back to Somalia, but her marriage eventually ended over continued disagreements between her and her husband over her decision to work. Her situation not only demonstrates the strongly gendered ideas about work and social roles in many migrant communities, it shows the significance that migrants attach to earning sufficient income to remit money back home. This is something for which they are prepared to endure considerable personal sacrifice and self-exploitation.

Her hard work and entrepreneurship were evident as she described how she had built up her business from a R3,000 investment given to her by her husband by buying and reselling items in the Bellville business district, gradually expanding the scale and scope of her trading:

I asked him for R3,000 and I bought socks, sunglasses, and earrings, and then I put them in big plastic [carton] outside in the taxi rank, in Bellville. People come and say 'Hey, how are you' and picked earrings and sunglasses. With the small money I got, I made this stand. And then when I made a stand, I bought

two tables, and put them this side. And then I worked and got enough money - I put in clothes, I put this side jackets, this side clothes. It is now three years [since I started the business].

In economic terms alone, she might be considered a refugee success story. Another successful entrepreneur was Joyce, a Congolese woman who makes her living operating a small grocery stall in Cape Town's main bus terminal, where she had been selling for over ten years. Unlike the others, who sell local produce, Joyce sells imported food products from the DRC. Though her trade is based on selling foreign goods, she acquires her stock through an in-country process whereby money changes hands (via intermediaries) several times in South Africa before the products reach her shop. This is noteworthy for two reasons. Firstly, a variety of individuals are employed in South Africa in transporting the goods; and secondly, she is not overtly competing with South African counterparts, as they are unlikely to sell Congolese products.

One major form of competition between foreign traders and their South African counterparts is for physical space in trading sites, whether formally or informally managed and controlled (Hunter & Skinner, 2003). This scramble for space emerged again and again in the interviews with hawkers and traders. One extreme example concerns a young Somali woman named Fadumo, who was working as an itinerant clothes seller. Because she could not secure a permanent place to sell her goods, she was travelling between Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg and walking door to door in Somali neighbourhoods in order to sell clothing, finding places to stay as she went. This competition did not sit well with all participants. Joyce noted with some resentment that South Africans get preferential access to the City's trading sites in Cape Town's bus terminal. The difficulty of accessing retail space not only happens in the central business district, but also in neighbourhoods outside of the city core. One *spaza* shop operator in Mitchell's Plain, Ali Mohamed, described how his rent continued to rise as his landlord threatened to find a new tenant who was willing to pay more.

Most of the individuals engaged in street and *spaza* shop trading can be classified as survivalists rather than successful entrepreneurs. Their businesses have low market entry costs, but also low profit margins, and very little possibility for significant growth or advancement. Family networks can be both an asset and a liability, supplying start-up capital but also pressuring them to remit money which they might otherwise save or reinvest in their business. Although some respondents had managed to establish themselves with a degree of long-term security, the livelihoods of many remained highly precarious despite their hard work and considerable personal sacrifice, often at the cost of a stable family life and their own personal safety.

4.2.3 Artisans, Wireworkers and Artists

The artisan industry, which caters primarily to tourists visiting Cape Town, is an important form of self-employment amongst migrants (Visser & Rogerson, 2004). Amongst the items associated with this form of business are wire-beaded and metalwork sculptures, animal carvings and wooden utensils, and various kinds of art, including paintings as well as potato-print and tie-dye cloth, which are made and sold for a profit. This informal industry, which clusters geographically around tourist attractions, includes a diversity of actors from a range of different countries. Certain sectors are associated with particular nationalities. The local cost and availability of materials, which can differ significantly between cities, also affects artisans' choice of media. In Johannesburg, Zimbabweans are known for their stone and wood sculptures, which are carved from materials sourced in Zimbabwe. In interviews, Zimbabwean artisans explained that due to the geographical distance, while working in Cape Town, they choose to specialise in wire and beadwork, as the materials are easier to source, and the margins are greater.

The artisanal craft trade is complex, with a series of internal rules and conventions. As with street traders and hawkers, space is at a premium and competition fierce. Newcomers have to fight and negotiate in order to gain a place on the street to sell their goods, a process that can take several weeks or even months. Crafts-sellers range from individuals, normally migrants, selling goods they have made themselves to established South African business owners selling bought pieces in brick and mortar shops. Some migrants act as intermediaries selling a variety of items, which may be locally sourced from artisans within Cape Town or from other artisans across South Africa and other parts of the continent. Several vendors interviewed for this study stated that they travelled back and forth, buying goods such as items made of malachite or wooden masks in their home countries (for example, Senegal and the DRC) and then importing them to be re-sold at a profit in South Africa.

Two of the Zimbabwean migrant artisans in this study, Tanaka and Samuel, were interviewed in Kalk Bay and Camps Bay, respectively. They had come to South Africa with the specific intention of pursuing their art as a business in South Africa. Both had studied various art techniques in Zimbabwe and acquired these skills while still in high school. While these skills have translated into a steady revenue stream in Cape Town, both men had previously worked in other industries, and in other countries (Namibia, Botswana and Swaziland) before coming to South Africa. This had given them a chance to further improve their skills through practice and instruction from peers with more refined techniques. Both men showed considerable business acumen and skill – for instance, by making contact with organizations for commissioned works, and constantly searching for new venues and outlets through which to display and sell their craft. Both participants employed web searches and word-of-mouth networks in order to secure tables at weekly markets or larger events. One noted that although the cost to rent a table at the National Arts Festival was expensive – over R4,000 for ten days in addition to transport and other expenses – when shared between four friends, it was ‘worth it’

because of the considerable profit to be made. Samuel described how his artistic decisions are mediated by his business practice as follows:

I taught myself after school. [I do] paintings, bead and wire, metal...at the moment, I like these townships [paintings], because they're cheap, cheap material. I don't buy anything, only the paint, which is very cheap, compared to the beads and wire, which is very expensive. Like this [painting], the production cost is R5 or maybe even less but I can sell it for R80. I would have gone for work in a restaurant or somewhere here in Cape Town, but art is better for me.

The wire working industry is heavily male-dominated, perhaps because as Matshaka (2009; 73), found, amongst young men in the trade, wire working is 'an esteemed trade, a masculine domain.' Asked why the artisan trade was almost exclusively male, Samuel observed:

The only thing is with the craft you have to be strong. You have to be patient - you sit at home, like a week, you produce, then maybe on the weekends you come out, you come to Camps Bay, and you don't sell anything. I've seen a lot of people trying to do crafts – they tried, at first they were patient, but later on, they're like, 'ah no.' And they're doing something else now. To be a crafter? You need to be patient and work hard. Like for me ... I paint until two am, then I sleep maybe four hours or so, and then I get up and dry things and then I come here.

In her fieldwork on Cape Town's wire workers, Matshaka (2009) notes that she encountered only two women engaged in the sale of these crafts, but does not offer an explanation for this. The implication of the above quote – that women do not sell crafts because they lack patience and a good work ethic is disproved even within this chapter by the many successful female entrepreneurs interviewed. Rather, the imbalance of

female artisans and sellers probably has more to do with factors like the willingness to repeatedly approach tourists, in English, to make a sale; access to mentors willing to train women in the craft; and their ability to contend successfully – both verbally and sometimes physically – with other artisans for a space to sell their wares. For the men involved, working selling wire crafts was not only a means of securing an income, but also a path to self-employment. One participant expressed this as the freedom of self-determination – to decide what to sell, and when, and to not have to be beholden to a boss.

The artisanal sector spans survivalist, entry-level participants right through to successful craft entrepreneurs. In general, this sector appears to accord higher status and generate greater earnings relative to other forms of trading, despite having similarly low entry costs. Although the basic form of the artisans' livelihood is similar to that of street traders and hawkers, their income is based less on numerous low-margin transactions, but more on a smaller number of more lucrative transactions, primarily with tourists. There seemed to be a wide range of income levels, but most of the artisans indicated that they were working in the sector because the income was steady enough to make it worthwhile. It was also preferred to casual labour or even formal employment in the service sector.

4.2.4 Hair Salons and Hair Braiding

Despite the widespread presence of migrant-operated hair salons in Cape Town, as well as other parts of South Africa, there is very little research literature on this particular kind of migrant entrepreneurship. An investigation into the types of foreign workers in Durban did find that 32 per cent were involved in 'hair cutting' as a primary activity (Hunter & Skinner, 2003). In areas such as Mowbray and Claremont in Cape Town, there are several brick and mortar hairdresser and barbershops clustered together in order to draw students from the University of Cape Town, as well as passing shoppers.

In the main minibus stations, women advertise their hairdressing services with placards displaying the various styles available to passing commuters. Two aspects of this industry make it particularly interesting: first, it offers a low-cost entry-level job for self-employed women; and second, it has a reputation for being a business with a high proportion of non-South Africans.

Many women from the DRC and Congo-Brazzaville are to be found working and running hair-braiding salons across the city of Cape Town. One hair salon owner, Grace said that when she first arrived in 2002 from Kinshasa, few South African women were braiding their hair at all. As more Congolese women migrated to South Africa and opened shops, South African women started having their hair braided in salons. In Cape Town, the hair-braiding salons represent a significant industry and source of income for migrant women. All the braiders interviewed for this study had non-professional experience braiding hair before coming to South Africa, and for this reason, considered it a relevant job for them to undertake. With flexible hours of work, and the possibility of bringing their children to work with them, working as a hair-braider accommodates women's childcare duties better than other kinds of work.

There is also a clear progression in the sector. Hair-braiders typically begin working as apprentices, making an incremental amount of money to help the salon owner or other braiders complete a job. Despite the small amounts, this money still plays a vital role in some families. One Congolese braider, Saleh, whose husband, Bondeko, had postponed cataract surgery until he became blind, was supporting her family of two adults and five children on their dwindling savings and the money she was making as a hair-braiding apprentice. Although her older children mocked the meagre earnings of around R200 per week, she pointed out to me that it was worthwhile, as she was able to cover part of the weekly grocery budget with her earnings.

After a certain amount of time, as apprentices progress, they start bringing in their own clients and pay commission to the salon owner. One salon owner, Janette from Brazzaville, Congo, tells her own story;

J: For the beginning, I was working outside, for the town, to the stand. After that, I meet my husband here, and then my man, he was the one looked for me the place here because he say no, I can't working outside, because you see now, its winter, it's not easy... I was working and getting just forty percent...you can do something for hundred Rand, the boss going to pay you forty Rand. Imagine for the month how much you're going to get! After that, I started to think about having my own place. To have also the shop here is really difficult. I learned this place my friend she was renting here... she told me, you cannot continue working for the people – you can take my place. And then I came here – since I'm here it's been one year already.

MN: And is business good?

J: No! You know, outside earlier is not the same...sometime you get money to eat and pay rent, that's all. Because if you don't get money, I [would have to] sleep outside...I'm a woman, I [would have to] to start to selling my body...the way I am here, it's better...all this place, I pay two thousand something. I live in that room and share another room. I'm not here alone, I have other people here renting [chairs].

When asked how much she made from a typical job, Janette responded in a way that reveals how seriously she considers the livelihoods of the other braiders in her shop, even when her own financial situation is precarious:

J: It depends - you can braid for one-fifty, two hundred, some eighty Rand, hundred Rand. It depends what the person wants. And also, I'm not going to plait alone, I'm going to plait with my sisters – you need to share the money...you see like now, it's quiet, no one here. Sometimes you can have customers, like three, four customers here, it depends. Like now it's the month end, it's supposed to be busy, but it's quiet.

Over the course of the interviews, it became clear that working in a salon was considered a 'natural' job for migrant women. While for the Zimbabwean male artisans interviewed, being self-employed was a way of publicly staking their agency through evident self-employment, women working as hair-braiders and running salons do not actively frame themselves as self-employed, but rather describe this work as 'better' than the alternative of selling their bodies. Although hard to determine if it is because of pre-existing cultural stereotypes or merely convenience, two separate Congolese ethnic organizations interviewed for this study were already either involved with or in the planning stages of a program that would help migrant women start their own hair salons. The fact that both organizations appeared to be run almost exclusively by men suggests that hair-braiding is seen as a job that is 'appropriate' for a woman – perhaps because it is a service that is largely performed by women for other women.

Hair-braiding salons are an example of migrants employing other migrants, and an almost unique example of an industry where, by and large, women train and employ other women. As with hawking and trading, some of the hair-braiders interviewed had received financial or other assistance from a friend or family member in helping them get established, but they in turn helped others. Based on the stories of women like Janette, and similarly to the experiences of traders like Joyce and Fowsiyo, it also seems to be an occupation in which migrants are able to achieve upward mobility, unlike the low-level trap of domestic service.

4.3 Business Robberies and Sexual Violence

An extremely common theme that emerged in the study, particularly when asking Somali residents about their businesses, was the considerable amount of violence that many experience, particularly in township areas of Cape Town. Two of the men -- both *spaza* shop owners originally from Somalia – described armed robberies that were considerably more violent than those related by other respondents. Both men described multiple occasions when they, or those they were with, had been threatened and physically attacked in the course of armed robberies. Mahmoud had large scars on his leg and stomach from when he was shot while operating his shop. After being attacked and having the stock from his shop plundered, he was hospitalized for twenty-three days for complications related to the attack. Ali Mohamed, who had previously operated a shop in Khayelitsha, and was operating one in Mitchell’s Plain at the time of the interview, had also experienced multiple armed robberies. His shop assistant had also been critically wounded after having been stoned by a group of youths. He summed up his experience as follows:

As for safety, it is very bad in South Africa for refugees, especially for Somalians. If they see [a] Somalian, they think they've got money. But money is very difficult – if you sell sweets and what-what, and small groceries, if you sell that stuff, maybe, plus minus, you can get more than R2,000 or R3,000 per month. Then, early in the morning, you wake up, you try and buy some stock. The people, they see this money and they think that you've got a lot of money

Both men’s experiences reflect a common pattern in which Somali traders operating businesses in townships are disproportionately affected by some kinds of crime – particularly business robberies that include looting, arson and murder (Gastrow & Amit, 2012). Many migrant shop owners often sleep in their shops in order to try and prevent theft. Not only is the level and frequency of such crimes alarming, it has serious

consequences for the livelihoods of traders. Robberies from shops, often of cell phone air-time credits or other valuable items, cut sharply into their monthly earnings and represent a considerable strain on their livelihood. Furthermore, given the difficulty of accessing the free health care to which refugees and asylum seekers have a right (Landau, 2006), injuries sustained while working in dangerous areas constitute a further financial drain on shop operators.

Not only male participants are affected by the increased violence in township areas. As a part of a very violent society, tens of thousands of South Africans and non-nationals report instances of sexual violence every year. While in 2006-2007, 52,617 offenses of rape were recorded by the police (Rumney & van der Bijl, 2010), it is impossible to know how many rapes go unreported. Kihato (2007) notes that many female migrants do not report their experiences of sexual assault to the police because they are undocumented, and fearful of deportation. As a documented migrant, a young Somali woman, named Fadumo, was working in a clothing shop in Khayelitsha when she was raped by two South African men. Fearful of becoming an object of malicious gossip, and without family of her own to support her, she decided to remain quiet:

I didn't tell anybody. If I told people, two men raped me... everyone [would say] 'hey, this woman, she got raped' nobody [would] talk to me, nobody [would] give me something, and then, [maybe] some people [would say] 'she sick maybe she got HIV'. There's another people [that were] rape[d], and that is why I am scared and why I just keep quiet.

Without telling anyone about what had happened to her, she left her job in Khayelitsha, and became an itinerant clothing seller, traveling from city to city, selling men's clothing to Somali businessmen too busy to shop for themselves, and begging for temporary housing, normally only a day or two, from understanding Somali families along the way. Worried about having her secret discovered, it took over a year for

Fadumo to visit Cape Town's Rape Crisis Centre, where she was able to take an HIV test (she tested negative). Fadumo was unable to receive counselling because she did not speak Afrikaans, Xhosa or English well enough to communicate with a counsellor, and no interpretation services were available. Fadumo still refrained from going to the police in order to keep her experience secret from the Somali community in South Africa, to protect her reputation and maintain her network of weak social ties, an essential part of her livelihood. While the importance of these ties is discussed in more depth in Chapter 5, the important point for now is the gendered nature of violent attacks and their social outcomes. Unlike her male counterparts, who were able to speak openly about the physical violence they had been victim of while working, Fadumo remained silent, compartmentalising an extremely difficult experience, and endangering her health.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated various forms of livelihood practised by forced migrants living in Cape Town, using individual narratives to draw out the diversity of their experiences. The reasons why an individual fails or succeeds involve an intersection of personal, structural and contingent factors. In addition to acquiring skills, training, and experience, improved livelihoods frequently depend on access to social and kinship networks and the kindness or generosity of others, especially for establishing an informal enterprise and in enabling movement from informal to more formal employment. Pre-migration experiences and particular family circumstances also play a role in determining the opportunities and constraints that migrants encounter. Pressure from family members in the home country to remit earnings can impede migrants' economic progress, but personal networks can also be sources of financial and other forms of support to engage in entrepreneurial activity in the first place.

Gender is another important factor. As several of the women's narratives in this chapter have shown, encouragement or opposition from a spouse or other family members can determine livelihood pathways, and influence whether they can embark on any form of income-earning occupation at all. In addition, certain migrant occupations are heavily gendered, such as women in hair braiding and men in craft production and sales, or construction work for males and domestic service for females engaged in casual labour. Within trading and hawking activities, the women in this study were engaged in more marginal and less secure forms of trade, such as itinerant selling or roadside stalls, whereas it was men who ran *spaza* shops. While this does not mean that men's livelihoods are necessarily easier to secure, it does demonstrate the importance of gender in determining migrants' incorporation into the labour market, whether formal or informal.

Another conclusion from the study is that a rigid distinction between formal and informal 'sectors' is not especially helpful in understanding the livelihood strategies and pathways of forced migrants. Self-employment or small enterprise is a better description of some occupations, such as running *spaza* shops or hair-braiding salons. Even the trading and artisanal production systems are embedded in complex procurement and value chains that extend beyond South Africa, intersecting with the formal wholesale and retail sectors in multiple ways. Seemingly unorganized casual employment is connected to labour recruitment agencies and can in practice be more regular and 'quasi-formal' than at first appears. What is also apparent is that refugees and other forced migrants are restricted in their labour options and economic mobility, whether by exploitative employers, bureaucratic and legal hurdles, or hostility from South African nationals. This matches findings from other studies of urban refugee livelihoods, both in other South African cities and elsewhere in the world. As Buscher (2011, p. 25) has concluded: 'Regardless of the economic coping strategies employed, the majority of urban refugees, while demonstrating a high level of resilience, remain on the fringes of

the economies in which they live. For many their survival is day-to-day, hand-to-mouth subsistence joining the ranks of the urban poor.’

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

5.1 Introduction

For those working informally, the state is only ‘one candidate among many’ in organizing one’s economic life (Meagher, 2010). There has been an increased interest among academics engaged in work relating to the informal economy, in the power of ‘social networking’ to explain economic behaviour. This field of economics investigates how informal organizations and institutions based on social ties such as friendship, kinship, ethnicity and location, can replace the formal roles of the state (Totolo, 2013). Migration scholars, who have widely acknowledged the importance of social networking in the migration process for many years (Boyd, 1989), describe it as a dynamic and flexible process that can easily adapt to the host community (Castles, 2004; Nyamnjoh, 2014). The diverse tactics that forced migrants use in Cape Town are excellent examples of social networking. As this chapter will demonstrate, participants utilize both weak and strong ties order to ensure their basic material and social security, and in so doing, draw upon a range of different relationships and entitlements in their day-to-day lives. This chapter explores the ways in which, in the context of a highly xenophobic environment, participants make use of these institutions and relationships, and argues that these strategies have significant consequences for the security of forced migrant livelihoods.

In order to demonstrate this, the chapter is organized into two separate sections, which together comprise an analysis of the series of tactics participants use in constructing and supporting their livelihoods. Not all participants I spoke to were connected with formal ethnic associations or money saving groups, and so these migrants had to manage their money, and navigate their precarity, through more individual agency. The first section explores the experiences of these participants through the series of tactics they use in

order to secure work, save money, find housing and gain access to banking in the formal economy. In the second section, I explore how several Congolese ethnic associations draw upon a sense of shared identity in order to manage club savings and skill training programs for the benefit of their members. I conclude that both individual and communal strategies play an important role not only in providing social support to forced migrants, but also in offering essential financial stability.

5. 2 Individual Day-to-Day Tactics and Social Networking

A high-unemployment economy, difficult access to legal documentation, and a distrust of foreigners and their documents amongst South Africans, together make it difficult for forced migrants to find work in the formal economy (Landau et al., 2005). Before forced migrants are able to connect with community associations, they navigate a series of individual challenges, including finding work, accessing banking and coping with meagre and irregular incomes. This section takes an inventory of some of the most common and effective tactics used in order to combat these challenges. At first glance, these strategies may seem atomized and individual, but when considered broadly a pattern emerges, wherein such seemingly minor tactics and slight transgressions, playing on pre-existing racial scripts constitute an important set of tools that help forced migrants mitigate their precarity.

5.2.1. Financial Literacy and Budgeting

While visiting the new home of two Congolese participants, a roomy bedroom with a double mattress, fridge, clothes rack and somewhat mouldy walls, I looked down to see several pounds of meat, mostly ribs, sitting in a box by the door. After jokingly asking if the two young men were planning on hosting a braai, I was informed that this meat had been bought in bulk for the next month's worth of meals. This conversation about budgeting was one of many that I had with participants from all different backgrounds,

many of whom were conversant with the idea of saving money, but lacked the funds to do so. This following excerpt, shared by Yves, a 32-year-old single man from DRC, reveals the small scale at which this budgeting takes place:

When you get a hundred rand, you know you have to eat [only] twenty rand, because eighty rand you must keep it for tomorrow...maybe I'll stay two, three months at home again with no work. It's up and down, up and down, that is the way we survive.

The box of meat I had observed was the first time I had seen for myself the various money-saving techniques that are often used by cash-strapped households. This example was one of the most prevalent ways to make money stretch by buying in bulk, a strategy which helped to ensure household food security. Mabel, an assistant manager at a Southern Suburbs restaurant and mother of two originally from eastern Congo, buys all of her groceries in bulk at the beginning of the month. Mabel notes that living costs, including groceries, have increased since she arrived. In 2008 her family's monthly groceries cost R500 rand; now she pays around R1,500 rand a month. Despite these added pressures, she and her husband, Joseph, a self-employed barber, also from eastern Congo, through careful budgeting, were able to stretch their income to cover the rent of their Wynberg apartment, (R3,800 /month), buy a car, and cover their childcare costs.

Sometimes frugality can be about more than ensuring household food security. Patricia, a vegetable stall operator from Zimbabwe, remits over half her income home each month to her parents and siblings. For her, buying only the essentials is not a mere act of accounting, but a way of asserting her temporary relationship with the city. As she told me:

Us, we are foreigners, and actually we are not permanent here. So actually, when we are using our money, we don't waste our money. Like, if you want to buy

food, you buy food at the end of the month, for the whole month...so don't just go Shoprite buy, bread, no. Buy for the whole month.

Budgeting is more than ensuring food security, but can also affect personal financial security, and make new livelihood opportunities possible. When Joseph quit his job at Vide e Caffè, a high-end coffee chain, because of poor working conditions and lesser pay than his South African counterparts, it was the R8,000 his wife had saved that enabled him to open a barbershop several months later. This was accomplished by strictly budgeting their income, a feat she had managed only by lying to her husband about their finances.

On such small incomes, budgeting is an essential tool that can empower households to save for the future or start businesses. Unfortunately, financial literacy is not universal, and in fact, amongst urban refugees, even those operating their own businesses, levels of financial literacy are surprisingly low (Buscher, 2011). For Bondeko, the owner of a refrigerator repair shop in Mowbray originally from rural DRC, financial planning was not something he or his family was familiar with. Like many refugees worldwide, Bondeko and his family were originally from a rural area (of DRC) where they owned their own house and were able to farm (Jacobsen, 2005). Moving to the city, where budgeting to pay for rent, food and three different sets of school fees is essential, was something Saleh, his wife, told me they found foreign and stressful compared to their memories of living in the DRC.

Over the three months that I knew the family, they steadily slid into increasing precarity and poverty linked partially to serious illness, but also to poor financial planning. After running out of family savings, Bondeko was forced to sell most of their furniture in order to pay rent. By the time I ended my fieldwork, the family of seven had moved out of their apartment, and were living in the repair shop's workspace, unsure of how to pay several months of back rent. At this point, like many forced migrants barely

surviving, Bondeko and his family would not have been able to take advantage of budgeting anyway, as they do not have enough cash to buy groceries in bulk or put away savings – demonstrating that this tactic is only useful for those with enough available cash to buy in bulk. While household budgeting can be a powerful tool for forced migrants with low incomes, there remains a divide between those who are financially able to budget and those who, due to unemployment, intermittent income or low financial literacy, cannot.

For those participants able to afford it, across household composition, ethnicity and form of employment, budgeting earnings and food emerged as an important method of managing their precarious situation, and thus, at least partially, prepare for an uncertain financial future. While for some participants this was their primary form of ‘insurance’, others combined this strategy with club savings programs, discussed further in section 5.3.

5.2.2 Smart Strategies with Banking and Racial/Ethnic Scripts

Participants with status as asylum seekers and refugees faced persistent problems in opening and maintaining access to bank accounts (see section 3.5). Whether by being denied permission to open an account, or having that account closed or frozen when legal documents expire, participants faced several serious hurdles to utilizing banking services. The majority of participants dealt with this exclusion the same way that over 25% of South Africans do – by avoiding banking altogether and working exclusively in the cash economy (Finscope, 2011).

The motivations against banking varied amongst participants. Some did not feel the need to have a bank account: for small business owners, such as hawkers and *spaza* shop owners dealing in cash, banking fees signify an unnecessary expense, as all of their savings are converted into stock for their shops. Country of origin also plays a role: several Zimbabwean participants had ZDP permits, which makes it easier to open

an account. Other Zimbabweans in the asylum system were able to return home or remit money home regularly enough for a South African bank account to not be of particular concern. Amongst participants, it was mainly Congolese participants (both from the Republic of Congo and DRC) that, due to the difficulty of remitting money home, their protracted time in South Africa, and the higher likelihood of working in the formal economy, were most interested in accessing bank accounts.

In South Africa, most employers prefer to pay wages through direct deposit into employees' bank accounts. For this reason, participants working through Fundi or in other more formalized jobs need bank accounts in order to conduct their business and to be paid for their labour. Many found innovative solutions to sidestep the obstacles put in place by banks.

One strategy particularly popular amongst casual workers for Fundi was to have office staff deposit their pay into a co-worker's account. While an elegant solution for the migrant employee, this approach has two main problems. The first is that it requires finding a co-worker who is reliable, trustworthy and willing to provide ongoing access to their bank account. The second is that it is cumbersome and not easily replicable. As a not-for-profit organization with the specific intention of easing access into the skilled workforce, it is within Fundi's unspoken organizational mandate to undertake such a process, which normally involves multiple phone calls between different employees, and a good administrative ability to not confuse different people (and their bank accounts). Given how cumbersome this process is, it would be difficult to find other organizations or employers willing to undertake this level of extra work in order to pay their employees. A second tactic was much less common. One participant, Raphael, secured his account by asking a South African friend to open up an account on his behalf. This is a risky proposition, as the bank account is in the name of the South African accomplice, and so that person would be able to withdraw money or close the account without the permission of the forced migrant. While not having a bank account

can hinder upwards mobility and business ventures, neither of these strategies offers a sustainable solution, forcing participants to rely on the charity of their employers, co-workers or friends in order to gain access to banking.

For those with bank accounts, the account was normally seen as an asset that should be protected. Another, more successful and better established participant, Claude from Brazzaville, had opened a bank account years ago, and used it often in the course of his successful business as a building contractor. As a contractor, Claude needs a bank account in order to run his business, as it is the only way clients can deposit large sums of money for him to buy materials and complete his contract. For this reason, Claude told me he was extremely diligent in ensuring that his legal papers were up to date, and that he had constant access to his bank account. As a part of this, he always made sure to perform transactions in more affluent areas of Cape Town, where he felt he was less likely to have problems. When in the bank, he ensured that he worked with either a coloured or white teller. He felt so strongly about this that he would let people go in front of him, in order to ensure that he did not bank with a black South African teller, who he claimed were less lenient and patient with foreigners. Another contractor, Yves from DRC, admitted somewhat reticently to using the same strategy to keep his account open. Although he lived in Mitchell's Plain,

I only went to the Bellville bank [where he first opened his account]...what I can say, it's not like I'm making that thing in bad way, but it was like, [there were] only white people there, so it was like, easy.

The tactics of these two men reflect a sentiment I heard repeated again and again by participants: namely, that it was specifically black South Africans (often referred to as 'Xhosas', which is the dominant black African ethnic group in the Western Cape) that resented their presence in South Africa the most. While statistically representative surveys have determined that South Africans are highly xenophobic, regardless of race,

gender, or language (Crush et al, 2008), this issue does have nuance that cannot be captured in national surveys. When describing my research to white South Africans, I was often told that foreigners were good workers, or worked hard, or were ‘so polite’. This was most memorably brought home by a conversation I had with a young, upper class white South African man, who commented to me there was something about Congolese that was more ‘sophisticated’ and ‘civilized’ than other Africans he had encountered. While his racist comments were supposed to support his claim that migrants from the DRC make particularly good waiters, his comments betrayed feelings I am sure not only he held: that some migrants are in some ways different or superior to black South Africans. Claude and Yves, in deliberately only banking with coloured or white tellers, were aware of, and deliberately taking advantage of these local racial (or ethnic) scripts in order to further their own interests. Indeed, amongst the Congolese participants I spoke with, many were aware that making a ‘good impression’ could pay great dividends. Based on the good impression he made on the owner of the house where he worked as a security guard (see 4.2), Raphael was given funds to enrol in a waiter-training program, and a job in a high-end restaurant upon completion. Another sign of this awareness is a short notice placed in a monthly Congolese newspaper, entitled *Congo Square*, which encourages Congolese to resist stealing from grocery stores, and instead ‘ask a brother or social agency for help’ (see Appendix A).

Whether by networking strategically amongst co-workers and friends, or by taking advantage of the pre-existing racial scripts in their host country, migrants have proved resourceful in finding access to formal banking when the system seeks to exclude them. While some participants drew upon a series of weak ties in order to use others’ accounts to achieve certain objectives, other participants were able to exploit fault lines in South African race relations in order to open their own accounts. With this added security and stature, these participants were better able to start and run their own businesses, engage in the formal economy, and employ other foreigners as well. In the following section,

the role that individual networking plays in helping newcomers integrate into the city is discussed further.

5.2.3 Housing

As Cape Town's population grows, so too does competition for housing, particularly for low-cost housing. In addition to navigating the hyper-segregated nature of Cape Town's neighbourhoods (McDonald, 2014), forced migrants enter into a competitive housing market, where they are forced to compete with poor locals for a place to live. They must do this without permanent employment, local references, or even, having just recently arrived, enough money for a deposit (Jacobsen, 2005: 44). In circumstances such as this, social networking is a crucial tool in helping newcomers integrate into the host society (Massey et al., 1993) and locate housing. Choices in housing are directly linked to livelihoods, not only determining personal safety, but also representing a major expense in migrants' lives.

The choice of where to live is among the most important decisions a migrant can make. Amongst participants, a significant portion had chosen to live in inner-city areas of the city, forgoing the significantly lower rents on offer in township areas. When asked why this was the case, participants would reference the townships as areas of violence. According to participants, townships were unsafe. Living there, they felt they would be more likely to be targeted for attack, based on the fact that they are not South African. While many participants were struggling to make ends meet financially, many placed a premium on continuing to live in areas that were safer – even when it meant a significant percentage of their overall budget. Many participants would share living space, bedrooms and sometimes even beds with other migrants in order to afford the more expensive rents (between R1,500 and R3,000 a month for a bedroom) in more central locations.

While not in any way representative, only four of thirty-two participants I spoke with were living in townships, despite the fact that rent can be up to ten times more in the city proper. During one interview, I asked two young Congolese why they chose to rent a single room together in Mowbray, rather than stay in a township. As a part of their reply, they showed me a series of graphic photos on their phones of a man who had been eviscerated and left for dead. While many of the details were fuzzy, they were adamant that this man was a foreigner, and had been killed in a Cape Town township for a small theft. Through a combination of word-of-mouth and mobile networks, news of these incidents travels quickly, and plays a motivating role in where migrants chose to settle in the city.

All participants indicated that upon their arrival in Cape Town, they used some form of social networking in order to locate their first accommodation. For those who did not join friends or kin already living in the city, one main method of social networking, referred to here as 'co-ethnic hosting', was used. Many forced migrants used shared ethnicity or nationality as a conversation opener with possible other co-ethnics, in the hope of asking for financial support, or even for temporary accommodations. One participant, a young Congolese man named Yves, describes how he used his language abilities to begin the lengthy process through which he secured his own housing when arriving in the city in 2005:

You stand in Cape Town station, there is people passing around...so you can see by looking the face, or what he's wearing. You just say no, this is mine. I can ... just move on him! I say 'bonjour' when he answer you back, so you...start talking, you ask him; you speak Lingala? Chiluba? Swahili? ...you get from there, start to talk, you get from him ten rand, twenty rand, to buy something. It took time, like two or three months, I was still with not a fixed place - staying in churches.

Since his arrival in 2005, Yves has encountered many of the most common experiences of forced migrants, including sharing a crowded apartment in Gardens with sixteen occupants, and having to move multiple times due to high rents. His past struggles securing housing and a livelihood have informed his current attitude towards newcomers as well. Remembering how hard it was for him, when asked, he hosts newcomers in his home in Mitchell's Plain, a room which he shares with two other people. This method of co-ethnic hosting is not just limited to Congolese newcomers. Chiaka, a hair salon owner originally from Nigeria, was able to find housing more easily. Below, he explained how he found a roommate by hanging out in the Southern Suburb of Observatory:

I was staying with my friend, he was here before me...we met on the street. When I spoke to him, and when he reply to me, I find that he is Nigerian guy – because of intonation. I say what part of you? He says he's from Anambra – that is my province. I start telling him my story – that I have just come, that I don't know anybody, that I'm new person here...and he say 'okay, no problem'. As I'm a Nigerian, I can stay with him until I get a job.

Chiaka and Yves' stories are examples of a strategy for creating and using weak social ties that I heard from many different sources. But while this housing strategy had worked well for men, it did not for lone female participants. In their study of the gender differences of Senegalese and Congolese networks, Toma and Vause (2014) found that unlike their male compatriots, who are able to draw on both weak and strong ties, female migrants rely more heavily on the strong ties of long-term migrants and family members in their own migration. Sharing accommodation with relative strangers – a strategy used by many – runs the risk of theft and physical and sexual violence, to which female migrants are more susceptible (Jacobsen, 2005). These findings seem to hold true in the experiences of single female forced migrants coming to Cape Town as well. This can lead to widely different trajectories between male and female forced

migrants. After her first Somali co-national host was resettled as a refugee in Canada, Fowsiyo, a 19-year-old Somali, was left without employment, a wide social network, or a strong command of English. Without viable options to secure reliable housing, she opted for what seemed most expedient at the time:

The time she left, the lady, I got a guy, the guy told me, I will help you, will you marry me? And then I told him 'Yes, I'll marry you'. But [it was] not my choice, I marry because I don't have place I'm sleeping, I don't have money.

This study found that because men had a wider range of socially acceptable housing options, they were more successful in finding housing than their female counterparts. This accords with findings by other scholars, such as Nyamnjoh's study of Cameroonians living in Cape Town, who found that women's social networks were more limited than men's, reducing their access to help and support. This was certainly the case for Fowsiyo, who was unable to sleep on the street or live unmarried with men, and so secured her accommodation through marrying a man who, may have hosted men, but not women, out of pure generosity. Despite being a consistent factor in women's migration narratives, this gendered aspect to social networking is often excluded from literature on kinship networks (Nyamnjoh, 2014) and often leads to analysis that is 'gender blind' (Gidengil & O'Neil, 2006:2). Taking into consideration the differing tactics available to both male and female participants is an important way to draw out the gendered implication of social networking, which can be easy to overlook if not directly compared. As the next section will explore more fully, men and women network differently in community spaces, in addition to in their individual lives, which has an overall effect on their (lack of) representation in these informal power structures.

5.3 Ethnic Community Associations

5.3.1 Group Networking

In the final weeks of my fieldwork, one of my participants, Bondeko, introduced me to five different community associations. Of the five groups, three of them had members specifically from different areas of Eastern Congo, while the other two groups included members from all over the DRC. These associations, while regarded broadly as an occasion for Congolese to come together to socialize and network, also provide important social and economic opportunities to members. In addition to networking and money saving schemes, many associations provide access to a series of informal services, such as emergency medical transportation and protection, for example by making contingency plans for xenophobic outbreaks.

Amisi and Ballard (2005) and Amisi (2005) have explored how Congolese living in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town use ethnic associations for survival. In their investigation, Amisi and Ballard provided a thorough political and historical context for the presence and function of these organizations in South Africa, beyond the scope of what can reasonably be outlined here. Most importantly for this thesis, they recognize that similar saving schemes existed in South Africa from as early as the 1930s, known as *stokvels* or ‘homeboy’ networks, and were used by rural South Africans who had moved to urban areas (Mamdani, 1996:193). Amisi and Ballard argue that for Congolese living in South Africa, this powerful survivalist tool is rooted in the DRC’s postcolonial history. In the DRC, citizens have coped with the decades of government neglect by forming grassroots support networks to provide the services that the state could or would not. In South Africa, Congolese refugees have recreated these community structures in order to establish networks of social support in their new home (Amisi and Ballard 2005:2). While the original function of these associations may be rooted in DRC’s colonial history, they take on a new meaning in the South African context. The structural difficulties and xenophobic attitudes towards foreigners in South

Africa were identified as the main motivating factors for the founding of these associations, stating ‘we come together here [the association] because society here doesn’t open up to foreigners’. Read against the feelings of exclusion that participants express, ethnic associations enable members to pass on cultural values to their South African-born children, and create a ‘home-away-from-home’ (Nyamnjoh, 2014:203).

5.3.2 Group Savings

All five ethnic associations operated basic group savings programs, which offer emergency funds in certain situations, and are drawn from monthly collections from all members. Each group meets at the end of each month, when members are most likely to have money. In the course of these meetings, various community issues are discussed and donations, determined by ability to pay, are taken for the joint fund. This process does not manage a tremendous amount of money – in a typical month, around a hundred members are able to gather between R1,500 and R3,000. This fund is then used towards a variety of essential payments for members, such as funerals, weddings, repatriation of relatives, medical emergencies, and cash support for unemployed members and widowed or abandoned women and children for groceries and rent. These funds are crucial because, as has been demonstrated in Chapter 4, the incomes of most members are unpredictable and insecure. As one community member noted, in an association of over 120 members, ‘no one is working a good job, not a single one! No office jobs’. For the forced migrants involved in these associations, forming or joining a savings groups like this is one of the only ways of expressing agency, through mitigating their individual levels of precarity.

While the concept of savings clubs, sometimes called ROSTAs (Rotating Savings and Credit Associations) is widely replicated by both internal and cross-border migrants in South Africa (Bähre, 2002) and worldwide (Ardener & Burman, 1995), the small loans that participating Congolese associations distribute are not necessarily typical across different ethnicities and circumstances. In her study of Cameroonians living in Cape

Town, Nyamnjoh (2014) finds that the ethnic associations of Pinyin and Mankon, who use similar savings programs to provide micro-loans to a similar number of members, distribute several thousand rand each month, and occasionally as much as R25,000 (2014: 184). In contrast to my informants, who had considerably smaller businesses and poorer access to formal banking, the members of the groups Nyamnjoh visited had bank accounts both in Cameroon and South Africa, and used electronic transfers to remit their savings back to Cameroon, for the purposes of supporting family, aiding in local development projects and for financial safe-keeping in case of refoulement or deportation. While for Nyamnjoh's participants engaging in this form of banking was a way of protecting pre-existing assets, for the participants of this study, savings clubs programs were an essential part of their day-to-day financial worlds. Excluded from formal banking, and unable to access loans from UNHCR partners, where the process of getting funds is lengthy, degrading and sometimes fruitless, group savings plans can be a rapid and reliable way of for migrants to access a larger sum of money if needed.

5.3.3 Skill Training and Employment Programs

There are few formal opportunities for forced migrants to access financial and practical assistance in starting a small business or accessing employment. In the course of my fieldwork, I found that while organizations such as ARESTA, Adonis Musati Project and Red Cross all provide important short and medium term humanitarian grants to cover rent and school fees, none of them offer business loans or grants. Only one Cape Town based organization, The Cape Town Refugee Centre (CTRC) offers support, in the form of small grants of between R500 to R5000 (Hoeflich, 2014). The program's success, however, is hindered by a lengthy intake process that takes over a year for participants to access funds, and the lack of skill training or education about money management (ibid).

By contrast, ethnic associations are able to provide easier to access start-up funding and be more engaged and invested with the business as it grows. An example of an

association that has been successful is VIDEFI, an ethnic association that has launched successful skills training programs in aesthetics and tailoring. During the fieldwork portion of this research, the program was training five women in each of the two programs, representing three different countries, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zimbabwe and South Africa, with a total of ten women in the program. Women are taught the basic skills behind the trades, and also develop experience selling their products and operating the business before striking out on their own.

While other ethnic associations have attempted to emulate this model, for example by starting a hair salon and crèche, they have so far been unsuccessful. This is not due to lack of will or capability on the part of these other associations, but rather their inability to fulfill the legal requirements necessary to start said programs. While it remains unclear how VIDEFI was able to open their business bank account, it is obvious that their success is the exception, rather than the rule. MUREMA for example, an ethnic association for Congolese members from the Maniema province of the DRC, was seeking funding in order to open a crèche and hair salon, but the endeavour was frustrated by their lack of access to formal banking.

For obvious reasons, non-profit associations must conduct their affairs from business bank accounts in order to receive funding through grants or donations. This is an issue, as refugees and asylum seekers, the majority of whom are not permanent residents in South Africa, are unable to open a business bank account for the association. While I was unable to find a specific piece of legislation that confirms the lived experience of multiple participants, there are several pieces of evidence that suggests that participants' experiences are accurate. The first is that it conforms to larger regulatory trends that address forced migrants and banking institutions. As previously mentioned in 3.4, forced migrants experience difficulties accessing formal banking services. In May 2010, South Africa's FIC (Financial Intelligence Centre) announced that banks were not allowed to transact with asylum seekers based on the official permits and certificates by

the Department of Home Affairs, preventing many forced migrants from accessing their funds in pre-existing accounts (Lawack, 2013: 339). This decision was reversed on September 9th 2010, when Lawyers for Human Rights, along with the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa brought an application to the high court in Johannesburg, who successfully argued that permits from DHA be considered acceptable identification (ibid). While currently these permits are accepted as identity documents, under the 2010 regulations to prevent money laundering, FICA seems to empower individual banks to determine whether or not individual migrants pose a financial risk. The second piece of evidence is forced migrants' general difficulty in opening up even individual bank accounts, despite their legal right to do so. The reasons for this difficulty may be banks refusing to take on the risk of migrant accounts, as demonstrated in the letter from First National Bank (FNB) officials to ARESTA (see appendices). Finally, the online application for a business account with FNB, the bank considered one of the most likely to provide formal banking to migrants (UCT, *n.d*) specifically notes that 'FNB must verify the identity of all persons defined by the FIC Act as Related Parties before any account may be activated' and that the person opening the account 'must be a South African Resident and have a green-bar-coded RSA ID book',¹⁶.

Given how few Congolese have been able to naturalize or obtain permanent residence, and certainly do not have green-bar-coded RSA ID books, it is unlikely that MUREMA, and other groups like them, will be able to access private funding through grants for grassroots initiatives. This banking barrier against opening business accounts represents a lost opportunity not only for entrepreneurs hoping to open or expand their businesses, but also ethnic associations and non-profits that hope to create social enterprises that could benefit the wider community. This roadblock signifies a loss to the South African citizens as well as forced migrants. In the spirit of Landau's call for programming that

¹⁶ Sourced from the First National Bank website at <https://www.fnb.co.za/Sales/main.jsp> accessed April 1, 2015.

moves away from ‘bespoke’ programming exclusively for refugees (2014: 143) some migrant associations are already providing services to interested South Africans, including VIDEFI’s tailoring training program and the business skills workshops offered by the Somali Association of South Africa (SASA) located in Bellville (*Daily Maverick*, 2015). Not only do these programs provide economic opportunities to individuals in need of assistance, but they could also serve as a venue for South Africans and non-nationals, including forced migrants, to interact in a positive environment.

5.3.4 Social Networking and Community Services

The monthly association meetings enable Congolese from across the Greater Cape Town area to connect and network with others from different parts of the DRC. Through the large monthly meetings, these associations are also useful venues to access information about formal and informal employment opportunities (Amisi, 2005, Al-Sharmani, 2003 and El-Abed, 2003) and important information regarding forced migrants’ legal status in South Africa. Members see the association as a place to meet. This is particularly true for funerals and weddings, where it is expected that all Congolese go to pay their respects (Amisi and Ballard, 2005). Through social networking, these meetings serve a larger function, in supplementing or in some cases even replacing the often-inadequate civil services available to migrants and South Africans alike.

In their investigations into medical xenophobia, Crush and Tawodzera (2011) find that within a healthcare system that is overburdened and in an advanced state of disrepair Zimbabwean migrants do experience discrimination based on documentation, poor communication, verbal abuse and xenophobic statements and insults. These findings echo issues with medical services noted by participants, such as MUREMA’S response to the discriminatory treatment of Cape Town Emergency Medical Services. Participants reported that, when speaking with the dispatcher, if they had trouble

communicating in Afrikaans or English, dispatchers would sometimes disconnect the call, similar to Crush and Tawodzera's findings that medical practitioners will deliberately use local languages with foreign patients, as a way of underscoring their powerlessness and other-ness. Participants complained that EMS had unacceptably slow response rates, particularly in townships, where an ambulance may not come at all, or if it did, only after several hours. In response, the association developed a list of members with cars able to provide transportation if a medical situation arises. If needed, any member of the association can call these numbers, and transportation will be arranged to bring them to the hospital. Similarly, in the course of community meetings, contingency plans have been made for possible future xenophobic attacks. This process is similar, and involves phone trees and a prearranged action plan in order to extricate members from affected townships and informal settlements, all without the use of public transportation such as public taxis and trains.

5.3.5 Gender in Ethnic Associations

Despite one of the main stated objectives of these associations being to financially aid single women and children who are deemed 'powerless' without the collective's support, women were conspicuously absent in all ethnic associations that I visited. Like Nyamnjoh's fieldwork with Cape Town based Cameroonian ethnic associations, I also found that women were confined to 'marginal decision making processes' (2014: 177), and of the five associations, only one woman was in a leadership position, holding the dubious honorific of Minister of Women and Children's Affairs. Women were also absent at the association's monthly meetings. When I raised this issue, it was explained to me that most female members' husbands were also members, so the women stayed at home to take care of the children, who were considered too disruptive to attend, while the husbands attended the meeting. This heavy gender distortion not only places male migrants in the position of 'helpers' of victimized female migrants, but also contributes to women having less widespread and more isolated social networks, and hence less social mobility, than their male counterparts.

5.3.6 Summary

In considering the role of social networking in forced migrants' livelihood tactics, it is obvious that both individual and community networking tactics are used. Individual networking, typically composed of weak ties, tends to be used more effectively by male forced migrants, while females face a more limited set of options. Community ethnic associations play an important role in providing access to small and easily accessed sums of money that would otherwise have been unavailable to participants. Finally, in addition to these club savings programs, some ethnic associations are undertaking economic empowerment programs, intended to provide training programs for their members, but also available to other foreigners, as well as South Africans. Such organizations provide a promising opportunity to not only enable forced migrant livelihoods, but build positive social capital with their host society.

5.4 Conclusion

By considering the full economic lives of forced migrants, it is clear that in addition to the wage and income earning activities discussed in Chapter 4, the individual tactics and networking strategies that migrants use play an important role in securing their livelihoods. The strategies, such as budgeting money and taking advantage of local racial scripts, are an important part of participants being able to deploy what little money they have in the most strategic way possible.

Both individual networking and interactions with ethnic associations help forced migrants to gain access to a series of weak ties that enable them to access housing opportunities, lump sums of money in emergency situations, and various kinds of skill training programs, as well as to network in order to gain access to a wider variety of job opportunities. In addition to fostering a sense of belonging, these ethnic associations structure forced migrants' interactions with each other, and act as a state-like structure that provides community-styled grant programs, emergency medical services, and even

disaster management. At the same time, these processes and tactics are deeply gendered, and offer a different portfolio of options to male and female participants, leaving women to deal with more serious consequences due to their diminished social networks and marginalized positions in ethnic organizations. While such non-monetary tactics may, to a certain degree mitigate the considerable financial strain on forced migrants' livelihoods, their position remains financially and sometimes physically perilous. In the words of one participant, while networking can help, for forced migrants with insecure employment and living in a xenophobic and sometimes violent city, 'not only are you insecure socially, but you don't know what your future holds for you'. In the end, these strategies emerge only as a way of managing, rather than erasing that insecurity.

6. CONCLUSION: LOOKING TOWARDS THE BIGGER PICTURE

6.1. Introduction

While South Africa has one of the most powerful economies on the continent, forced migrants arriving in Cape Town encounter a city divided by vast income inequality, embedded within a country with national unemployment rates of above 25 percent. Unlike forcibly displaced migrants living in refugee camps and receiving humanitarian aid, forced migrants in South Africa must be economically self-sufficient by taking part in the South African economy. Despite their high rates of education rates and willingness to work, their access to formal employment opportunities is hampered by South African employers' distrust of their paperwork and widespread xenophobia, pushing many forced migrants into the informal economy. In response to this context, this thesis set out to learn more about the economic activities of forced migrants working outside of the formal economy, typically through working in the informal economy or as casual labourers. In order to take a bottom up, people-centred approach that drew out individual lived experiences, this thesis drew upon a livelihoods framework, following in the approach of Vearey (2008) and Jacobsen (2005; 2006). The following pair of interlinked questions guided the research and analysis: What forms of informal employment or other income generating activities are forced migrants in Cape Town using to secure their livelihoods? and what are the economic, social and spatial factors that enable this employment?

Using data collected from semi-structured interviews with forced migrants and key informants, the research for this thesis discovered that while the both disorganization and corruption prevalent in the Department of Home Affairs and the persistent and generalised hostility towards foreigners throughout South African society curtailed participants' economic activities, this was mediated by participants' drawing upon a series of formal and informal tactics and social relationships in order to secure their livelihoods. The specifics of these, along with the overarching themes of the thesis, are

summarized in the following section (6.1). In sections 6.2 and 6.3, I identify the theoretical and policy implications of these findings, before discussing the limitations of the study (6.4) and pointing to some areas for future research regarding the study of livelihoods and forced migrants living in South Africa (6.5).

6.2 Main Findings

This thesis has considered the livelihood strategies of 32 forced migrants working outside of the formal sector in South Africa. It has found that even amongst those engaged in informal and casual labour, a diverse range of income earning modes were employed. Participants engaged in entrepreneurship in sectors such as contracting, hair salons, *spaza* shops and hawking, while those engaged in casual labour secured their work either through the Fundi Network, or informally, through day labour or social networking. Those engaged in casual labour were predominantly construction and domestic workers. There was a marked heterogeneity of experiences: while many seem trapped in low level employment, others, by drawing on transnational connections, personal charm and luck, were able to negotiate their way into more formal (and secure) employment. Three cross cutting themes were identified, each of which are explored in turn in the following section: gender, the informal/formal divide, and instability and precarity.

6.2.1 Gender

Gender was a factor that structured all aspects of participants' economic and personal lives, from their experiences at the Department of Home Affairs, to the sectors participants became involved in, to the ways and extent to which they networked. With separate queues for men and women at the Department of Home Affairs, despite the prevalence of men among forced migrants, women experienced fewer frustrations in renewing their permits, and reported less of an impact on their overall livelihoods and access to legal status. Gender also shaped the choice of participants' income-earning

activities, as women were involved in hair salons, vegetable stalls and hawking, while men were more likely to be involved in artisan work, *spaza* shops and casual labour. This gender-influenced income earning extended into casual labour as well: men were able to use Fundi as well as day-labour options to secure work, while only one woman engaged in this form of labour, and only through Fundi. Casual labour opportunities for 'female' jobs such as dishwashing and domestic work were in less demand by potential employers than typical 'male' jobs, such as painting and construction work. This made it more difficult for female participants to find work using this resource. These gendered livelihoods had further impacts on how participants networked socially. While men could be hired as a part of a larger team of construction workers, which allowed them to network with other foreigners, as well as South Africans, while building skills by learning from their co-workers, women were normally registered as single domestic workers or administrative assistants, jobs which were less common, socially isolating and presented few opportunities to build skills. Within ethnic associations, women's roles were restricted to marginalized positions specifically designed for women. Women's presence in meetings was sparse, as most women were tasked with caring for the children off-site.

6.2.2 *Formal/Informal Divide*

While this thesis set out to document the livelihoods of forced migrants working in the informal economy, my findings suggest that rigidly distinguishing between formal and informal 'sectors' may not be the most useful way of framing forced migrant livelihoods. Focusing on the income-earning histories of participants, starting from when they began their process of moving to South Africa to the present day, revealed that many participants moved frequently between formal and informal income-earning in order to earn a living. Some participants, particularly men working as casual labourers, sometimes work simultaneously in both formal and informal economies in order to make ends meet, and maximise income and networking possibilities. Income-earning in the informal economy is subject to similar organizational rules as the formal

economy, in that informal processes determine access to spaces to work and operate, with their own hierarchies and rules. These govern migrants' access to the space and opportunity necessary in order to earn income. While forced migrants may work casually or informally, the results of their work is a part of the formal economy, whether in the infrastructure built by casual labourers or in the production of the artisanal crafts sold in formal, brick and mortar shops.

6.2.3 Instability and Precarity

A consistent theme in conversations with forced migrants was the volatile and unstable nature of forced migrants' tenure in the city. This manifested itself in several different ways, including accessing documentation, social services and housing, as well as in their income-earning strategies. As discussed in section 3.2, refugees and asylum seekers experience great difficulty accessing legal documentation, because of the disorganization and corruption at the Cape Town RRO, which results in long lines and inconsistent renewal periods. This puts participants' legal status in regular jeopardy. While informal and casual labour is to a certain degree unstable by nature, there seemed to be cyclical dips in business and earnings, as many hawkers, traders and artisans have built a customer base which consists largely of poor South Africans, who tend to spend less near the end of the month. Others rely on the highly seasonal tourist economy. In addition, Cape Town's xenophobic atmosphere contributes to participants' feelings of being physically unsafe as they move throughout the city, which in turn shapes their experiences of the city, cutting them off from building social networks with South Africans. While forced migrants have developed a set of tactics to address these strains and exclusions, such as strict budgeting and individual and community level social networking, these are not permanent solutions to their chronic instability. Some participants, such as Claude and Raphael (section 4.2) were able to mobilise local and transnational social connections in order to maximise their income and access steady employment in the formal economy. The majority of participants, however, despite drawing upon a diverse set of entitlements that ranged from various income strategies,

individual and community links and personal strategies and tactics, could do little to increase their overall livelihood security.

The three finding chapters of this thesis have demonstrated that there is no simple solution to the uncertain and vulnerable situation that forced migrants find themselves in, but rather confirm the fact that the exclusion that participants face is multidimensional.

6.3 Contributions to the Literature

This thesis joins a significant body of literature that explores the livelihood strategies of the urban poor, as well as the literature of migrants living in South Africa, and their struggles to make a place for themselves in the country. It finds that there is no singular experience of being a forced migrant in Cape Town, and that livelihood strategies are as diverse as the participants themselves. In considering forced migrant access to the Department of Home Affairs, this study confirms the work of Amit (2012) and Vigneswaran, (2008) that corruption and long wait times interfere with participants' access to legal documentation and formal employment. In considering forced migrants' relationships to banking, this work builds on the earlier work of Landau et al. (2005), Jacobsen (2005) and Jacobsen and Bailey (2004). Through a fine-grained consideration of individual migrants' struggles, it reveals how the new 2010 FICA regulations, which interlink legal status with bank accounts, limit forced migrants' access to formal banking. Chapter 4 describes the kinds of trades that migrants are generally involved in, highlighting the hitherto under-researched role that hair salons play in how female migrants craft their livelihood strategies. In considering the social networks of participants, the findings of this thesis confirms those of Amisi and Ballard (2005) in their investigation of Congolese ethnic organizations, in identifying these institutions as important loci of social networking and informal insurance. In contrast to Nyamnjoh's (2014) investigation of Cameroonian migrants living in Cape Town, this thesis found that Congolese participants contributed and drew upon much smaller amounts of

money, but did find that, like the associations described by Nyamnjoh, there were few opportunities for female inclusion in leadership.

6.4 Policy Implications

South Africa's current legal and banking structure seriously affects forced migrants day-to-day lives, and their abilities to participate in the formal South African economy. While the entire asylum system needs to be redesigned, simple adaptations, such as setting a minimum time between permit renewals, for example a year or six months, instituting a numbering system for appointments, or a by-mail application submission system for permit renewals could create a more fluid and humane experience for forced migrants. This thesis also recommends that the South African government reconsider its banking regulations, and amend FICA guidelines to clearly state that refugees and asylum seekers are allowed to hold both business and personal accounts.

The findings of this research have revealed interesting policy implications in regards to the livelihoods of forced migrants. In spite of a burgeoning literature addressing humanitarian action and urban refugees, there is little evidence from interviews with participants that such programs play an important role in how forced migrants patch together their own livelihoods. Indeed, as Landau (2014) suggests, humanitarian aid to refugees and asylum seekers that is not also available for South Africans could feed into xenophobic feelings towards foreigners. A closer consideration of Fundi Network's operating model may be able to offer insight into the kinds of structures that can empower migrants. Fundi deliberately designs teams that contained both South Africans and non-South Africans, both highly-skilled and less-skilled labourers, so that labourers at Fundi were able to learn from each other, and build social networks outside of their own ethnic affiliations. The informal nature of casual labour allowed participants to arrange their time, to be able to take care of their documentation issues at the Department of Home Affairs without jeopardizing their employment. One serious

recommendation would be for Fundi to attempt to diversify its opportunities, so that women may also be able to take better advantage of this program.

6.5 Limitations of the Study

Drawing on a livelihoods approach, the intention of this study was to incorporate the perspectives of forced migrants on their own livelihoods by considering, on the one hand, the structural factors that shape their options, while highlighting the agency that participants have to actively shape their lives through material and non-material assets. The results of this thesis has the potential to overstate the individual agency that participants have to shape their lives in contexts of poverty, and I have done my best to evenly objectively present forced migrants' livelihoods. With purposive sampling, and a sample size of only 32 participants, ranging in profession, country of origin, age and gender, there is little scope to generalize these findings. In choosing respondents, there is a possibility of missing interesting and useful information from the individuals that I excluded. With such a diversity of participants, it was sometimes difficult in analysis to find themes and trends across so many different factors that were meaningful without being reductionist.

6.6 Future Research Directions

While the field of refugee and forced migrant livelihoods offers a vast array of options for further research, three avenues would be particularly interesting and worthwhile. The first is the role that ethnic associations play in forced migrants' livelihoods. While Amisi and Ballard have done an extensive investigation into the practices of Congolese migrants, a fuller exploration of which migrants use these networks, and how widely these networks are used, and by migrants from which countries, could be explored further.

A second area of focus is women's livelihoods, with a particular focus on the role of hair salons, in order to fill a gap that has not been previously explored, and in order to

learn more about an industry that is largely operated by women. Certain questions arise from a consideration of this particular industry. For instance, what are the trajectories and qualities of women that start these businesses? How do they raise capital to start these businesses, and how is this process different from that utilized by their male counterparts?

Finally, this thesis would not be complete without a call for other migration scholars to take a more serious look at forced migrants' access to formal banking. In my search for literature to contextualize and support my own findings, there were few studies that review the impact of the new regulations on forced migrants. Such a study could yield important information and policy recommendations. Such a study should consider: How have the regulations changed since 2010? How many forced migrants use bank accounts? How many use other forms of banking? How does this affect remittances?

6.7 Final Remarks

Forced migrants come to South Africa hoping to escape the persecution and war they have experienced in their home countries. Upon arrival, they instead encounter a hostile country where the unnecessarily difficult bureaucratic structure of Home Affairs traps them in a cyclical quest to maintain their legal status. While most forced migrants are able to secure their livelihoods through a combination of formal and informal work and the power of social networking, few have been able to move beyond mere survivalism. Even those that are economically successful struggle to access South Africa's banking system, and are unable to build equity in the country. These structural constraints, paired with widespread xenophobia and violence, inspire many participants to dream of ways to leave South Africa, whether by returning home, or through resettlement. More than twenty years after the end of apartheid, it seems that South Africa does not yet belong to all who live in it.

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APPENDIX A: EXCERPT FROM CONGO SQUARE NEWS

Août/August, 2013: 2

Alerte! Alerte! Alerte!

Asani, AMIBEK

Dans moins d'un mois plus de quatre Congolais(RDC) ont été arrêtés dans un des supermarchés de la place pour vol des produits comme: Fromages, Pampers, Chocolats et Bouteilles de Whisky. Il est vrai que la vie est devenue très difficile, mais cela ne justifie pas l'acte de voler. Le mieux serait de recourir a un frère ou une maison Sociale. Nombreux parmi nous ne savent pas que les Congolais (DRC) SONT PARMIS LES ETRANGERS LE MIEUX REPUTES EN AFRIQUE DU SUD, selon les statistiques d'un groupé d'avocats Sud africains qui avaient justifier qu'ils peuvent facilement finir toute une année sans avoir un casier judiciaire d'un Congolais. Veillons maintenir cette réputation, car ca peut servir, soit nous mêmes, soit nos enfants nés dans ce pays.

TRANSLATION

Alert! Alert! Alert!

Asani, AMIBEK

In less than one month more than four Congolese (DRC) have been arrested in supermarkets for stealing products like: cheese, Pampers [diapers], chocolates and bottles of whisky. It is true that life has become difficult, but that does not justify acts of stealing. It would be best to use a brother or a social service organization.

Many of us do not know that Congolese (DRC) ARE AMONGST THE FOREIGNERS WITH THE BEST REPUTATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, according to the statistics of a group of lawyers who proved easily that at the end of the year, they had not had a case with a Congolese.

Let's maintain that reputation, as it can be used, by us and by our children born in this country.

APPENDIX B: LETTER FROM FIRST NATIONAL BANK TO ARESTA



14 June 2013

Mr Bidandi Fred
ARESTA

CONTACT
INFORMATION
REDACTED

Dear Mr Fred

Re: Banking Services for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Our meeting dated 27 May 2013 refers.

We advise that First National Bank has taken the decision to discontinue offering and opening new accounts for Asylum Seekers and Refugee Permit Holders as a result of the regulatory risks associated with banking Asylum seekers and Refugees that do not hold Red ID documents as well as the negative impact of the current process of validation on the customer experience and service. First National Bank does however continue to open accounts to holders of the Red ID books.

Yours Sincerely

SIGNATURE REDACTED

Sedick Howa
Branch Manager

Adderley Street
82 - 84 Adderley Street
Cape Town
8001

CONTACT INFORMATION REDACTED

APPENDIX C: ETHICS APPROVAL



Research Ethics

Use of Human Participants - Ethics Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. Belinda Dodson
File Number: 103623
Review Level: Full Board
Approved Local Adult Participants: 0
Approved Local Minor Participants: 0
Protocol Title: Livelihood strategies of urban refugees in Cape Town, South Africa
Department & Institution: Social Science/Geography, Western University
Sponsor:
Ethics Approval Date: May 30, 2013 **Expiry Date:** August 31, 2014

Documents Reviewed & Approved & Documents Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Wallet Card	Attachment 6: Wallet card for recruitment purposes	2013/03/05
Western University Protocol		2013/03/05
Instruments	Revised Question Guide: Forced Migrants	
Instruments	Revised Question Guide: Key Informants	
Advertisement	Revised recruitment flyer	
Response to Board Recommendations	Responses to the Board's recommendations	
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	Revised LOI for forced migrants	2013/05/08
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	Revised LOI for key informants	2013/05/08

This is to notify you that The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (NMREB) which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above named research study on the approval date noted above.

This approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the NMREB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information.

Members of the NMREB who are named as investigators in research studies, or declare a conflict of interest, do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on, such studies when they are presented to the NMREB.

The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board (NMREB) is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB

SIGNATURE REDACTED

<small>Principal Investigator</small>	<small>Research Officer to Contact for Further Information</small>	<small>Research Officer</small>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <small>Dr. Belinda Dodson</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> <small>Christal Wilson</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> <small>Christal Wilson</small>

This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.

Western University, Research, Support Services Bldg., Rm. 5150
 London, ON, Canada N6A 3K7 t. 519.661.3036 f. 519.850.2466 www.uwo.ca/research/services/ethics

APPENDIX D: LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR FORCED MIGRANTS

Livelihood strategies of urban refugees in Cape Town, South Africa

Principal Investigator:

Belinda Dodson, Geography Department, University of Western Ontario

Student Researcher:

Madeleine Northcote, Geography Department, University of Western Ontario

Letter of Information¹⁷

My name is Madeleine Northcote, and I am a student at the University of Western Ontario in Canada. I am here in Cape Town because I am working on a research project about forced migrants in the city and how they make a living. This letter is meant to explain my research to you, including what kinds of issues we will talk about, and what I plan on doing with the information you share with me. This will help you decide whether you would like to participate.

Cape Town has many forced migrants and refugees, and I am interested in knowing how these people make a living in the city, and how important self-employment is in this. I plan on interviewing around 30 individuals who were forced to leave their home country and now live in Cape Town. In order to participate in an interview, you must consider yourself to be someone who migrated under forced conditions. You must also be aged 18 or older, and make at least part of your income through self-employment, for example in making goods for sale or providing a service for which you are paid.

I would like to know what you do to make a living, what difficulties you encounter in these activities, and what help or support you receive from other people or organizations. I would also like to know what some of the biggest challenges are to living in the city as a migrant, and what things you do to meet these challenges. I will be talking to men as well as women, and I will also ask you about the different ways that men and women migrants make a living.

Participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw at any time. If you agree to participate, I will ask you several questions about how you came to live in Cape Town, your work life and your experiences living in the city. I hope that you will also tell me about other aspects of your life in Cape Town that you feel are relevant that I did not think to ask. If there are any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering, you do not have to. I will not ask for any identifying information or about your immigrant or refugee status and you should not tell me anything about your status that might put you at risk. If you think that talking to me would attract unwanted attention from other people or from authorities

¹⁷ **Paper copy will be provided to potential participants, and oral version will be read to any who are illiterate.**

like the police, then it is better that you say no and do not participate. If you do participate, all your information and answers will be confidential and will be kept either with me or in a locked location at all times, so no-one else will be able to hear or see them.

The interview should last about an hour, but you are free to end it at any time. With your consent, I would like to record the interview with a digital audio recorder. You can choose to have the recorder turned off at any stage during our conversation. If you do not want our conversation to be recorded, you can still participate, but I will write down notes to help me remember what we discussed. The only person who will listen to the recording or read the notes after our conversation is myself. From what I learn from these interviews, I will write a thesis about migrants in Cape Town. When I write about what you have told me, I will never use your name. I will reveal only your age, gender, where you come from and how you make a living and I will refer to you only by a made-up name. I will keep all the information on my laptop computer and only I know the password.

There are some risks you should be aware of. You might lose time by talking to me that you could have spent working. You can decide when it is convenient for us to talk, and if you want to pause the interview or must do something else while we are talking you are free to do so. You can choose whether we do the interview at the place where you work or at another place, such as at a coffee shop.

Some of the questions may be sensitive, but as I said before, you may choose not to answer a question and we can move on to the next one. Also, remember that you may end the interview at any time. You will not benefit directly from participating in this study but information gathered may help to bring attention to the situation of forced migrants living in Cape Town, and show that they are working to look after themselves.

After the interview, I will be happy to keep in touch and to tell you about my research as I make progress. You can reach me by telephone in South African at _____ or in Canada at _____ or by email at _____. If you would like to know more about the research project, you may also contact my supervisor, Dr. Belinda Dodson, in Canada at _____ or by email at _____. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant,, please contact the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Western Ontario in Canada at _____ or _____.

Sincerely,
Madeleine Northcote

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

APPENDIX E: FORCED MIGRANT ORAL CONSENT FORM

Livelihood strategies of urban refugees in Cape Town, South Africa

Consent Form

I have read or heard the letter of information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction. By way of stating 'yes' I indicate my willingness to participate in this survey.

Yes/No

May I continue audio recording our conversation? Yes/No

APPENDIX F: QUESTION GUIDE: FORCED MIGRANTS

Clarify that they don't have to respond to any questions that make them uncomfortable.

1. Are you over 18?
2. Did you come to South Africa because you felt you could not continue living in your home country?
3. Where are you from?
Probe: What country were you born in? Where did you grow up?
4. Would you consider yourself self-employed?
5. What made you decide to move to South Africa? How long have you lived in South Africa?
6. Can you tell me about how you came to Cape Town?
7. Tell me more about how you make a living.
Probe: What kind of work do you do?
Probe: If they have a business: What products/services do you sell?
Probe: How do you get your supplies?
Probe: Where do you make most of your sales? Where do you spend most of your day?
Probe: How long does it take you to get from where you live to where you normally work?
Probe: Do you work on your own or with other people? Are those people also immigrants? Are they from the same country as you?
8. Can you describe a typical day to me?
9. What are the major obstacles you encounter in trying to make a living in Cape Town?
Probe: Are you able to sell/work in the same place regularly?
Probe: Is there a lot of competition for customers?
Probe: Is it difficult to get goods to sell or money to buy stock/make your products?
Probe: Is it difficult to transport or store goods or money?
10. What are the major problems you face in day-to-day life in Cape Town?
Probe: Do you feel safe where you work?
Probe: Do you feel safe where you live?
Probe: Do you feel safe using public transportation?
Probe: Have you had any experience with authorities (either police or immigration?)
Probe: Have you encountered any negative attitudes or hostility from South Africans or from other migrants?
11. How do you deal with these challenges? Are there any people who help you?
Probe: Do you have family in the city?
Probe: Are there any migrant or refugee organizations you use?
12. Do you think your experiences would be different if you were a man/woman?
13. What are your hopes for the future? Where do you see yourself in 5 or 10 years?

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Madeleine Northcote

Post-secondary Education and Degrees: Lester B. Pearson College UWC
Metchosin, British Columbia, Canada
2005-2007 IB Diploma

Mount Allison University
Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada
2007-2011 B.A. (Honours)

The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada
2012-2015 M.A.

Related Work Experience

Development Assistant
Toronto Foundation for Student Success
2014

Teaching Assistant
The University of Western Ontario
2012-2014

Settlement Worker
Romero House
2011-2012

Publications:

Northcote, M. A. (2011). Thirsting for equity: Gender and water in Latin America. *Atlantic International Studies Journal*. 7, 65-74.

Northcote, M & Dodson, B. (forthcoming). Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Cape Town's Informal Economy. In *Urban Informality and Migrant Entrepreneurship in South African Cities*. Crush, J, Chikanda, A and Skinner, C. Taylor and Francis.