



HUNTERSTOUN CENTRE



LAND REFORM, STORIES AND FUTURES IN THE TYHUME VALLEY

– exploring land reform opportunities drawing on the spatial and social history of land possession, dispossession and repossession

THE SETTING - TYHUME VALLEY:

The research explores land reform in a river catchment area in the East Cape Amathole mountain range. The Tyhume River catchment area (..... ha) is small yet contains within it a wide range of land uses, land tenure and access systems. There are exciting yet diverse opportunities for land reform in the Tyhume Valley.

The catchment area has a long history of conflict over access and rights to land. It was here that the 100 year war with the British took place. Consideration of realistic land reform options in this context has to be informed by the past, social and physical environment and development opportunities.

Land transect study – 2 part mini video series and research reports:

The aim of the transect study is to explore land reform possibilities from a spatial and developmental perspective for diverse land parcels, all in the Tyhume catchment.

The work to date has two components, video documentaries and research into the land stories and futures in the Tyhume Valley context.



• The technical research, reports on five parcels of land with very different histories, current use and future potential (forthcoming)

• Short documentaries exploring the land reform issues of the same five parcels of land in short video documentaries (Land Futures) and powerfully document six land (his) stories of families living in the catchment (Land Stories).



SIX 'LAND STORIES' – DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE – VOICES OF THE DISPOSSESSED

The 'Land Stories' mini-series of video documentaries provide voices and faces of families who have experienced insecure tenure, fragile livelihoods, dispossession and the agency of a bold woman in 'illegally' re-claiming of land for settlement. Each families' Land story provides very clear evidence of how their lives have been deeply affected by past land policies and tenure in security. Their longings and dreams for the future of their children expresses their hopes, in contrast to their sobering current lives and land related struggles.

The six short video-recorded accounts have provided for each of the families video documentation of their elders and forebears stories of land possession and dispossession. While rich material for research analysis, the importance of documenting land histories cannot be over emphasized. The family histories are now available to them for posterity on YouTube

Key issues emerging from the mini-series include:

Land access:

- Lack of secure tenure –the impact of multiple moves from one property to another due to their status as 'employees', group areas, resettlement as well as a longing to be able to grow produce
- Conflict with powerful land owners – e.g. commercial forestry re access to land as well use of long standing family burial spaces

Governance:

- Lack of access to basic services, housing, with a special emphasis on social services and water
- Ongoing delays in development - unresponsive and uncaring local political representatives and local authority structures

Sustainability:

- Precious water resources and indigenous forest areas are under threat from commercial forestry – the need for a carefully balanced approach between economic activities and environmental impacts



NTOMBESIZWE MAFIKA

THE BOLD WOMAN OF BOLD POINT

Ntombesizwe grew up on the property 'Hidden Away' in Hogsback. They had to move when this property changed hands; her father was allocated a piece of land in Umtsaland Village where he built a four roomed house for his family of 10. With the building of the Binfield Dam in 1985 they were moved with the Chief to remote eLundini, by the Ciskei'an government. As compensation, the family of 10 were given a two roomed wooden structure in 'eLundini'. eLundini remains a small undeveloped resettlement village, 34 years later. Frustrated with the lack of housing opportunities for 'black people' in Hogsback a decade after 1994, she was the first to build a house in Bold Point, on the norther edge of Hogsback. . The site was a portion of 'commonage' set aside for the animals. Her bold action was taken in 2005, regardless of any consequences she might face. Bold Point has grown to become a small settlement, with very basic services without any tenure. Her dream was to move back to her home in Bold Point, rebuild it and push for the provision of social services for the community. These dreams remain unfulfilled. She passed away in 2019.

Commonage, Binfield Dam, Forced removal, Unemployment, Dreams, Lushington, Ciskei, eLundini
<https://youtu.be/kNsOrokXQko>



XOLELWA COPHISO

THE ROCK OF ESIKHULULWENI

Xolelwa's story highlights the struggle for the recognition and ongoing use of a community burial site on land previously owned by South African Forestry Company (SAFCOL). The land, on a long term lease to a private company, is no longer accessible to them for perform traditional ceremonies, rituals or further burials at the graveyard. In the past, the graveyard was used by the residents of the settlement. The residents of Esikhululweni have dreams to build an age home. Xolelwa explains that she '...would love to sit there with old people, and cook for them, make tea for them, read stories to them, and listen to their old stories' She says, 'It is a beautiful area to live in but there is a still a need for development, such as a community hall – we want to discuss our community issues with dignity.'

Graveyard, Old Age home, Community Hall, Dreams
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihm-6cxgD3c>



PETER SMOOI

MAN OF THE FOREST

Peter is a mushroom seller and former marijuana dealer. He used to be without land, and therefore without a home which left him without an alternative but to live in the wilderness of Hogsback. He now lives in Esikhululweni with his dog Gas. The dilapidated state of his home still makes everyday living a struggle. In the late 80's and early 90's Peter lived in Cape town, however he had to leave in 1994 due to struggles finding employment as well as issues with the law regarding his selling marijuana. Despite the fact that Peter Smooi has all the knowledge he needs to make a living off the land, he still looks on to the future with optimism for himself and for his community. Peter loves to play his guitar, travel around, and write songs. His dreams are to stay in Hogsback till the day he dies.

Esikhululweni, Forest, Living conditions, House, Struggles, Future, Unemployment, Dreams
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4qUJDIPcMw>



PHUMLANI

THE STONE KEEPER'S SON

Phumlani grew up on a farm in the district. His parents as farm workers, experienced a lot of hardship under the apartheid regime. Their family 'grinding stone' is a symbol of their journey from mountain top to Hogsback. The 'grinding stone' is a reminder to the family of the hardship of the life they lead. The family lived as farm workers on 'Mountain Top' for a very long time raising children and working really hard farming. Phumlani finally moved with his family to Hogsback. They built their house of wattle and daub. Phumlani has built his own house at Esikhululweni, he now has a place to perform his Xhosa rituals.

House, Grinding Stone, Xhosa rituals, Farm worker
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_BDMZleXEI



SAMSON MATINI

THE WATER MAN

Samson was taught plumbing by a local Hogsback resident. He has lived on various properties in the district – a function of his father's work on a farm, caretaker of an absentee landowner's home in Hogsback a resettlement village in the Tyhume valley At this stage the residents Esikhululweni, don't have proper houses they occupy the old existing houses with no door frames or windows. As plumber working in the Hogsback area, he tries to ensure his community has access to increasingly intermittent water from a local stream. Samson is concerned about the pine plantations planted by forestry, these trees are depleting the water supply. The area has about four taps which is they share - carrying buckets to the tap and back to their houses. He feels that the community needs to work together, and the youngsters need to learn from the elders. His dream is to improve their living conditions with the building of houses, sports and recreation facilities and a high school to encourage future generations, to make a better life for the community. Samson would like to see the community have title deeds for their land, so that they can pursue some community projects, and make something of their land, for example growing vegetables.

Plumbing, Youth, Better life for the community, Taps, Plantation, Water, Dreams
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1quOXK3SUnM&t=22s>



ZIMKHITHA FIHLA

THE MATRIARCH

Zimkhitha has concerns that that many Hogsback workers live in the backyard of their white employers - they don't have houses to call their own. She says 'living in a white person's house (property) is stressful because you could get kicked out anytime'. Zimkhitha Fihla was one of the first to build in Esikhululweni - she built a house for her parents and her brother. 'I decided to also build a house for my parents so that we could have a family home. Struggling with the government to allocate land they we decided to protest and rise up, because if we didn't, we would never have home or land to call our own. The community began building shacks and wattle and daub houses at Esikhululweni and Bold Point, which resulted in them being arrested and taken to Queenstown. After that the government started listening to them. In late 2017, electricity was installed at Esikhululweni and Bold Point. They are still waiting on the government to give them their own land. Their wish is that they get enough land for farming as well as to create a place for the children to have recreational activities such as training and gym facilities.

White people, Building Homes, Protests, Government, Promises, Dreams, Family
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hj-WUX0ZcY>

LAND FUTURES – 5 LAND PARCELS

The future of land in South Africa impacts on the daily lives of all South African's – not least those living in rural areas.

What is the land reform and development potential for communities living and working in the Tyhume River Catchment?

This mini-series of five short 'Land Futures' documentaries explore the potential futures of five very different land parcels. While the opportunities for each parcel provides hope for the future, these futures are clearly all undermined by past land conflicts, policies and controls. The 'Land Futures' video series of the 5 land parcels, documents the impact of the plethora of legislation and policy – the 1913 Natives Land Act, forced removals, bantustan jurisdiction and control, betterment, resettlement, Groups Areas removals, land claims and land 'illegal' occupation among others. The complex history of the area dates back to Chief Maqoma's defence of the Tyhume Valley land, further land conflict in the 19th Century, which resulted in Colonial occupation, settlement and control.

The future opportunities and challenges highlighted include overall concerns about environmental sustainability (water), rights and social justice especially for young people and rural woman as well as addressing a number of critical constraining factors such as inadequate policy and action – from small scale farmer support to agri-business and traditional leadership.

The 'Land Futures' series is the second of a Land video documentaries. The first 'Land Stories' documents the lived experiences of six families residing in the Tyhume catchment area. Made in 2018, they track the 'land' history of each family – of place of birth of forebears, occupation, possession, dispossession ending with the hopes and dreams of each for their family and community.

The two documentary series are part of a 'Land: tenure, governance and sustainability' exploratory study which asks 'What would a land reformed Eastern Cape look like?' The Tyhume Valley, in many ways representative of the range of land parcels in the Eastern Cape, provides a valuable case study to look at land reform from a spatial perspective.

These video stories have been made possible by a generous grant from the NIHSS for 'Land' and 'Eastern Cape Intellectual Heritage' Research.



YET TO BEAR FRUIT

Originally owned by the Atwell family before the Ciskei days, Battlesden farm (HuDuza) continued to be farmed as a productive citrus estate under the Ciskei Development Corporation. Six years after the inception of democracy in South Africa, the land was transferred to a Community Property Association (CPA) (representing the residents) under the government's land redistribution programme. The video tells the story of the frustrated residents, some of whom have lived on the farm for decades. For example Mr Dumile Katyana, has lived and worked on the farm since the 1950's. He tells of the decline in productivity and how it has come to be in its current poor state. Riverside, a citrus company in

nearby Fort Beaufort, was contracted by government in 2013 to assist in mentoring and providing support for the farm. The intention was that the external support (including training) would be provided until the citrus production on the farm could be run independently by the community. The local community don't believe that they are getting the support they need. There seems to be a lack of transparency about the financial situation of the farm and also no clarity about the nature of the agreement the government has with Riverside. We know the land can be productive but is without the necessary support, the CPA is 'yet to bear fruit'.

Irrigation, Citrus, Agri business, Farming, Land reform, Government support, Community Property Association (CPA)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1W3R2e3N_xQ



HOPE FOR THE VALLEY

The Tyhume Valley catchment remains largely undeveloped. Settlement patters are typical of other Bantustan areas – concentrated betterment villages. The area has high levels of unemployment, low agricultural productivity and outmigration. During the Ciskei Bantustan period, there were substantial agricultural development investment initiatives implemented by the Ciskei government. The Binfield dam built in 1985 was set up to secure water supply for downstream irrigation projects. However, since the end of apartheid many agricultural initiatives in the valley have been neglected. The dam's potential for irrigation, recreation and tourism remains untapped. Marginalised groups such

as youth and women struggle to get ahead.

There are cases of successful very small scale farming activities but these are few and far between. There is potential opportunity for youth development, small scale agricultural projects as well as heritage tourism. 'Hope for the Valley', explores the potential for small scale agriculture and skills development opportunities in rural areas. 'Hope for the Valley' leaves the viewer with a greater awareness of the challenges and yet, inspired by the passion of those who are making a difference.

Unemployment, Agriculture, Tourism, Small scale farming, Youth development
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yr2llvPa2GA>



UPROOTING OUR FUTURE

The Amathole region is a critical ecosystem catchment environment. This is an area of high rainfall, biodiversity and endemism. Extensive pine plantations have taken over grasslands and fragmented areas of indigenous forest. Poor land management practices in areas of extensive plantation can result in raised vulnerability of sensitive areas and ecosystems. The commercial State owned forests are out on long-term lease to the private sector. 'Uprooting our future' provides the viewer with important insights into the need for sustainable forestry practices, the threat of fire while also

highlighting the fragility of the precious indigenous forests. The Cape Parrot is under threat and can only be protected if indigenous forests remain healthy. With changing rainfall patterns, the water needs of downstream communities will need to be weighed against the water-thirsty extensive plantations in the Tyhume River catchment.

Water, Commercial Forestry, Plantation, Fire, Indigenous forest, Cape Parrot, Land management, Sustainability
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rB1KDf2VZ8s>



OUR RDP HOME

Golf Course is a RDP settlement located just 2km to the west of the centre of Alice town. The problems that the residents of Golf Course experience are typical of other RDP settlements - such as unreliable and poor service delivery (basic services & social amenities), unemployment and a high rate of crime. There are unintended consequences found in this development around the ownership of houses.

Those who have had access to own a RDP house have made use of the opportunity in various ways. Given the shortage of other housing opportunities in greater Alice for those with permanent jobs (eg police/ nurses) or for students, many original owners have moved elsewhere and sold or rented their units to middle class families or rented to students. Some of the original indigent recipients remain settled in the area – resulting in a mix of income groups, and some 'new' job opportunities offered by middle income households (eg domestic work/ gardening). While the housing has provided original owners with the opportunity of renting out their units and generating income, suitable land needs to be identified and developed in the greater Alice area to address the broader housing demand.

Low cost housing, unintended consequences, Lack of service delivery, Students, Land for housing, Rental, Sale
<https://youtu.be/IH9MIS3GKWo>



THE SUMMERTON SAGA

The 'Summerton Saga' is a story which shows the impact of Group Areas policy on the total commitment for the love of one's family. As one of the first residents in Hogsback, the Summerton family held substantial swathes of land which they used for intensive cultivation. The marriage of their two white sons to two back sisters was the beginning of the struggle of love across the colour bar, been torn between being black and white and not giving up on love. The 'Summerton Saga' tells of the heartache and violence of being reclassified 'coloured' which lead to the family leaving their home in Hogsback, and selling most of their land. Today they are still struggling with a land restitution claim submitted in 1994. The family dreams of giving back to the community, creating opportunities for the elderly, woman and children of Hogsback and the Valley. Through all this they offer forgiveness for all the wrong done to them.

Family Love across the colour bar, Land expropriation, Land restitution, forgiveness, Dreams, Group Areas
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2sbKwT9Dk0&feature=youtu.be>