



IKHAYA LAMI: UNDERSTANDING HOMELESSNESS IN DURBAN

Designing a study rooted in
community based participatory
research methodology

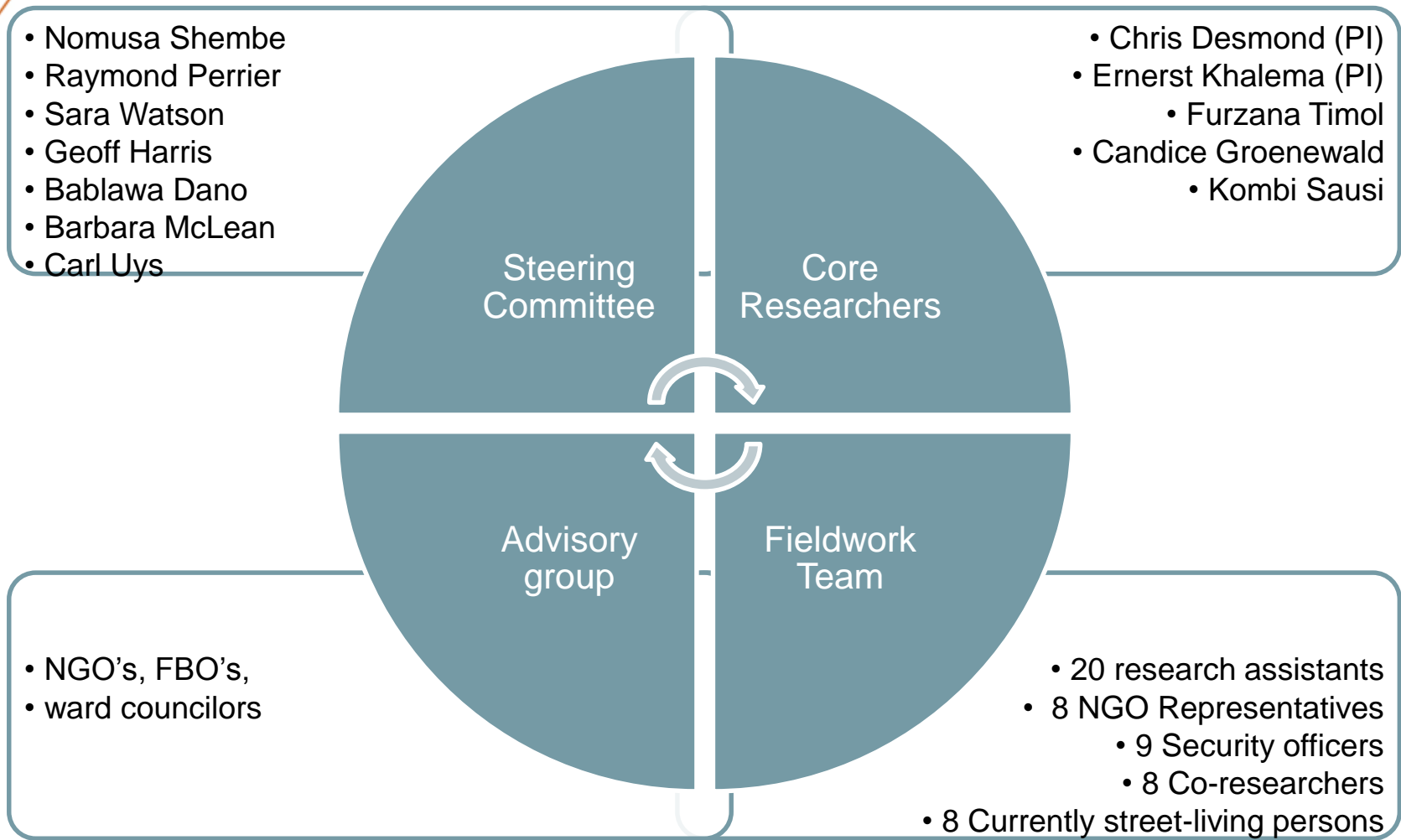
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Presenters:

Dr Chris Desmond
cdesmond@hsrc.ac.za

Furzana Timol
ftimol@hsrc.ac.za

Study Team



Defining and understanding homelessness

In many cases homelessness has been viewed as a problem that encroaches on the rights of other citizens or businesses in the area. The solution has been merely relocating the homeless to other less visible areas. Little consideration is given to the rights of the homeless as citizens to occupy these spaces. ¹

The way we understand homelessness and the subgroups that exist is important for the development of contextually relevant interventions to support these populations

Individuals who have homes somewhere but are homeless within the cities

What support do they need?

Migrants who have homes in their country of origin but live on the streets in the country they migrated to

What support do they need?

People living in shelters

What support do they need?

People that do not have a home to return to

What support do they need?

1. Cross, Seager et al. (2010)

Other studies conducted by the eThekweni Municipality

i-Trump homelessness survey

- 2009
- 360 homeless people interviewed
- Warwick Junction region
- Recommendations:
 - Develop databases on the homeless, available shelters and their associated services
 - Census on homeless population in the city
 - Services to promote job creation
 - Safe and affordable accommodation

Albert Park Profiling study

- 2013
- 354 homeless individuals interviewed and profiled
- Albert Park, Victoria Embankment area
- Recommendations
 - Involve various local and national stakeholders to address issues related to substance abuse amongst the homeless
 - Accommodation/shelter

HSRC study

July 2015- June 2016

Methodology

Community-based Participatory Research

Acknowledging the wealth of knowledge that exists within the community

Involves all stakeholders in all aspects of the research process

All stakeholders contribute expertise and share in decision making process thereby fostering project ownership

In adopting this methodology it was hoped that in addition to the project outcomes, the process itself would be beneficial

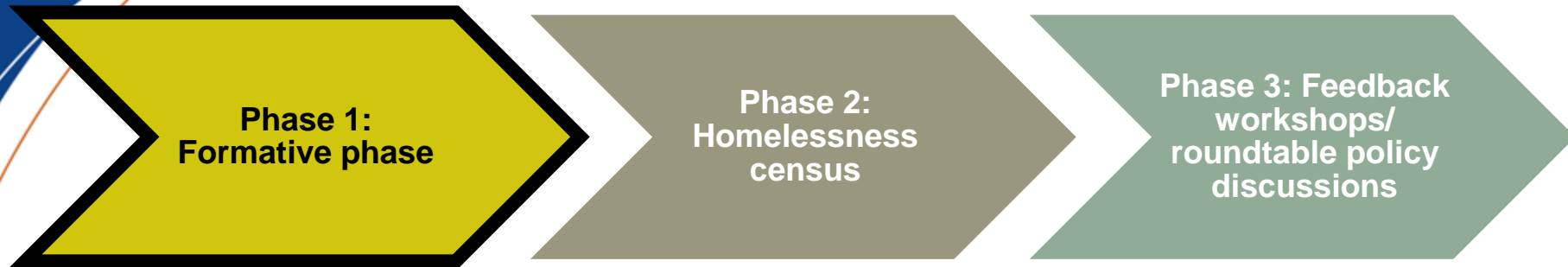


Work with existing organisation on the ground to ensure findings are easily filtered back to those working on the ground



Work with existing organisations facilities so that financial resources can be filtered back into the community.

Phase 1



Phase 1: Formative phase

Focus on the relationship building aspects of the processes by developing research and community networks, understanding supportive systems, and fostering joint project ownership

Phase 2: Homelessness census

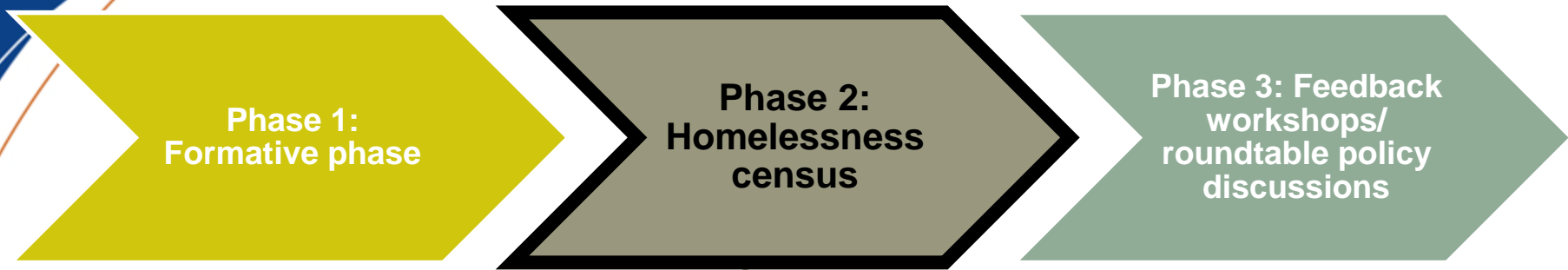
- **Consultation Process**

- Gaining entry
- Establishing Steering Committee
- Establishing Advisory committee

- **Qualitative data collection**

- Interviews (Local government)
- Focus group discussions (Street/shelter living)
- Indepth interviews – Life grid/life histories
- Asset mapping – Service Providers

Phase 2



A census of all persons sleeping on the streets/in shelters within the demarcated study site.

Guided by steering committee

Census questionnaire developed from qualitative component of the study (phase 1)

- Involved stakeholders in data collection
- Collaborative
 - Skills sharing
 - Build on existing relationships and trust
 - Project ownership

Phase 3

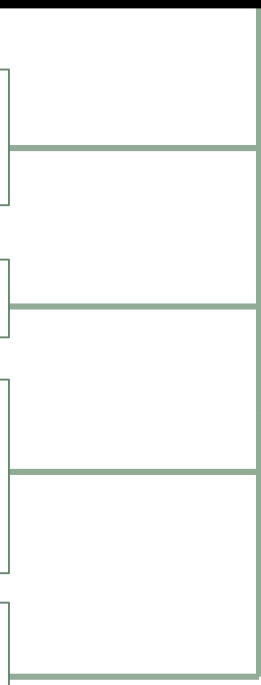


Feedback results to stakeholders

Project ownership

Stakeholder representatives invited to policy discussion meetings

Collectively develop policy recommendations



Highlights from the study

Street-Living

Shelter-living

Count

1959

1974

Gender

88%
Male

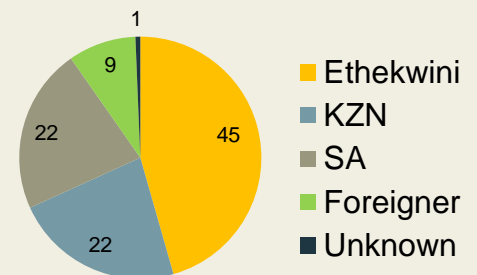
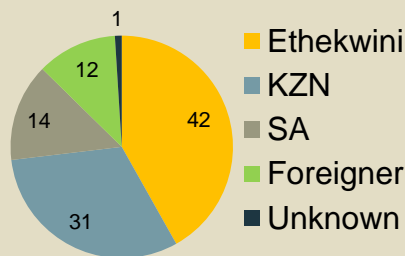
80%
Male

Race

87%
Black

62%
Black

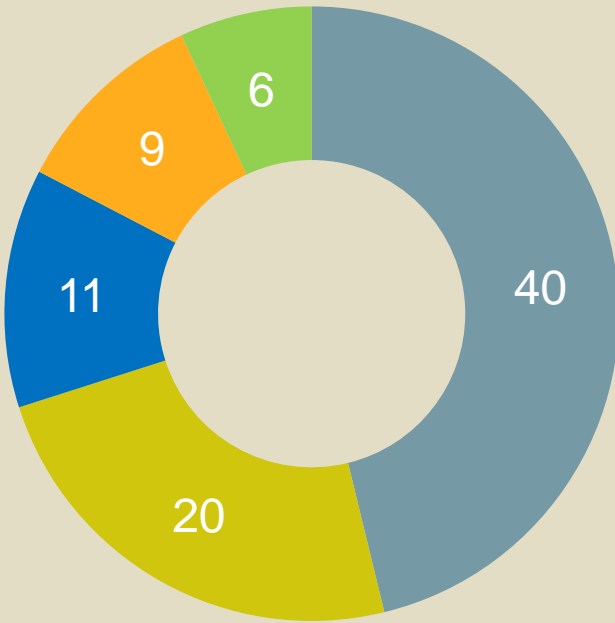
Region of origin



Primary reason for coming to the street

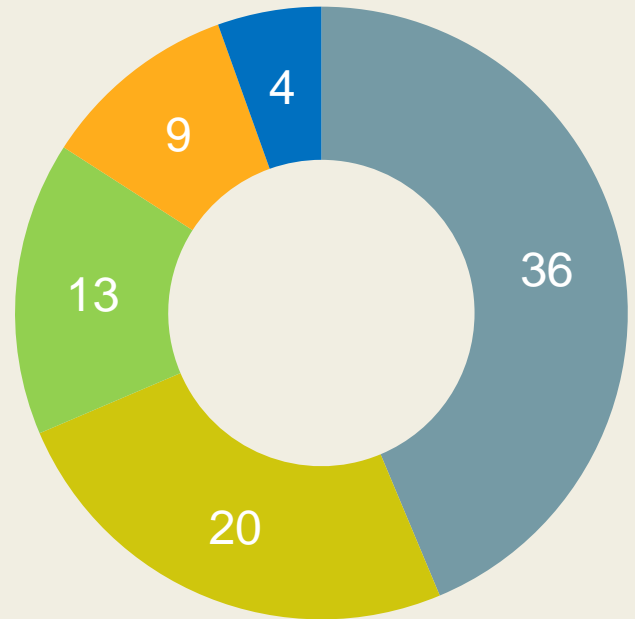
Employment & Family related issues (disagreements/close family death)

Street-Living



- Seeking employment
- Family disagreement
- Substance abuse
- Close family death
- Nowhere else to go

Shelter-living

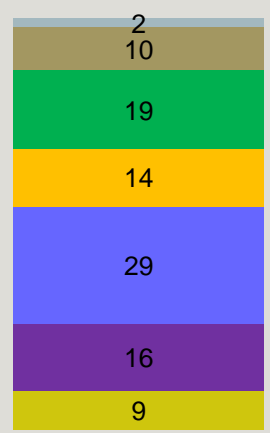


Current living arrangements

Street-Living

Shelter-living

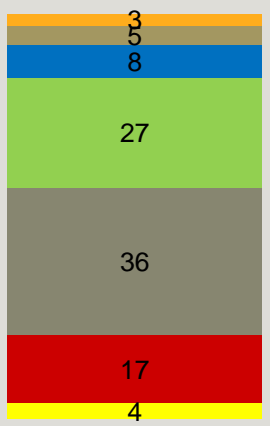
Length of current stay on street/in shelter



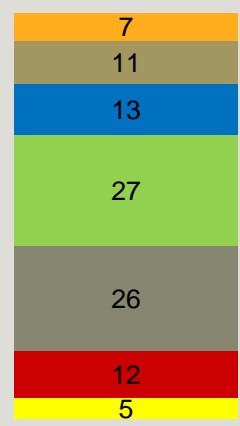
- More than 20 years
- 10-20 years
- 5-10 years
- 3-5 years
- 1-3 years
- 6 months to 1 year
- less than 6 months



Age when first came to stay on street/shelter



- 60 years and older
- 45-59 years
- 35-44 years
- 25-34 years
- 18-24 years
- 11-17 years
- 10 years and younger



Movements Home

69% of the street-living and 58% of shelter living populations have a place elsewhere that they refer to as home.

Of these people, roughly half indicate that they go home with many reporting going home often or when they have money to give their family

Of those that have homes, but do not visit, primary reasons why this is so include a lack of resources at home and no longer having relationships with their family/ community

What do the street & shelter need to get off the street/out of a shelter



Substance use

Street-living

61% report any drug use

60% report frequent drug use

33% report frequent "hard" drug use

33% report any alcohol use

18% report frequent alcohol use

Shelter-living

51% report any drug use

50% report frequent drug use

22% report frequent "hard" drug use

37% report any alcohol use

21% report frequent alcohol use

Key issues to consider as we move towards policy discussions

Changing the narrative

- Evidence based policy recommendations

Given the large number of people living in shelters there is growing discussion of the need to regulate shelters

- This is challenging

Street living and shelter living populations are not homogenous

- There is a need to tailor interventions and support to specific groups

Blurred lines

- The roles of Local and Provincial Government