In SERI’s Community Practice Notes we document the socio-economic struggles of community-based organisations in different settlement contexts in South Africa.

Rooigrond:
Community Struggle in the North West
Informal Settlement Series

SERI's first community practice notes are a series on informal settlement struggles for development, in which we examine how community-based organisations (CBOs) in four informal settlements in South Africa have organised and mobilised for development, particularly around the *in situ* upgrading of informal settlements.

The series examines the strategies and tactics of CBOs in four informal settlements located in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (Gauteng), Mahikeng Local Municipality (North West) and the City of Johannesburg (Gauteng). The four CBOs profiled are: Makause Community Development Forum (Macodefo), Rooigrond Committee, Thembelihle Crisis Committee (TCC) and Slovo Park Community Development Forum (SPCDF).

The series documents and analyses the relationship between evictions, development, community organisation and mobilisation, local politics, protest and the use of courts.

*Rooigrond: Community Struggle in the North West* is the second community practice note in the series. The other three are: *Makause: Resisting Relocation on the East Rand; Thembelihle: Engaging an Unresponsive State* and *Slovo Park: Twenty Years of Broken Promises*.

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Rooigrond: Community Struggle in the North West

Rooigrond: Community Struggle in the North West is the second in SERI’s Informal Settlement Series of community practice notes.

It provides a brief background to the Rooigrond settlement; summarises the key events in the narrative to resist relocation and push for development in the context of broader political struggles, inter-governmental relations failures and protest in the North West province; and examines the strategies and tactics of the local community structure, the Rooigrond Committee.

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About Rooigrond

Rooigrond informal settlement is located in ward 27 of Mahikeng Local Municipality in the North West province. It is a rural settlement informally divided into two sections and comprising approximately 600 households (1 500 people) living mainly in shacks, but also in mud and brick houses. The settlement is located 18km outside Mahikeng, opposite the Rooigrond Prison and adjacent to the R503 road leading from Lichtenburg to Mahikeng. Rooigrond was established in 1993 after farm workers, who had been dismissed from neighbouring commercial farms, moved onto the land. Water for the settlement is pumped from two generator pump boreholes and residents use self-dug pit latrines for sanitation. One third of the households have access to a formal electricity connection.
02

Key Events

The following figure summarises the key events in the struggle to resist eviction and push for development at Rooigrond informal settlement.

**1997**
The NWDA commits to allocate 140 hectares of neighbouring Bauwel land to Rooigrond community.

**2003**
203 households at Rooigrond receive electricity from Eskom as part of the implementation of the IDP.

**2006**
Mafikeng City Council reverses its agreement to expropriate the Rooigrond land and takes a decision to resettle the Rooigrond community on Bauwel land.

**2010**
Operation Rooigrond is formed.

**2012**
Service delivery protests occur throughout the North West. The Executive Mayor publicly commits to rescind the resolution to remove the Rooigrond community.

**1998**
Mafikeng City Council says it will consider expropriating the Rooigrond land.

**2005**
NWDA agrees to facilitate the acquisition of part of Bauwel land on behalf of the Rooigrond community. A housing development is planned for the area, including at Rooigrond.

**2007–2008**
Rooigrond community attempts to engage with government officials and politicians about the lack of services and the proposed eviction.

**2011**
Local government election is held. Monametsi Moeti from Rooigrond is elected ward councillor. Rooigrond community members march to the Provincial Legislature to hand over a list of grievances to the MEC for Housing.

**2014**
Ward councillor Moeti’s house is burnt down. Construction of houses begins at the settlement.

Figure 2: Rooigrond summary timeline
TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1993

- **JUNE**
  - Farm workers move onto the Rooigrond land after being dismissed from neighbouring farms.

1997

- **JUNE**
  - The North West Department of Agriculture (NWDA) requests that the Mafikeng City Council expropriate the land on which the Rooigrond settlement is located, which is owned by the Department of Public Works. The NWDA also commits to allocate 140 hectares of neighbouring agricultural land – known as Bauwel 128 – to the Rooigrond community to “be used for economic purposes either for crop production or any other agricultural activity instead of settlement as there are no other economic activities in the area.” This land is owned by the Department of Public Works. The Office of the Premier approves the allocation of the Bauwel land, subject to verification of the farm workers.

1998

- **MARCH**
  - The Mafikeng City Council says that it will consider expropriating the Rooigrond land on condition that the NWDA surveys the land at its own cost and consults with neighbouring property owners. The NWDA agrees to these terms.

- **JUNE**
  - The North West Department of Developmental Local Government and Housing (NWDLGH) expresses its concern to the Mafikeng City Council at not being consulted on the Rooigrond issue and accuses the NWDA of encouraging the “invasion of and squatting on” land “without due regard to issues pertaining to integrated development planning”.

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2 North West Office of the Premier “Letter to the MEC for Agriculture: Allocation of Land to Farm Workers in the Rooigrond Area: Farm Bauwel 128 JQ” (1 August 1997).
According to the Rooigrond Committee, 1999 and 2000 were “years of rejection” for the Rooigrond community during which time “confused” government officials and “junior deployed cadres” promised a lot but did not deliver.\(^4\)

From 2001 the Rooigrond community attempts to address the development of the settlement through participation in formal decision-making spaces, including ward committee elections and integrated development plan (IDP) meetings.

In 2005 a contract is signed between the municipality and NWDLGH in terms of a housing project to deliver 8 000 housing units in the municipality. 1 000 units are earmarked for rural *in situ* upgrading, with 250 of these units to be allocated to Rooigrond residents.\(^6\) This project never materialises.

In 2006 the Mafikeng City Council reverses its agreement to expropriate the Rooigrond land and takes a decision to resettle the Rooigrond community on the neighbouring Bauwel farm land.\(^7\) This is apparently because the housing development and shopping centre had been approved for the Rooigrond site.\(^8\) In an effort to force the residents to accept the relocation, the municipality halts services that it had provided at Rooigrond, discontinuing the monthly mobile clinic and instructing Eskom to halt the further installation of electricity meters.

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\(^4\) Rooigrond ANC Members “Letter to ANC Provincial Secretary: Intervention in brutality and torture of vulnerable Rooigrond community at the hands of ANC deployed cadres” (18 February 2008).


\(^7\) M Setlholdi “Tough to enforce rights if you are poor” paper presented at “Strategies to Overcome Poverty and Inequality: Towards Carnegie III” conference (University of Cape Town, 3-7 September 2012).

\(^8\) M Moeti “Telephonic interview” (16 April 2013). See also *City Press* “Rooigrond – The forgotten village” (4 August 2012).
During 2007 and 2008 community representatives from Rooigrond attempt to engage with numerous government officials and politicians (as well as a public interest lawyer) about the proposed eviction of Rooigrond and the lack of services. These include the Premier of the North West in February 2007; the Mafikeng City Council in 2007; the Director-General in the Presidency in February 2007 and March 2007; the North West Office of the Public Protector in February 2007; Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) in March 2007; the Office of the President in June 2007 and February 2008; and the ANC provincial secretary in February 2008.9

The NWDLGH announces that a R54 million housing development is to commence at Rooigrond informal settlement. According to the MEC, “the project for the construction of 1 000 housing units in the area had to be suspended and reallocated to the City of Tlokwu Municipality after the appointed contractor was intimidated”.10 The Rooigrond community is not given much information on this project, however it appears that the 1 000 units are to be built far from the settlement.

Rooigrond community members participate in a march to the Office of the Premier, where a memorandum is handed over. In response to the memorandum, two meetings are held between community representatives, the Office of the Speaker, officials from the municipality as well as the Executive Mayor. Resolutions are taken to make available the scientific report from Mafikeng City Council that shows that the Rooigrond land is not habitable and the community must relocate to Bauwel.11 This report is never produced and it is unclear why land is claimed to be uninhabitable.

Operation Rooigrond is formed by Koketso Moeti, the daughter of the ward candidate Monametsi Moeti. Operation Rooigrond consists of a blog, Facebook page and Twitter account and aims to create awareness of Rooigrond community projects. According to its website, it has the mission to facilitate positive change in the community by utilising education and knowledge as a means of alleviating poverty; eradicating substance abuse, unplanned pregnancies and the spread of HIV/AIDS; as well as encouraging the formation of partnerships between the community and other organisations.12

9 Stewart “14 Years in Limbo” (2011).
10 North West Department of Local Government and Housing “R54.6 million Rooigrond housing development to commence in two weeks’ time says Yawa” press release (24 March 2009).
12 See Operation Rooigrond blog: http://operationrooigrond.wordpress.com/aboutoperationrooigrond/
During the run-up to the May 2011 local government elections a political campaign is carried out to discredit the Rooigrond community and its candidate for ward 27, Monametsi Moeti. Her name is removed three times from the ANC party list even though she won the most votes in her branch’s electoral meeting. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) steps in and Moeti is added to the provincial list, eventually becoming the party’s ward candidate in 2011, receiving almost 70 of votes cast in the election. After taking office, ANC councillors sideline her from council decision-making processes and attempt to turn the Rooigrond community against her.

**SEPTEMBER**
A law professor at North West University, Linda Stewart, hears about the Rooigrond community after an engagement with Koketso Moeti on the social media platform Twitter. Stewart becomes involved in the Rooigrond community’s struggles and begins to engage with them on service delivery and other socio-economic rights issues. She puts Rooigrond community representatives in touch with the Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI). Monametsi Moeti approaches SERI to request assistance regarding the provision of services at the settlement.

**NOVEMBER**
Rooigrond community members march to the Provincial Legislature in Mahikeng to hand over a list of grievances to the MEC for Housing, Local Government and Traditional Affairs. Nothing happens after the march. The community starts preparing for a follow-up protest where a memorandum of demands will be handed to the Premier. The community notifies the municipality of their intention to protest, following which they receive a call from the municipality to request a meeting between community representatives and the Executive Mayor. This meeting is postponed to 10 January 2012 after she does not attend the scheduled meeting.

**JANUARY**
Representatives from the Office of the Premier meet with officials from the municipality and Rooigrond leaders to discuss the memorandum of grievances handed to the MEC in 2011. It is agreed that the settlement will be provided with petrol and diesel for the water-pumping generators on a daily basis. However by March the community continues to having intermittent access to water.

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13 Ward 27 consists of Matshepe, Matlhonyane, Setlopo, Rooigrond, Schoongesicht, Dihatshwana, Dithakong tsa ga Sehuba and Mothakga.
14 K Moeti “Interview” (Johannesburg, 16 April 2013).
15 Ibid. See also Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) “Municipal Election Results: Local Government Elections 2011”.
17 K Moeti “Interview per email” (28 April 2013).
20 E Torerai “Rooigrond people take on Premier” The New Age (12 November 2011).
22 Ibid.
MAY - JUNE

SERI takes legal instructions from over 200 households at Rooigrond settlement, recording the numbers of people per household, the number of children and elderly persons, levels of access to basic services, and the socio-economic conditions of each household.

During May and June a number of service delivery protests occur in the province. On 30 May at least 6 villages in Moroleng protest and are later joined by 7 other villages. On 6 June residents of Top Village in Mahikeng barricade the road between Mahikeng and Zeerust. On 7 June the Lomanyaneng community embarks on an approved march to hand over a memorandum; however when the Executive Mayor allegedly does not show up to receive it, the residents get angry and barricade the road. On the same day Ganyesa experiences a service delivery protest which sees a school set alight, shops of foreign nationals being looted and results in the death of a pregnant woman. On 9 June residents of Manokwane village embark on a protest sparked by a lack of access to water.

In June, the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements conducts an oversight visit to the North West province. During this visit the Committee is surprised to find that no houses have been built at Rooigrond. The Committee is informed that the municipality has decided to revoke its decision to evict the Rooigrond residents, and further processes are underway to ensure basic services are provided at the settlement. Following the visit the Committee orders the municipality “to stop proposed plans to relocate people from the Rooigrond informal settlement, at least until they have negotiated with them.” Following this visit the ward councillor and the Executive Mayor address the Committee about the situation at Rooigrond.

JULY

The Rooigrond community’s anger over the slow response from the municipality grows and in July a number of people from the settlement protest on the R503. They are met with force by the police, who shoot at the protestors. Operation Rooigrond tweets about the ongoing police violence, which goes viral on social media platforms.

On 23 July the Executive Mayor meets with the Rooigrond community where she publicly commits to rescind the resolution to evict the community and to table the matter before the Mahikeng city council within a month. She says that Rooigrond will be developed into a residential area. This decision is welcomed by the community.

On 26 July the NWDLGH – now called North West Department of Human Settlements – announces that it has allocated 1 000 housing subsidies for the Rooigrond housing project and appointed a contractor. A meeting is initiated by the provincial department and the municipality to discuss development in the area and to identify issues to be resolved, including land acquisition, township establishment processes, service provision and the construction of houses. In relation to the proposed eviction of the Rooigrond community, the NWDLGH states that “the undertaking by the Mafikeng Local Municipality is that the decision to evict residents of Rooigrond will be revoked as a means of intervention to stabilize the area. However, this position is still to be served before the council.”

While the public commitment by the Executive Mayor in July halts the litigation process, the relationship between Operation Rooigrond and SERI continues in another guise. Together with the Local Government Action (LGA)

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23 Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements “Committee Commends North West’s Human Settlements Department” press release (July 2012).
24 M Kabeli “Rooigrond digs in heels” news article on Parliament website (June 2012).
25 Conversation with K Moeti (2 September 2012).
27 North West Department of Human Settlements, Public Safety and Liaison “Presentation to Human Settlements Portfolio Committee” (26 July 2012).
SERI organises a two-day workshop at Rooigrond in September called "Democracy in Practice". The workshop is for representatives of surrounding communities and settlements in ward 27, with an emphasis on local government. The day before the workshop is held, the Mahikeng council, in line with the Executive Mayor’s undertaking in July, publicly rescinds the resolution to evict the residents and the Executive Mayor later visits Rooigrond to officially announce that the process to develop the settlement has begun.

**OCTOBER**

A number of informal settlement communities in ward 27 attend IDP review meetings. The residents of Rooigrond are told that they are apparently earmarked to receive state-subsidised houses and that diesel to pump water will be delivered at regular intervals. They are informed that although contractors have been appointed, there have been a few delays, the main one being that the Mahikeng municipality is waiting for the transfer of the land from the Department of Public Works. The latter wants the municipality to give it land elsewhere in exchange for transferring title deeds to the Rooigrond land.

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**2013**

**MAY**

SERI and LGA hold another two-day “Deepening Participation” ward-based workshop in Skoongesicht, as a follow-up to the 2012 workshop.

**OCTOBER**

The Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report of the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements states that the transfer of the Rooigrond land to Mahikeng municipality is being facilitated by the Housing Development Agency (HDA), and that the construction of 1 000 housing units is envisaged.

**NOVEMBER**

A third workshop is held, entitled “Building Bridges”, aimed at building bridges between communities in the ward and other stakeholders, including the Office of the Public Protector (which was in attendance at the workshop).

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**2014**

**APRIL**

A faction of the local ANC branch encourages a number of Rooigrond residents to burn down the ward councillor’s house, under the guise of a service delivery protest. This occurs as a result of the orders of senior politicians in the municipality. The arson is strongly condemned by the Premier.

**JULY**

The construction of houses at Rooigrond begins.

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28 The LGA network is loose affiliation of activists, NGOs and CBOs working to hold local government accountable and develop local communities in South Africa. See [http://www.localgovernmentaction.org/](http://www.localgovernmentaction.org/)


30 Conversation with K Moeti (20 February 2013).

31 K Moeti “Interview” (Johannesburg, 16 April 2013). M Moeti “Telephonic interview” (16 April 2013).

32 SERI and LGA “Deepening Democracy workshop” (Skoongesicht, 18-19 May 2013).


34 SERI and LGA “Building Bridges workshop” (Skoongesicht, 25-26 October 2013). The Public Protector is an independent institution responsible for investigating excesses in the exercise of public power and ensuring good public administration.
Over the past eight years the Rooigrond community has fought against the relocation of the settlement, and to be allocated neighbouring Bauwel farm land to support their agricultural livelihoods. In 2006 the Mahikeng Local Municipality reversed its 1998 agreement to expropriate the Rooigrond land, and took a decision to instead resettle the Rooigrond community on the Bauwel land. This move led to a sense of despondency at Rooigrond, with the settlement feeling isolated and cut off from the rest of society. However the Rooigrond Committee and a number of key individuals in the community “willing to get their hands dirty” and with a vision for the settlement ensured community buy-in and pushed against this isolation. They established a crèche and community library at the settlement, and engaged the government on development at Rooigrond.

Rooigrond Committee: Strategies and Tactics

36 K Moeti “Interview per email” (28 April 2013).
Over the years numerous announcements were made by the municipality about a housing development at the settlement, but until 2014 these amounted to nothing concrete. The municipality did not anticipate the level of antagonism that developed over its plans to relocate the Rooigrond community and build an upmarket housing development in the area. As a result of this resistance to the relocation, the settlement was sidelined: the mobile clinic was stopped together with the installation of electricity at the settlement.

In early 2010 Operation Rooigrond was started. According to Koketso Moeti, who founded the project, it was precipitated by the breakdown of the settlement’s two water pumps and the subsequent lack of water to drink, wash or cook. Moeti contacted everyone in the surrounding area looking for help and, according to her, “our ‘SOS’ call worked — a nearby property owner brought in water and we managed to feed the children. A light went on for me that day: if we could connect people inside and outside our community, we would have the power to solve many of our problems”. This prompted her to “kick it [Operation Rooigrond] into top gear”. While the main aim of Operation Rooigrond is to facilitate positive change within the community, the project has also taken on board other priorities of the community: to resist relocation and have the settlement upgraded, to get access to improved services, to increase the frequency of the mobile clinic visits, and to have access roads that can accommodate emergency vehicles.

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38 K Moeti “The world is in my hand” Sunday Times (10 June 2013).
39 See http://operationrooigrond.wordpress.com/aboutoperationrooigrond/.
While the emergence of Operation Rooigrond in 2010 was significant, it was only during the run-up to the local government elections in May 2011 that the municipality took notice of the community’s grievances. The ANC candidate for ward 27, Monametsi Moeti (Koketso’s mother and Rooigrond resident), was against the relocation of Rooigrond. According to some residents of ward 27, the ANC sub-region did not want informal settlement communities to elect her as their ward representative for this reason. Moeti’s name was removed three times from the list even though she won in her branch’s electoral meeting.\(^1\) The local ANC was clearly concerned with the possibility of an ANC ward councillor actively resisting relocation in opposition to the decision of the ANC-run municipality. However this concern transcended political factions and ideological differences, and corruption and self-enrichment played a large part. The political campaign to discredit Moeti emanated from the toxic factional politics playing out in the provincial ANC, which have affected the functioning of provincial government departments and municipalities and compromised service delivery.\(^2\) Party members’ attempts to enrich themselves are directly linked to service delivery. According to one ANCYL leader in the area, when he would complain about lack of water in his community, the municipality would respond by saying that they should not raise such “political issues”.\(^3\)

According to Moeti, ANC factionalism is largely peddled to cover up corrupt activities. For her, the goal is to ensure implementation of what the party has promised.\(^4\) It is on this basis that the Rooigrond Committee decided to fight against the eviction and relocation

\(^{1}\) K Moeti “Interview” (Johannesburg, 16 April 2013).
\(^{2}\) M Olebogeng “Co-operate or be expelled” Sowetan (18 July 2012).
\(^{3}\) Anonymous interviews with community members at Rooigrond (25-26 July 2012).
\(^{4}\) Conversation with M Moeti (June 2012).
both outside and inside the party, using the ANC’s own discourse. To illustrate this strategy, a participant at the 2012 “Democracy in Practice” workshop stated that “there is more struggle when one is detached from the ANC ... it is better to use ANC machinery to organise ourselves”. It is therefore unsurprising that the Rooigrond community has opted for a strategy of positioning the community’s interests within the party’s agenda as well as positioning itself in the public space as challenging the local ANC on its own terms in respect of undertakings made to develop the community.

In July 2012, following the spate of protests and an oversight visit to the North West by the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements, the Mahikeng Executive Mayor met with the Rooigrond community and publicly committed to rescind the resolution to relocate the community. The use of protest by the community is also complex. The mid-2012 protests in the North West gained national public attention but were dismissed as being driven by factional politics, with the North West provincial government even setting up a protest task team to review and make recommendations to deal with the protests. However, according to Rooigrond residents, there was very little recognition of what was really behind the protests.

According to Koketso Moeti, protests are not usually the first option for communities, and are more the result of frustration at not having one’s voice heard. She states that “instead of listening to what communities are saying, the service delivery protests are politicised with accusations of ‘political interference’ flying around. The people are once again ignored while threats of ‘finding those behind the protests’ fill the media space.” However Moeti believes that protests have to be strategic, with a clear set of demands, a time-frame for a response and plans for if demands are not responded to within that time-frame. In relation to the accusations against protesters, another Rooigrond

Community meeting at Rooigrond, 2012

45 T Rantlha “New protest task team set” The New Age (11 June 2012).
47 K Moeti “Interview per email” (28 April 2013).
resident is quoted as saying that: “They claim we closed the road but we didn't. They also accuse our councillor of inciting us, but she is stopping us: we would be doing bad things if we wanted.”

While the Rooigrond Committee approached SERI for legal assistance in November 2011, there has to date not been any litigation undertaken. The community sees litigation as a strategy of last resort to be employed only in instances where other engagement mechanisms fail. The Rooigrond community has also used a combination of local organising, government engagement, protest, party politics and social media. In terms of the latter, Operation Rooigrond gained momentum and intensified its mobilisation by using social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook on mobile devices to link with outside groups and raise awareness of the struggles of informal settlements in Mahikeng. According to Koketso Moeti:

Rooigrond used to feel so isolated — just another poor community in a poor province in an unequal country. But through the keypad of my cellphone we now feel part of the nation. There is a whole network of people who are concerned about Rooigrond and committed to improving our lives. Even the elders in my community have started to tweet, now that they’ve seen what the world of mobile technology can do! We still face extreme poverty, but now we feel like we have some control. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google Plus tend to be regarded as useful tools for those with money and education. But South Africa has one of the highest levels of cellphone users in the world, and mobile technology could bring down many of the walls that still separate young people and poor communities from real opportunity.

For the Rooigrond community, social media platforms have opened up democratic space and provided access to information that would otherwise be impossible to find. Social media attention on the community also led to mainstream media coverage. In 2012 the City Press newspaper sent a journalist to engage with Operation Rooigrond and cover protests in the province. This exposure also led to a number of organisations and private individuals stepping forward to assist the community. According to Moeti, “Now a constitutional law expert is helping us to access water and sanitation. A Cape Town-based activist is helping to get the early-learning centre registered for funding. An agricultural specialist has designed a farming plan, and a young social entrepreneur is working with us to find ways for women to manage the challenges associated with menstruation”.

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48 Kabeli “Rooigrond digs in heels” (June 2012).
49 Moeti “The world is in my hand” Sunday Times (10 June 2013).
50 Afrikan Goddess “Kokestro Moeti” (6 July 2012).
51 City Press “A province in disarray” (4 August 2012).
52 K Moeti “Interview per email” (28 April 2013). These include Fundza Literacy Trust, Nal’ibali, Hippo Water Roller Project, Operation Blanket, Operation Shoebox, Project: LAYLA, Souns, Southern African Association of Youth Clubs (SAAYC), Operation Hunger, World Servants, SANGONET and PLAAS.
53 Moeti “The world is in my hand” Sunday Times (10 June 2013).
This community practice note documents the Rooigrond community’s struggle for the development of their settlement in the context of broader political struggles, failures in inter-governmental relations and protest in the North West province. The 2006 decision by the municipality to relocate the settlement was a critical point in mobilisation of the Rooigrond Committee and the community. In 2010 Operation Rooigrond took those local struggles forward and mobilised broader support from academics and lawyers. The strategic use of social media and information communication technology (ICT) by Operation Rooigrond provides an important case study in how marginalised communities can garner broader support and make links to the mainstream media to assist with various forms of support, solidarity and assistance.

However the Rooigrond story also illustrates how complex political interests can overwhelm even a very organised and well-networked community structure. Despite the 2012 decision by the Executive Mayor not to relocate the settlement, the Rooigrond land has not been transferred from the Department of Public Works to the municipality. The Rooigrond struggle highlights how government does not ‘speak with one voice’ and there are in fact conflicting agendas even within a particular sphere of government. CBOs and communities like Rooigrond have to navigate this often complex terrain.

Further, the political context in the North West province, and particularly in Mahikeng Local Municipality, is extremely tense with corruption and political factionalism. Service delivery in the province is clearly negatively affected by this. While the Rooigrond community itself has used protest to show its frustration and draw the attention of politicians to issues at the settlement, there is an acknowledgment that protest can be destructive. After the 2012 protests, workshops were held with communities in the ward to try to channel some of residents’ frustrations into productive engagement with the municipality. In April 2014, the ANC ward councillor was forced to flee the settlement after a mob burnt down her house under the guise of a service delivery protest. It appears that this violence stems from political battles for positions in the municipality ahead of the upcoming local government election in 2016.

On a positive note, in July 2014 the construction of houses at Rooigrond finally began.
Abbreviations and Acronyms

**ANC**  African National Congress

**CBO**  Community Based Organisation

**HDA**  Housing Development Agency

**ICT**  Information Communication Technology

**IEC**  Independent Electoral Commission

**LHR**  Lawyers for Human Rights

**MEC**  Member of the Executive Council

**MMC**  Member of the Mayoral Committee

**NWDA**  North West Department of Agriculture

**NWDHS**  North West Department of Human Settlements, Public Safety and Liaison

**NWDLGH**  North West Department of Local Government and Housing

**SAPS**  South African Police Service

**RDP**  Reconstruction and Development Programme

**SERI**  Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI)
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• SERI “Report on first consultation with Rooigrond residents” (16 March 2012).


• L Stewart “14 Years in Limbo: Waiting for the Promised Land” (2011). http://www.academia.edu/1095984/14_years_in_limbo_waiting_for_the_Promised_Land


