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

Slovo Park: Twenty Years of Broken Promises
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.

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

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Slovo Park: Twenty Years of Broken Promises

Slovo Park: Twenty Years of Broken Promises is the fourth in SERI’s Informal Settlement Series of community practice notes.

It provides a brief background to the Slovo Park informal settlement; summarises the key events in the struggle to push for upgrading at the settlement; and examines the strategies and tactics of the local community structure, the Slovo Park Community Development Forum (SPCDF).

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Slovo Park informal settlement is located next to the Nancefield industrial area, between Eldorado Park and Bushkoppies in the City of Johannesburg. Slovo Park consists of around 3,700 households (approximately 7,000 people) living on more than 1,000 informal stands. The settlement was established in the early 1990s by people who moved to the site in search of land close to their jobs. The settlement is situated on the Remaining Extent of Portion 33 of the Farm Olifantsvlei 316 IQ and covers approximately 47 hectares. Most of the occupied land is publicly-owned, with much of the surrounding land owned by the Gauteng provincial government. The settlement has approximately four communal standpipes per street and 1,050 ventilated improved pit latrines (VIPs) which were installed in 2005 on each stand. There is no electricity at the settlement and residents use candles for lighting and paraffin stoves for cooking, both of which pose significant fire risks. Indeed, shack fires are a frequent occurrence at Slovo Park.
## Key Events

The following figure summarises the key events in the struggle for upgrading at Slovo Park informal settlement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Slovo Park residents are earmarked for inclusion in a housing project. This doesn’t materialise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>The NDOH and GDLGH hold a meeting at Slovo Park and undertake to build 950 houses there.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>The feasibility report is published. It states that Slovo Park should be upgraded to yield 1,150 stands.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Geotechnical studies are conducted at Slovo Park. Nemai is appointed to undertake an EIA. The SPCDF is formed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>The SPCDF works with ISN on a water connection project. The City presents a plan to provide 575 stands at Slovo Park, with the remaining 2,500 households to be relocated to Eldorado Park.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>The SPCDF continues to engage the City while working on the court application. A family of four is killed during a shack fire at Slovo Park.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>An application is launched on behalf of the Slovo Park residents requesting that the court compel the City to take the necessary steps to apply for funding to upgrade the settlement in terms of the UISP.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>The City holds a meeting with Slovo Park residents promising the construction of 950 houses in September.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>The Premier and MMC for Housing promise Slovo Park residents that construction will begin in September. iNtatakusa is appointed to conduct a feasibility report on Slovo Park.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Arcus Gibb replaces iNtatakusa as project consultant.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Nemai submits the EIA report to GDARD, recommending a layout of 629 to 663 stands at Slovo Park. Residents protest after the MMC for Housing fails to attend a meeting about development at the settlement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>The City hosts informal meetings with SPCDF. No concrete, inclusive plan is put on the table. The SPCDF informs the City it will proceed with a High Court application to compel the implementation of the UISP.</td>
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TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1991-1994

During the early 1990s the burning issue for Slovo Park residents is access to water at the settlement. They have to use two streams in the area or purchase water at inflated prices. In 1994 the municipal authority provides a water tank as a temporary measure, assuring residents that pipes and taps will be installed. Communal street taps are eventually installed, which are also only meant to be a temporary measure, to be replaced by individual yard taps. However these remain the only source of water at the settlement until 2010.

In 1994 the Slovo Park community is earmarked for inclusion in the Harrington Valley Housing Project, initiated by a private residential development company called Condev. Instead, a housing development called Devland Extension 27 is built nearby the settlement. Allegations of corruption and misappropriation of funds in relation to this project continue to plague Slovo Park residents and have not been resolved.

1995

After the death of the first Minster of Housing, Joe Slovo, the community names the settlement Slovo Park in his honour.

1998

The South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO), an umbrella body of civic organisations aligned with the ANC, organises a public meeting at the settlement. The Gauteng Premier Mbhazima Shilowa promises Slovo Park residents that they will not be moved and that houses will be built at the settlement.

2000

DECEMBER

The first local government election is held and an ANC ward councillor is elected in the area.

1 SPCDF “Interview” (Slovo Park, 30 June 2010).
2 Condev “Regional Housing Board (Transvaal) Application for Project-based Subsidy: Harrington Valley, Nancefield” (31 October 1994).
3 In August 1997 the Housing and Land Affairs Standing Committee of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature investigate the project finding that “the allegations raised by the petitioner are of a serious nature and indicate, if proved true, that serious flaws have emerged regarding the procedures followed in the Devland Extension 27 development.” See Gauteng Provincial Legislature “Announcements, Tablings and Committee Reports” No 68 - 1997: Fourth Session, First Legislature (11 September 1997) 251-252.
4 SPCDF “Structure of the historical background of Slovo Park-Nancefield” (undated).
The Community Development Forum (CDF) is formed after Slovo Park residents elect individuals to lead the community. Officials from the City of Johannesburg (the City) erect a large tent at the settlement and a government official states that by September 2001 the construction of 950 new houses at Slovo Park will commence.

2003

**JULY**
Officals from the National Department of Housing (NDOH) and the Gauteng Department of Housing and Local Government (GDLGH) attend a large community meeting at Slovo Park, where several commitments to the community are made, including that Slovo Park will not be relocated, that 950 houses will be built, and that the settlement will be demarcated into Eldorado Park from Protea South and Lenasia.¹

150 shacks are destroyed and two people die in a shack fire at the settlement.

2004

The GDLGH, Gauteng Premier and Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Housing, Strike Ralegoma, erect a large tent at Slovo Park and undertake to ensure the building of houses by September 2004. The GDLGH appoints iNtakusa Africa Consulting (iNtakusa) to conduct a feasibility report on development at Slovo Park.²

2005

**MARCH**
iNtakusa produces a feasibility report which notes that the formalisation of Slovo Park “is not only feasible but its implementation is also urgently required.”³ The report notes that there are 5 000 households on 1 050 stands at Slovo Park and recommends that the community be restructured into one family per an approximately 300m² stand, a necessary requirement due to the site being situated on dolomitic land. The feasibility report states that an in situ process can be followed, but that a large amount of de-densification would have to be carried out and “additional land must be identified to accommodate the surplus families”.⁴ The report describes how the availability of vacant land for development and the relocation of excess families is a development constraint, and that the vacant land adjacent to Slovo Park should be investigated. The conclusion of the feasibility report is that the remaining community (approximately 3 500 households) will have to be relocated to nearby developments on vacant land.

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¹ SPCDF “Letter to President Jacob Zuma” (2 December 2009).
² From 2002 to 2005 iNtakusa Consulting was part of the regional professional team providing project management services for the Gauteng Department of Housing. The company was involved in the township establishment and development process from land identification to the transfer of ownership to beneficiaries.
⁴ Ibid 29.
MAY
The CDF sends a letter to the ANC ward councillor requesting him to put in more effort to fast track municipal services at the settlement including electricity, water, sanitation, roads, housing and social amenities. The letter states that: “one sees the importance of these issues as the opposition is gaining support because of lack of services/interaction from our leaders” – a clear warning from the SPCDF of potential defections from the ANC ranks. Following the letter, a meeting is organised between the community, the ward councillor and the MMC for Housing in June. At this meeting, development at Slovo Park is discussed, and the MMC promises to try to fast track the development process.

DECEMBER
Shortly before the local government election in March 2006 a large meeting is held at Protea South. Slovo Park residents are bussed into the gathering, which is attended by the MMC for Housing, the MEC for Housing and the Mayor. The MEC states that the same type of housing being built at Protea South will be built at Slovo Park. Further, the Mayor states that he would put money into Slovo Park by March 2006 and “no further questions should be asked by the community about Slovo Park”.

2006
Arcus Gibb, a large engineering consulting firm, replaces iNtakakusa as the consultant on the Slovo Park housing project. Arcus Gibb, on behalf of the GDLGH, commissions Moore Spence Jones to conduct a dolomite stability assessment at Slovo Park.

According to the City of Johannesburg’s 2005/2006 Annual Report, the City’s Department of Housing appointed the Johannesburg Property Company (JPC) to finalise the purchase of privately-owned land to make provision for the establishment of new subsidised housing projects. For the Slovo Park development, “six properties were to be acquired for a 1 055 stand township to be established.”

2007
The Slovo Park Community Development Forum (SPCDF) is formed out of the existing community structure at Slovo Park. According to the SPCDF’s draft constitution, its primary aim is “to help unite the community behind the Developmental Agenda given to the SPCDF” from the community. It also has a number of secondary goals and states that it will “collaborate with any interested party willing to assist the community, political or non-political.”

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9 CDF “Letter to Councillor Manack” (23 May 2005).
10 SPCDF “Structure of the historical background of Slovo Park-Nancefield” (undated).
**MARCH**
Arcus Gibb informs the Slovo Park community that they are in the advanced stages of the township establishment process, which is due to conclude in early July 2007 after geotechnical studies are conducted. Geostrategies, a consulting firm of geotechnical engineers, environmental scientists and land surveyors, is appointed to do this work. The community is told that development will proceed by September 2007, but that the number of houses being constructed would be reduced from 950 to 821 because of dolomitic conditions in the area.

**JUNE**
SPCDF representatives, together with the PR councillor and a delegation from the local ANC branch, meet with the MMC for Housing to discuss the fast tracking of development. The MMC states that development will begin in July 2007.

**JULY**
By July the community has heard nothing about the geotechnical study, the perceived last hurdle to development at Slovo Park, and decide to protest. On 10 July residents blockade the N12 highway. Police officers arrive and arrest a number of protesters.

A dolomite stability assessment for Slovo Park recommends that a minimum stand size of 350m$^2$ will be necessary, as the site is classified as dolomite risk class 4. Nemai Consulting (Nemai), an independent environmental assessment practitioner, is appointed to undertake an environmental impact assessment (EIA) at Slovo Park.

**AUGUST**
Arcus Gibb visits the Slovo Park community and says that development will commence in November, but that only 660 houses will be constructed.

**SEPTEMBER**
On 11 September community members march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to “introduce the community to President Mbeki” and to call for electricity, water and sewerage at the settlement. They present a memorandum which includes the following short-term demands: improvement of service delivery, installation of electricity, installation of permanent taps in individual yards, sanitation flush toilets, and tarred roads and pavements. Long-term demands include: 2 500 five-room houses and recognition of Nancefield Township.

During 2008 the SPCDF engages with various government officials, technical professionals and high level ANC politicians about development at Slovo Park. The latter include the Office of the Mayor, Office of the Speaker, MMC for Housing, MEC for Housing, the Premier and the ANC Chief Whip.

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14 SPCDF “Memorandum” (11 September 2007).
MARCH
A public meeting is held at Slovo Park Hall to discuss the EIA process with the community and other interested and affected parties. The SPCDF, ward councillor and representatives from Arcus Gibb, GDLGH and Nemai are present.\(^{15}\)

APRIL
The SPCDF organises a protest march to the Office of the Mayor to submit a memorandum of grievances pertaining to development at Slovo Park.\(^{16}\)

SEPTEMBER
The Informal Settlement Network (ISN) is formed in a number of provinces after a series of informal settlement dialogues during 2008.\(^{17}\) SPCDF becomes an active member of the ISN.

OCTOBER
The SPCDF, frustrated with failed attempts to engage political channels, approaches the Legal Resources Centre (LRC) for assistance.\(^{18}\)

On 17 October, the LRC addresses a letter to the City of Johannesburg about lack of access to services at the settlement.\(^{19}\)

DECEMBER
An application for the Establishment of Nancefield Township Extension 4 in terms of the Town-Planning and Townships Ordinance Act 15 of 1986 is received by the City from the GDLGH. The application is for a township with 640 residential stands.\(^{20}\)

2009

During 2009 a number of public meetings are held as part of the EIA public participation process. Slovo Park residents articulate concerns with delays in the development process and the reducing of the number of houses to be built.\(^{21}\) During 2009 SPCDF also continues to attempt to engage with politicians and government officials around development at Slovo Park.

JANUARY
The notice of the township establishment process is published in the Government Gazette inviting people to inspect the particulars of the application from January to early-February.

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\(^{16}\) SPCDF “Memorandum of Accountability: Presented to the Office of the Mayor (18 April 2008).

\(^{17}\) ISN is a “bottom-up agglomeration of settlement-level and national-level organisations of the urban poor” in South Africa. See http://sasdialliance.org.za/about/isn/

\(^{18}\) The Legal Resources Centre (LRC) is a public interest human rights law clinic. See http://www.lrc.org.za/

\(^{19}\) LRC “Letter to the City of Johannesburg: Slovo Park/Nancefield Settlement-Services Rendered” (17 October 2008).


Nemai makes the Slovo Park EIA report public for comment. The report states that the dolomite study revealed that a minimum stand size of 350m$^2$ is required at the site, and outlines a number of other possible impacts and proposed mitigations. The report further states that the formalisation of Slovo Park is "strongly recommended from an environmental point of view" as the current settlement has an "uncontrolled impact on the surrounding environment." The report recommends a layout of between 629 and 663 stands at Slovo Park.

The SPCDF sends a letter to local Parliamentary Constituency Offices (PCOs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) in order to strategically target the newly elected representatives. The letter refers to "empty excuses from everyone since 2001" and describes how the Slovo Park community has been trying for over 10 years to get basic services: "electricity, water, sewerage, to prevent more shack fires from the community, hence saving the lives of the poor. We are currently not aware how long we are going to maintain the pressure from the community members. Houses, whenever they arrive, will be a bonus for the community."

The SPCDF sends a letter to the ANC headquarters at Luthuli House, the GDLGH, the Office of the Speaker, Gauteng provincial legislature, Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) and the Department of Human Settlements (DHS). In the letter the SPCDF expresses a number of concerns that highlight their mistrust and concerns at the possibility of a repeat of the failed 1994 project, including a concern that "the Housing Department is only going to start with building 660 houses but others from Protea South have been promised and where will the 5 000 Slovo park residents go?"

Local government by-elections are held for a number of wards in Gauteng, including ward 18 (under which Slovo Park falls). SPCDF’s chairperson Mohau Melani contests the by-election as an ANC candidate, however a DA candidate wins the ward with 59% of the vote.

Slovo Park residents protest after the MMC for Housing fails to attend a meeting about development at the settlement. Community members blockade the N12 highway with burning tyres.

The following day the new MMC for Housing Ruby Mathang attends a meeting at the Eldorado Park Civic Centre which is also attended by the local ANC branch chairperson, the DA ward councillor and SPCDF representatives. At this meeting, the MMC allegedly promises that development of the area will begin in March 2010.

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25 See IOL News “Burning tyres used to block roads” (7 December 2009); IOL News “Drivers stoned near Lenasia” (8 December 2009).
2010

MAY
The SPCDF sends a letter requesting a meeting with the MEC for Local Government and Housing, Kgaogelo Lekgoro. In the letter the SPCDF states that the meeting is necessary to “discuss the blockages around the development of the area, and hopefully break the deadlock on the project”.27

JULY
The SPCDF’s engagement with the ISN leads to the implementation of a water connection project at the settlement. SPCDF leaders compile a skills audit in the community and identify people with knowledge and experience in plumbing and drainage. It is agreed that a main pipeline will be installed from existing water standpipes to every street in the settlement so that individual families can make household connections to the main line. 1 050 households are provided with water connections.28

AUGUST
The LRC sends a letter to the City’s Housing Department detailing the Slovo Park housing development process to date and requesting a meeting. The letter states that “the community is deeply hurt and uncertain. They feel, and in our view rightly so, that they have been pushed from pillar to post over the years. Exacerbating their disappointment is the fact that around them, developments and townships spring up and they watch their friends and colleagues from other communities settle into safe, hygienic and functioning environments.”29

SEPTEMBER
A meeting is held at the offices of the GDLGH, attended by SPCDF members, LRC representatives, officials from the GDLGH, as well as Argus Gibb consultants. Arcus Gibb and GDLGH officials explain why the housing project has been delayed, and the numerous challenges faced. An amended layout plan is presented which provides for 575 stands at the settlement, with the remaining 2 500 households to be relocated to Eldorado Park.30 The SPCDF rejects this layout.

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER
Through the SPCDF’s collaboration with ISN and the Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC),31 the community partners with the University of Pretoria’s Architecture Department to design and upgrade the community hall, using the skills of various community members (e.g. bricklaying, tiling, plumbing, welding etc.) and donations from surrounding businesses. In November, the community hall is officially opened.32 Two officials, one from the City and the other from Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality attend the launch as well as senior lecturers from the University of Pretoria.

27 SPCDF “Letter to MEC for Local Government and Housing Kgaogelo Lekgoro” (17 May 2010).
29 LRC “Letter to City of Johannesburg Housing Department: Slovo Park/Nancefield Settlement” (31 August 2010).
30 LRC “Minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2010” (2010).
31 CORC is an NGO that supports the social processes of community-based organisations that want to work for themselves, by facilitating engagements with formal actors like the state. CORC supports the SDI rituals of savings, enumeration, and community-led development strategies. See http://www.sasdialliance.org.za/corc/
32 For more on this project and the partnership between the University of Pretoria’s Architecture Department and the Slovo Park community see http://slovo-park.blogspot.com/
2011

**JANUARY**
After the SPCDF approaches the Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI) to investigate the non-implementation of the housing development at Slovo Park, SERI assists the SPCDF to write up the history of Slovo Park and to investigate the political, social and technical dimensions of the settlement.

**APRIL**
SERI publishes a working paper based on information provided by the SPCDF. According to an Arcus Gibb project manager, development at Slovo Park is being stalled by unexpected problems with the bulk sewerage connection, which is the responsibility of the City. According to him until the bulk infrastructure issues are sorted out, the application for township establishment is suspended. He also states that the unsuitability of land adjacent to the settlement for relocation, and the unwillingness of Eldorado Park residents to accommodate Slovo Park residents in the area, has stalled the development.33

**MAY**
On 18 May the local government election is held. Slovo Park is demarcated into a newly created ward which includes Bushkoppies and Freedom Park. It is no longer in the same ward as Eldorado Park. The SPCDF is pleased with this development, particularly as Slovo Park is in the same ward as Devland Extension 27. They anticipate being able to raise issues about this housing development and prior corruption. Ward 119 is won by the ANC candidate, Mbuyiselo Dokolwane.

**DECEMBER**
The SERI Law Clinic, on behalf of the Slovo Park residents, addresses a legal letter to the MEC for Local Government and Housing, the Executive Mayor and the Executive Director of Housing for the City, setting out the various undertakings made to Slovo Park residents over the years about development at the settlement. The letter states that the residents "require a coherent, inclusive and comprehensive plan for the upgrading of Slovo Park" and that the obvious instrument for developing such a plan is the UISP.35

No response from the MEC or the City is received.

2012

**APRIL - JUNE**
The City hosts two informal meetings with SPCDF, the newly-elected ward councillor and SERI representatives. The City notes that the layout approved by the GDLGH will only accommodate 475 households, as the minimum stand size is 350m² due to the presence of dolomite. The City states that it would have to challenge this process as it is unable to build such large stands and has a policy to increase densification. The City discusses an alternative model whereby all households would relocate to a piece of state-owned land and the community would establish a cooperative; however the proposal is vague and there is no firm commitment from the City.35

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33 Argus Gibb project manager “Telephonic interview” (19 April 2011).
The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) publishes the new SANS-1936 standards for the development of dolomite land, which potentially allow more scope for residential development on dolomitic land.

During 2013 the SPCDF continues to engage with the City, technical professionals and lawyers about upgrading the settlement. The community embarks on a process of resurveying their stands and negotiating with each other to shift boundaries so that all stands are at least 350m², as per the EIA recommendations and the new SANS-1936 regulations pertaining to dolomite.

On 19 September SPCDF representatives meet with City officials to discuss ideas for the upgrading of Slovo Park. The City requests that the SPCDF produce a more concrete plan, and expresses concerns that the whole community is not behind the initiative. At the same time, the SPCDF together with SERI works on building a case to compel the City to apply for the UISP to be implemented, if engagement proves unsuccessful.

A family of four is killed during a shack fire at Slovo Park.

An application is launched in the South Gauteng High Court on behalf of the Slovo Park residents. It requests that the court compel the City to take the necessary steps to apply for funding to upgrade the Slovo Park informal settlement in terms of the UISP. Included as respondents in the application are the City of Johannesburg, Executive Mayor Parks Tau, MMC for Housing Daniel Bovu, Executive Director of the City’s Housing Department Thabo Maisela, the MEC for Local Government and Housing, and the Minister of Human Settlements. The MEC and the Minister do not oppose the application.

The City responds to the application by launching an application disputing the lawfulness of the power of attorney authorising SERI to institute proceedings.
For almost 20 years the Slovo Park community has been promised access to formal services and housing at the settlement. Since 1995, politicians and government officials at all levels of the state have visited Slovo Park, met with community leaders, and reassured them that development is imminent. Feasibility studies have been conducted, layout plans have been developed, EIAs have been written, steps have been taken to declare a township, funding has been earmarked. However, to date nothing has happened.

In 2007 the SPCDF was formed out of the existing community structure, with a focus on pushing for development at the settlement. Over the years it has engaged in formal political channels to apply pressure on the government to make good on the numerous undertakings to develop the settlement, while at the same time it has participated in processes initiated by technical consultants appointed to undertake various studies at the settlement. Frustration with the perceived duplication of efforts over the years, the constantly changing number of houses to be built at the settlement and the dominant role of consultants has led to the SPCDF and community members resorting to a combination of closed door political meetings, protest, self-help and litigation.
A letter addressed to the Speaker and to the ANC Chief Whip in June 2008 highlights the way that the SPCDF has critically engaged within ANC channels and using party discourse. The letter states that the community structure is writing the letter:

not because we want to become difficult, not because we are antigovernment, not because we are power-mongers but for one particular reason – to mobilise our community behind the ruling party in preparation for the upcoming elections ... we appeal to you to provide us with the political direction as we have been preaching that one day something will actually happen to residents of Slovo Park right here where we are. We have prepared the soil ... for the next National Elections, but it is going to be a fruitless exercise if we do not motivate our people with implementables.\(^{39}\)

Another letter written in July 2009 - to ANC politicians, national government departments and the City - describes how “we [SPCDF] elected you and are deeply disappointed that no development has taken place. It is disappointing and dangerous to members of the community to elect people based on promises and delays indefinitely, when people do not know what the problems are and no one is articulating them.”\(^{40}\)

The SPCDF has attempted to engage with high level politicians in government at the local, provincial and national level, as well as with various ANC structures around fast-tracking development at the settlement, and the negative effect of 15 years of “promises after promises”. For many years the SPCDF’s preferred route of engagement was party


\(^{40}\) SPCDF “Letter to ANC Luthuli House, Gauteng Provincial Government, City of Johannesburg, Office of the Speaker, Gauteng Legislature, DPLG and Department of Human Settlements” (5 July 2009).
political and it used ‘political scare tactics’ as a mechanism to push government into fast-tracking development at the settlement. These ‘scare tactics’ were sometimes subtle and sometimes overt. To date, however, these engagements and scare tactics have not yielded many tangible results for the community. Between 2007 and 2010 this engagement shifted from the political terrain to the more technical - with planning and environmental consultants appointed by the GDLGH engaging with the community over the proposed housing development. The outbursts of anger and frustration by Slovo Park community members in 2007 and 2009, which manifested in protest and the blockading of the N12 highway, clearly highlight the link between broken political promises and protest, as a last resort to draw attention to problems faced by communities.

Most recently, as a result of frustration with a lack of development and a desire to put pressure on those in power, the SPCDF has sought the assistance of public interest lawyers, including the LRC and SERI. The structure has been very proactive in soliciting support and assistance from various organisations and institutions, including CORC, ISN and the University of Pretoria’s Architecture Department. These partnerships have led to a community hall being built, household water connections installed, and plans and proposals being developed for upgrading the settlement. At the same time, the SPCDF has partnered with the ANC ward councillor to continue to put pressure on elected politicians and government officials to implement an upgrading project. The High Court application launched in 2014 is yet another attempt by the SPCDF to see real progress and ensure development at the settlement, not least because of pressures on them by the community to perform on their mandate.
04 Conclusion

This community practice note documents the Slovo Park informal settlement community’s struggle for development over 20 years. The complex Slovo Park story highlights the serious planning gaps and deficits in official processes which, in turn, raise serious questions about the ability of even mobilised and politically-connected communities to bring about development in informal settlements. Tensions between political promises made (and broken) and technical engagement around planning and environmental processes are clearly evident.

This community practice note brings into stark focus the importance of participation in informal settlement upgrading, but also the difficulties faced by communities and their representative structures to make this a reality, despite the clear possibilities that multi-stakeholder partnerships hold for upgrading informal settlements.
### Abbreviations and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organisation</td>
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<td>CORC</td>
<td>Community Organisation Resource Centre</td>
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<td>DA</td>
<td>Democratic Alliance</td>
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<td>DHS</td>
<td>Department of Human Settlements</td>
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<td>EIA</td>
<td>Environmental Impact Assessment</td>
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<td>GDARD</td>
<td>Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
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<td>GDLGH</td>
<td>Gauteng Department of Local Government and Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISN</td>
<td>Informal Settlement Network</td>
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<td>JPC</td>
<td>Johannesburg Property Company</td>
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<td>LRC</td>
<td>Legal Resources Centre</td>
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<td>MMC</td>
<td>Member of the Mayoral Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEC</td>
<td>Member of the Executive Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDOH</td>
<td>National Department of Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCO</td>
<td>Parliamentary Constituency Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANCO</td>
<td>South African National Civics Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SABS</td>
<td>South African Bureau of Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAPS</td>
<td>South African Police Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>SERI</td>
<td>Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPCDF</td>
<td>Slovo Park Community Development Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UISP</td>
<td>Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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