

- 6.1.5.16 Some evictees received help from their families and friends to dismantle their corrugated iron sheets and transport their belongings, because it was not clear as to where they would be relocated. They were not certain whether their belongings would be safely kept at the factory.
- 6.1.5.17 At the end of the eviction process, 50 families at Bokamoso were left without shelter.
- 6.1.5.18 41 families were taken to the Fire Department and given food by the Municipality. Those who did not receive any assistance were left in the cold and stayed overnight at Bokamoso.
- 6.1.5.19 The Chief's residence was amongst those that were demolished and despite this he was ordered to leave the Fire Department premises as the situation was now deemed to be under the control of the Municipality.
- 6.1.5.20 On Thursday, 12 June 2014, the evictees made their way to the Fire Department to find out more about the plans that had allegedly been made for alternative land.
- 6.1.5.21 He found deplorable conditions at the Fire Department where males and females were crowded together in one room. There was no water and toilets were blocked. Children couldn't attend school and some missed their exams as they were uncertain about where they would be resettled. Much of the furniture that

was taken to the factory was damaged and some of the belongings of the evictees had been stolen.

6.1.5.22 Some of the evictees, who received shelter from families and friends for the night, arrived at the Fire Department on the 12th June and were told that they were no longer part of the evictees who need to be provided with alternative accommodation and land because they had other options of residence.

6.1.5.23 The Municipality took 41 households who slept at the Fire Department on the first night to a piece of land at Snake Park in Bluegumbosch for purposes of alternative accommodation.

6.1.5.24 Temporary accommodation provided by the Municipality was made up of old corrugated iron sheets belonging to the evictees and new corrugated iron sheets bought by the Municipality. These temporary shelters are three metres apart.

6.1.5.25 On Saturday, 14 June 2014, other evictees were moved to Makwane Youth Centre after the intervention of the MEC for Social Development, Ms Ntombela.

6.2 Interview with Residents/Evictees

6.2.1 On Wednesday, 18 June 2014, the Commission embarked on a visit to QwaQwa to interview the evictees, to assess their plight and observe their living conditions.

- 6.2.2 The investigating team first paid a visit to Snake Park in Bluegumbosch where 41 households have been relocated to by the municipality.
- 6.2.3 The investigating team found that the municipality had erected 28 shacks in this area as alternative 'temporary' accommodation for the evictees.
- 6.2.4 The evictees gave account of their dreadful experiences and the resultant impact of the eviction of their lives.
- 6.2.5 The evictees stated the following:
- 6.2.5.1 After the eviction they were placed in a temporary shelter at the municipality's Fire Department in QwaQwa.
 - 6.2.5.2 On Friday, 13 June 2014, the Municipality provided them with alternative accommodation at Snake Park.
 - 6.2.5.3 They do not have sanitation or toilet facilities in Snake Park. They have resorted to using toilets of residents in Snake Park.
 - 6.2.5.4 A communal tap was installed by the Municipality on the 13th June 2014.
 - 6.2.5.5 They are all from impoverished backgrounds. They are mostly unemployed and rely on social grants.
 - 6.2.5.6 They used to occupy RDP houses belonging to other people before they were allocated land by the Chief in Bokamoso.

- 6.2.5.7 They feel that the Municipality was inconsiderate and acted inhumanely by carrying out the eviction in winter during cold conditions in QwaQwa.
- 6.2.5.8 A voting station tent was erected in Bokamoso during the May national and provincial elections.
- 6.2.5.9 The Municipality has failed to inform them about plans to relocate them to an approved municipal site.
- 6.2.5.10 The Municipality promised to provide their children with counselling and has failed to fulfil this promise.
- 6.2.5.11 The MEC for Human Settlements visited the Snake Park area and promised them that government had found a site for them but couldn't state exactly where this was.
- 6.2.5.12 They have no information on the proposed relocation site identified by the municipality.
- 6.2.5.13 Some were dismissed from their work due to failure to report for duty as they were trying to safeguard their belongings.
- 6.2.5.14 Children couldn't attend school as a result of the eviction. Snake Park is far from their schools.
- 6.2.5.15 Their relocation to Snake Park has resulted in old residents openly threatening them.

- 6.2.5.16 They can't purchase nearby sites as they are unaffordable for them.
- 6.2.5.17 Their belongings were damaged by the bulldozer and the personnel of the demolition company.
- 6.2.6 Other evictees interviewed include the elderly, persons with disabilities and women.
- 6.2.7 They are all struggling to make ends meet and mostly rely on pension and disability grants from government.
- 6.2.8 The investigating team also visited the Makwane Youth Centre where 194 evictees are temporarily accommodated by the Municipality.
- 6.2.9 The investigating team interviewed the evictees based at the Makwane Youth Centre.
- 6.2.10 Most of the eviction victims fault the Municipality for their plight.
- 6.2.11 The evictees at Makwane Youth Centre stated the following:
- 6.2.11.1 Houses were demolished in their presence and this left them devastated.
- 6.2.11.2 An elderly lady, and two males were hospitalised and a four months old baby suffered from diarrhoea immediately after the eviction.

- 6.2.11.3 Some evictees suffer from chronic illnesses and couldn't take their pills on time.
- 6.2.11.4 One of the evictees was looking after her daughter who had a one month old baby when the eviction took place.
- 6.2.11.5 They requested a temporary mobile clinic but they were told that mobile clinics had been assigned to other areas in the municipality.
- 6.2.11.6 Most of their belongings were taken to the QwaQwa Industrial Area for safekeeping.
- 6.2.11.7 No inventory of their possessions was taken when they were evicted.
- 6.2.11.8 Some of their possessions were stolen whilst in safekeeping at the Industrial Area.
- 6.2.11.9 Some lost their identity documents during the eviction and demolishing of houses.
- 6.2.11.10 On Sunday, 15 June 2014, officials from the Department of Home Affairs visited the shelter to establish the number of people who had lost their identity documents.
- 6.2.11.11 Children couldn't attend school.

- 6.2.11.12 One of the evictees studying at the University of South Africa stated that the eviction severely hampered his preparation for June examinations.
- 6.2.11.13 The Municipality appointed a service provider to provide them with food.
- 6.2.11.14 The Municipality didn't provide them with food in some of the days.
- 6.2.11.15 The Mayor has not been to the shelter.
- 6.2.11.16 A major cold snap had descended on QwaQwa during the eviction and it was cold at the shelter.
- 6.2.11.17 The Department of Social Development gave them two gas heaters.
- 6.2.11.18 Evictees are vulnerable at night due to the fact that the Youth Centre is not lockable.
- 6.2.11.19 They now have to walk long distances to work.
- 6.2.11.20 One of the evictees has a wheelchair bound daughter.
- 6.2.11.21 All females at the shelter share the same mobile toilet. The mobile toilet is not designed to accommodate persons with disabilities.

- 6.2.11.22 All males also share the same toilet.
- 6.2.11.23 Other proper functioning toilets are used by the Social Workers.
- 6.2.11.24 One of the evictees was injured by a corrugated iron sheet during the eviction and has not received medical attention.
- 6.2.11.25 The municipality did not meaningfully engage with them.
- 6.2.11.26 They couldn't change their clothes for a week after they were moved to Makwane Youth Centre as their clothes were kept at the industrial area.
- 6.2.11.27 They were told that they would only stay at the Youth Centre temporarily and would then be moved to an alternative municipal site. No date of relocation was fixed and they are still in the dark.
- 6.2.11.28 The Methodist Church of South Africa was able to provide them with blankets and food.
- 6.2.11.29 Some evictees slept on the floor and on beds without mattresses.
- 6.2.12 The evictees accused government of abandoning them.
- 6.2.13 The following observations were noted in the areas visited:

6.3 General Observations

- 6.3.1 The land from which the people were evicted is in the vicinity of the University of Free State QwaQwa campus.
- 6.3.2 The vast majority of evictees are unemployed and rely on social grants from government.
- 6.3.3 They predominantly speak Sesotho and Zulu.
- 6.3.4 The conditions at the Makwane Youth Centre were deplorable.

6.4 Substantive Observations

- 6.4.1 The evictees residing in Snake Park use one communal tap for water.
- 6.4.2 There are no toilets for evictees in Snake Park.
- 6.4.3 The toilets used by men at Makwane Youth Centre are unsanitary.
- 6.4.4 During the inspection period, the investigation team witnessed the conditions in the area. (***see Photos 1-18***)

PHOTO 1 (CHIEF TSOLO MOPELI SHOWING THE EVICTION SITE TO INVESTIGATORS)

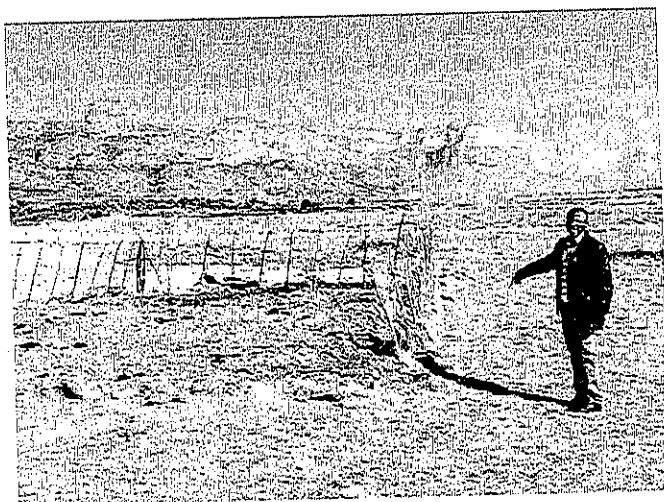


PHOTO 2 (BOKAMOSO AREA)



PHOTO 3 (BOKAMOSO AREA)

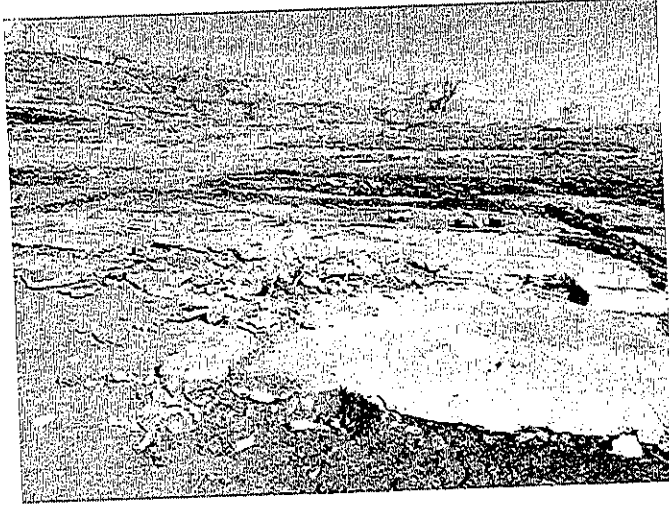


PHOTO 4 (ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION – SNAKE PARK)

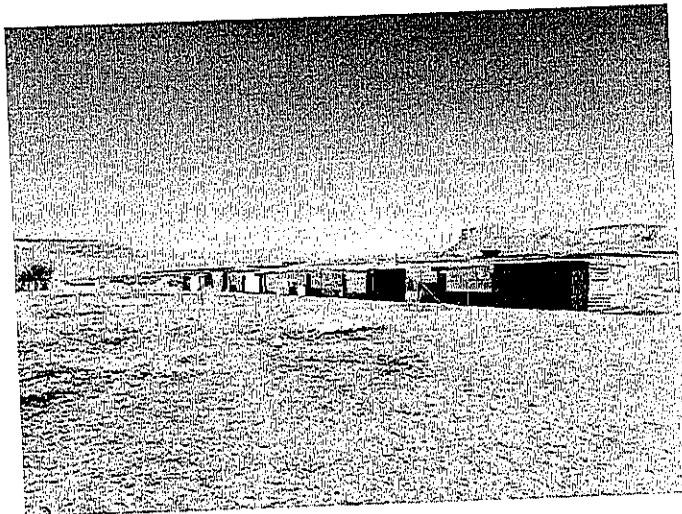


PHOTO 5 (ONE COMMUNAL TAP – SNAKE PARK)

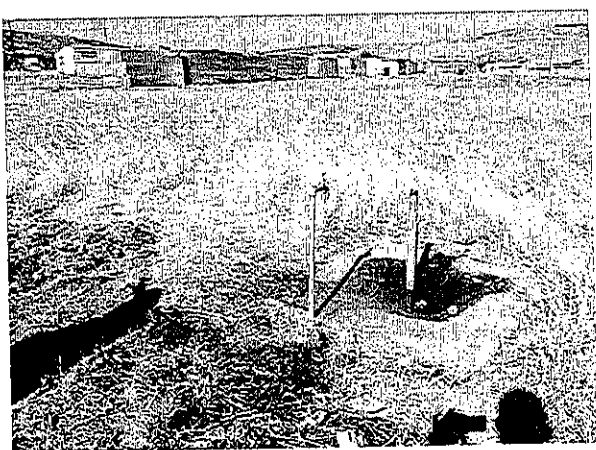


PHOTO 6 (EVICTEES TEMPORARILY RELOCATED TO SNAKE PARK)



PHOTO 7 (NEIGHBOURING HOUSES IN SNAKE PARK)

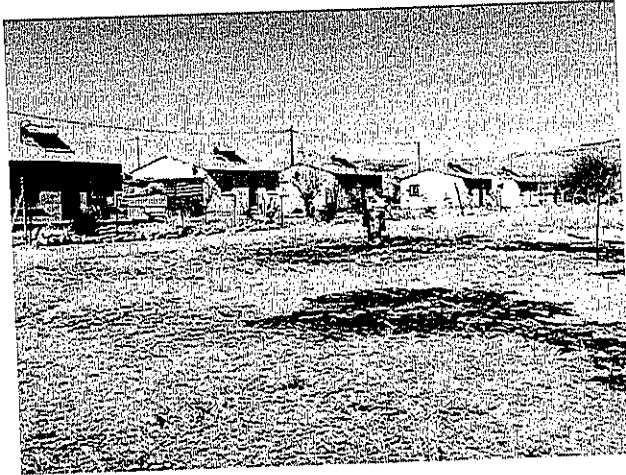


PHOTO 8 (AN EVICTEE LIVING WITH DISABILITY)

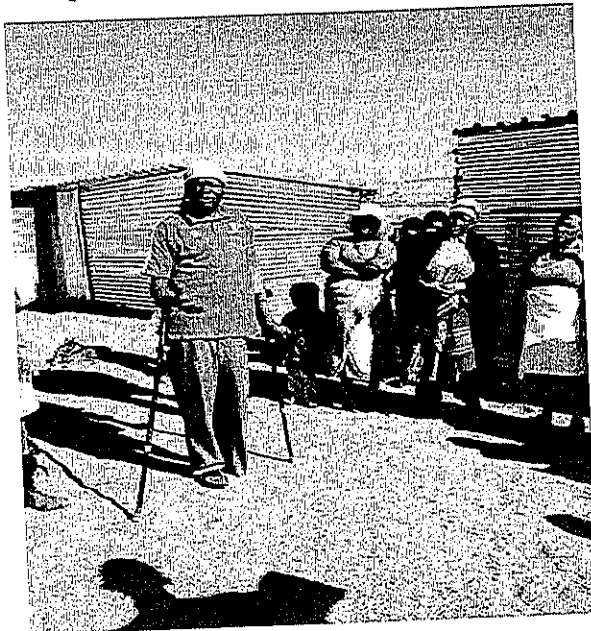


PHOTO 9 (SNAKE PARK ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION)

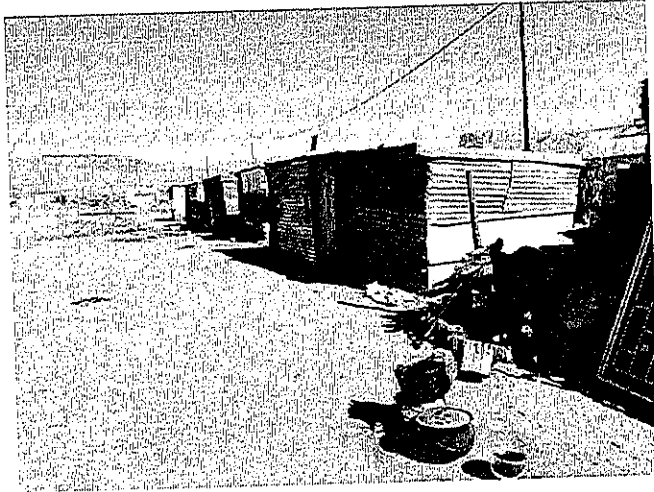


PHOTO 10 (EVICTEE WHOSE BELONGINGS WERE DAMAGED DURING THE DEMOLITION)



PHOTO 11 (EVICTEES AT MAKWANE YOUTH CENTRE HALL)



PHOTO 12 (MAKWANE YOUTH CENTRE HALL)



PHOTO 13 (PERSON WITH DISABILITY – MAKWANE YOUTH CENTRE)

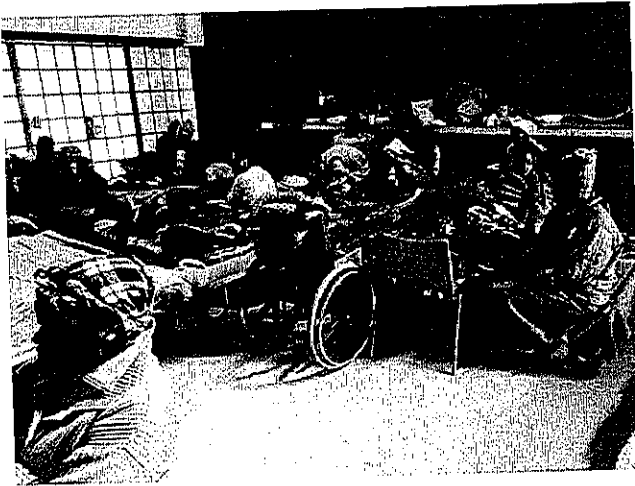


PHOTO 14 (BEDS WITHOUT MATTRESS)

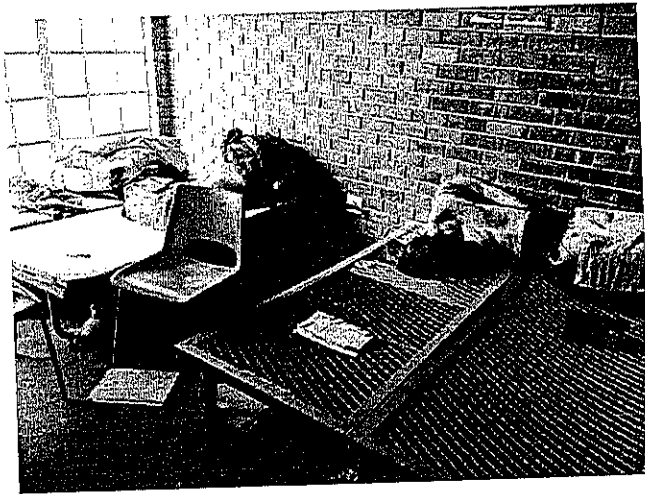


PHOTO 15 (SOME EVICTEES SLEPT ON THE FLOOR)



PHOTO 16 (UNSANITARY BATHROOMS)



PHOTO 17 (UNSANITARY TOILET)

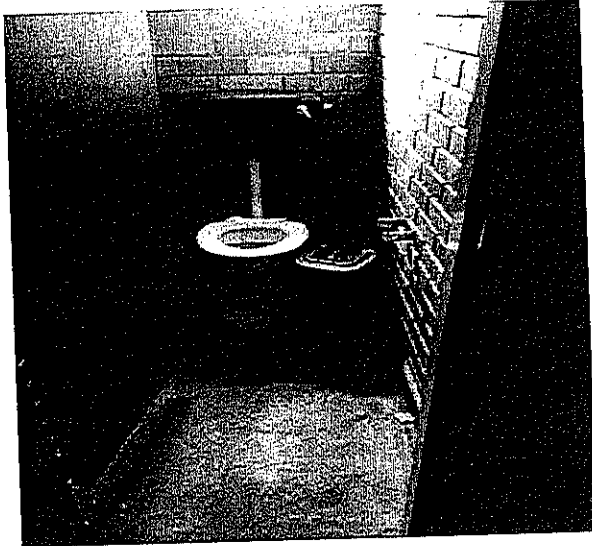


PHOTO 18 (LUNCH PROVIDED BY THE MUNICIPALITY)

