



The Meaning of Home Amongst the Homeless Population of Cape Town, South Africa

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Abstract

The City of Cape Town has not found a permanent, successful solution to accommodating the large chronically homeless population living there. The sponsoring organization, Streetscapes, employs the sector of the population that struggles with substance abuse. In this project, we interviewed Streetscapes' employees about what are considered important physical and emotional elements of a home. Streetscapes can use this information to improve their therapeutic programs and housing application processes to better meet an individual's needs. Personal safety and being able to accommodate family were the top-ranking elements of importance. The survey tool and database produced from this project can also be used by city NGOs to annually track improving or worsening scores.

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Executive Summary:

Home is often the foundation of a successful and positive life. Unfortunately, similar to many cities, Cape Town struggles with high unemployment rates and difficulty providing housing for many of its residents. Homelessness rates are extremely high and there is a challenge in creating long-term housing that resonates with the street people's physical and emotional needs, both short-term and long-term.

Physical elements are often seen as the more desired parts of a home. However, there are important emotional or social aspects that are often neglected when providing public housing to the homeless. The Cape Town government and Non-Governmental organizations have developed various temporary living spaces for street people, the term used in South Africa for homeless. Despite this effort, there are many occurrences where the street people choose not to take advantage of such resources. Streetscapes, our sponsor, who aims to reintegrate street people back into society, would like to better understand the needs of street people and what they prefer to have in the make-up of their living spaces. To fulfil their goal, Streetscapes wanted to determine the emotional and physical aspects of what home means to street people, such as security or community, so they can help contribute to developing better housing solutions in the future.

Background:

Between 1948-1994, the South African government implemented a racial divisive governance system called Apartheid. Apartheid restricted housing opportunities for black and colored residents by forcing them into less desirable neighborhoods, giving the more valuable land to white people, who now have legal ownership. During Apartheid, many of the black and colored people were sanctioned to live in areas far away from urban centers, creating difficulty in finding jobs (SAHO, 2016). The sanction has now led to a generational inequality in the employment and housing access in Cape Town. In a 2016 Western Cape Census, eighty-three percent of the unemployed population was black and colored people (SAHO, 2016).

Homelessness is something that seems primarily physical, but there are underlying social aspects that impact each person (Zigmark, 1995). The idea of what constitutes a home is something that changes for every individual, but there are physical and emotional components for everyone. There are aspects that make a living situation more desirable to people such as, location, comfort and safety. People often associate their home with their identity, based on their decorations. For a home to feel like it truly belongs to someone, it is important that it provides safety, personal space, and creates a positive living environment that provides a sense of community. Many homeless people often leave temporary living spaces that are provided by the government, because it does not meet their needs.

Project Goal and Objectives

The goal of this project was to investigate the meaning of home amongst the homeless community of Cape Town to provide our sponsor, Streetscapes, with information to help them improve the current housing accommodations offered to the homeless.

We accomplished this by achieving the following four objectives:

1. Understand the experience of people living on the street and in “safe-spaces”
2. Determine the reasons why homeless people stay in or leave their current living or safe spaces.
3. Investigate the emotional and physical attributes of a home among the homeless population.
4. Develop a survey analysis tool that Streetscapes can use to improve their future services to the homeless.

Methods

To achieve our first objective, we spent the first week of our project developing rapport with interviewees, who are Streetscapes clients also known as beneficiaries, by doing activities such as gardening and sweeping the streets with them. Through this involvement we were able to become familiar faces to the clients and learn basic information about their lives. After this, we conducted semi-structured interviews with the beneficiaries about their current living experiences and past living spaces. These questions were asked in Appendix A.

To achieve objective two, we continued our semi-structured interviews with questions that were more personal, consisting of why they choose to stay, where they live now or what influenced them to leave past living situations. The responses consist of the location where they live and have lived, the aspects they enjoyed and disliked.

For objective three we moved on to questions about home traits, which we divided into physical and emotional to assess specifically what favorable attributes people think of when defining their home. We asked questions pertaining to their opinions, their feelings, and their descriptions of their home, as well as what they desire in a home.

To achieve objective four, the group developed a survey analysis tool with interview data to determine with which elements interviewees were satisfied or dissatisfied in their current living conditions. Our team created a database compiling all previous survey responses and background notes from interviews. We then selected the ten most common elements, five emotional and five physical among the responses, and based on those, developed a questionnaire that Streetscape can administer every year to determine if the “meaning of home” has changed over time, as well as use this information to see if living has improved.

Assessing the Experiences and Needs of the Homeless Population in Cape Town

Our first theme in our discussion was the current housing experiences that were described by the interviewees. We interviewed people living on the streets, Kuils River Safe House provided by Streetscapes, informal housing, formal housing and the Woodstock Day Hospital (listed in decreasing order of interviewee number). We found that people living in the streets were by far the most dissatisfied in the Streetscapes community because they were often disappointed in the realities of street life. People living in Kuils River, formal housing, and government housing were generally happier. There were a significant number of people who hoped to one day live in informal housing.

We found that unemployment impacted all of our interviewees prior to working for Streetscapes. There are a variety of past experiences that displace people into street life, consisting of bad family dynamics, physical or emotional abuse/trauma, and drugs and alcohol.

All of the interviewees also stated that they struggled with escaping the street life, because there are bad habits that involve drugs and alcohol that often pulled them back into a troubled life. There was no opportunity for “personal growth” when living on the streets in Cape Town. Poor family dynamics or the death of a primary family member lead to mental trauma and financial despair forcing people onto the streets. After such experiences, interviewees turned to drugs to cope with the emotional trauma since they did not have support from any person. We found it important to understand that people did not choose for these events to occur in their life, but unfortunately found themselves in those situations.

Finally, we identified the primary elements, what each individual found to be important in their past, present and future living spaces. While safety is an important element to a home, beneficiaries stressed that the emotional aspects behind personal growth, belonging and community are also key components. Living in a community that consists of gangsterism, alcohol and drug abuse, growing as a person and feeling as though you belong there, is nearly impossible. They are trapped by the environment and feel as though there is no escape. The problem is that after work, they go back to the troubled environments and never fully get away from it.

Residents in each location had varying experiences with the community surrounding them, the living conditions and the utilities. With there only being one response in our survey tool from formal living and Woodstock Day Hospital, we were unable to have significant findings from these living types. People currently living on the streets were dissatisfied with nine elements, safety and security, family accommodation, roof, personal growth, utilities, community support, personal space, belonging, and warmth. The only element they were satisfied with was the sense of responsibility they had because they were able to make their own decisions.

Kuils River Safe House had the highest satisfaction rates in all the surveys we conducted. The safe house scored a satisfactory rating for all ten elements that were surveyed. The biggest takeaway from these surveys was satisfaction level with the roof element. Our data showed that having a secure roof was very important to the people living in the safe house as all of the interviewees gave it the highest rating possible.

Results from informal living were often split, but there were a few areas of concern from the beneficiaries. Beneficiaries felt there was not enough space to accommodate the utilities they wanted to have in their living space. The beneficiaries mentioned that there was an absence of community support, because they were often living in locations that were involved with gangsterism. With a shortage of community support beneficiaries felt as if they lacked a sense of belonging and identity. They no longer want to be associated with areas that involve gangsterism and want to move away from this problem. However, there were elements that were still satisfactory. There were five different elements that had a majority satisfactory rating, safety, roof, personal growth, sense of responsibility and warmth. We hope that the survey tool will help Streetscapes to be able to make a significant change in these living environments.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“There is no place like home.” This commonly used phrase in the United States portrays the strength and value that a home provides to individuals and families. Home is not only a physical space; a home represents community, the environment, and the sense of comfort that allows people to have their own safe space. It is an area to recover from the outside world. To come home, close the door and be able to have space and time to oneself. Without meeting this basic need, a person is unable to recuperate and refresh the mind and body from a day’s work (Lawson, 2018). A home is the first step to building one’s life and becoming self-reliant (Bryon, 2018). A living space is a representation, reflection, and an extension to an individual's identity (Zigmark, 1995). It is vital that every person of any age, identity, or race has the opportunity to live in a home that resonates with happiness, safety, and recovery from the daily hardships of life.

Worldwide, governmental attempts have been made to improve daily living conditions of homeless communities. However, there is a challenge in finding permanent, effective solutions that ultimately lead to revisions in homeless policies, regulations, and law enforcement. Humanitarian aid approaches are being implemented throughout major cities across the world to try to address this problem and reduce the number of people turning to the streets for their home (Nickelsburg, 2018).

Cape Town is a major city in South Africa that has always suffered from increasing homelessness. Failure to create suitable housing opportunities has contributed to its increase of street people. Homeless aid seldom creates long-term housing options that make someone truly feel at home (Evans, 2019). Cape Town has few organizations that strive to provide living spaces for street people and unfortunately, there has been little success in creating accommodations. Occasionally, this is due to poor location or lack of safety at these accommodations, causing people to feel uncomfortable and leave their housing (Goebel, 2007).

To understand the experiences of homeless people in Cape Town, we partnered with Streetscapes, an organization in Cape Town that provides street people a chance to rehabilitate and reintegrate back into society by granting work opportunities (Streetscapes, 2019). Our goal was to better understand the homeless population’s meaning of home in hopes of improving the quality of housing options provided by Streetscapes.

The remainder of this report is structured as follows: In Chapter 2 we discuss the theoretical background that supported our research. Chapter 3 explains the methods we used to find key elements of the meaning of a home and develop an interview survey tool. Chapters 4 and 5 are our discussion about the findings from the study. We then describe the deliverables and recommendations we came up with for our sponsor Streetscapes.

Chapter 2: Background

Section 2.1: Inadequate Housing as a Global Challenge

Acquiring long-term housing is an ongoing struggle for the poor communities in Cape Town and worldwide. The World Resource Institute (WRI), states in “The Housing Crisis Is Global: There’s A Better Way to Solve It.” that about 1.6 billion people are expected to lack access to adequate and affordable housing by 2025. That would mean that twenty percent of the world will be living in substandard housing situations (The Housing Crisis Is Global. There's A Better Way to Solve It., 2017). From this analysis, inadequate housing results in an increase of homeless communities and a high unsatisfactory rate causing people to leave homes.

In 2017, there were about 900 million people worldwide living in slums (“The Housing Crisis Is Global. There's A Better Way to Solve It.”, 2017). Moving the people out of city slums and into temporary housing moves them away from social and economic connections (Confronting the Urban Housing Crisis in the Global South). WRI presents a potential solution that calls for the disadvantaged groups in the slums to become empowered. WRI defines empowerment as teaching disadvantaged groups how to repair their community to improve their living conditions (Confronting the Urban Housing Crisis in the Global South). Evidence has shown that empowered local slum communities, have solved their own issues and created job opportunities (“The Housing Crisis Is Global. There's A Better Way to Solve It.”, 2017). Although inadequate housing can sometimes be alleviated through community empowerment, often it can lead to a lack of job opportunities due to poor location. This tends to result in a higher chance of unemployment leading to homelessness (“Inadequate Housing”, 2019).

Section 2.2: Homelessness and Unemployment in Cape Town

Unemployment in South Africa is a national problem and is a major contributor to homelessness (“Homelessness | Western Cape Government”, 2019). In 2018, unemployment in South Africa peaked at twenty-nine percent, the highest percentage recorded since 2003 (Unemployment - Unemployment rate - OECD Data). Currently, Cape Town has approximately 200,000 homeless people, roughly four percent of the total population (“Homelessness | Western Cape Government”, 2019). There is a connection between unemployment and homelessness which becomes evident when analyzing the living locations of black and colored post-apartheid communities.

Between 1948-1994, the South African government implemented Apartheid. Apartheid restricted job and housing opportunities for black and colored residents by forcing them into less desirable neighborhoods, leaving valued land for white communities. This created racial tension in the country and led to decades of disenfranchisement for black and colored people. This is evident in the housing sectors, with black and colored people occupying fewer desirable dwellings in informal settlements (SAHO, 2016). In the Western Cape, seventeen percent of residents live in informal settlements, four percent above the national average (Table 1). An

informal dwelling is defined as “areas where groups of housing units have been constructed on land that the occupants have no legal claim to, or occupy illegally” (Glossary of Statistical Terms, 2019). During Apartheid, the government sanctioned off specific locations where black and colored people were allowed to live. Many of these sanctioned areas are far away from urban centers, making it very difficult to find jobs (Thelwell, K., & Project, B. 2019).

The 2016 Census provides statistics of the black and colored populations as the majority population affected by homelessness. Approximately eighty-two of the Western Cape’s population live in formal dwellings. The sixteen percent living in informal dwellings are essentially “stuck” without access to reliable and affordable transportation to central business locations (SAHO, 2016).

Table 1; Distribution of households by type of main dwelling: Western Cape, CS 2016.

District/municipality	Formal dwelling		Traditional dwelling		Informal dwelling		Other		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
CPT: City of Cape Town	1 032 597	81,6	2 400	0,2	222 920	17,6	6 828	0,5	1 264 746
DC1: West Coast	111 389	85,8	1 830	1,4	15 884	12,2	759	0,6	129 862
WC011: Matzikama	18 350	88,1	81	0,4	2 300	11,0	89	0,4	20 821
WC012: Cederberg	11 936	78,1	140	0,9	3 065	20,1	138	0,9	15 279
WC013: Bergrivier	17 487	91,7	410	2,1	1 072	5,6	103	0,5	19 072
WC014: Saldanha Bay	26 592	74,8	835	2,3	7 855	22,1	268	0,8	35 550
WC015: Swartland	37 024	94,6	364	0,9	1 592	4,1	159	0,4	39 139
DC2: Cape Winelands	190 977	81,0	2 178	0,9	41 833	17,7	918	0,4	235 906
WC022: Witzenberg	29 969	83,3	687	1,9	5 040	14,0	280	0,8	35 976
WC023: Drakenstein	64 710	90,3	151	0,2	6 630	9,2	195	0,3	71 686
WC024: Stellenbosch	33 971	65,0	366	0,7	17 829	34,1	107	0,2	52 274
WC025: Breede Valley	36 964	77,7	720	1,5	9 679	20,3	205	0,4	47 569
WC026: Langeberg	25 363	89,3	254	0,9	2 654	9,3	131	0,5	28 401
DC3: Overberg	75 105	81,8	1 231	1,3	14 738	16,1	739	0,8	91 813
WC031: Theewaterskloof	25 679	77,6	272	0,8	6 732	20,3	412	1,2	33 096
WC032: Overstrand	28 235	79,0	174	0,5	7 133	20,0	176	0,5	35 718
WC033: Cape Agulhas	9 976	88,1	761	6,7	522	4,6	61	0,5	11 321
WC034: Swellendam	11 215	96,0	24	0,2	350	3,0	89	0,8	11 678
DC4: Eden	162 325	85,7	1 400	0,7	24 544	13,0	1 038	0,5	189 309
WC041: Kannaland	6 171	97,4	-	-	111	1,8	52	0,8	6 333
WC042: Hessequa	16 645	96,0	254	1,5	222	1,3	223	1,3	17 345
WC043: Mossel Bay	28 004	88,2	314	1,0	3 397	10,7	51	0,2	31 766
WC044: George	52 606	83,9	498	0,8	9 261	14,8	358	0,6	62 722
WC045: Oudtshoorn	21 316	91,2	50	0,2	1 948	8,3	48	0,2	23 362
WC047: Bitou	16 788	76,6	202	0,9	4 799	21,9	126	0,6	21 914
WC048: Knysna	20 796	80,4	82	0,3	4 807	18,6	181	0,7	25 866
DC5: Central Karoo	21 498	97,8	361	1,6	102	0,5	19	0,1	21 980
WC051: Laingsburg	2 791	97,5	24	0,8	47	1,6	-	-	2 862
WC052: Prince Albert	3 838	91,8	337	8,1	8	0,2	-	-	4 183
WC053: Beaufort West	14 868	99,6	-	-	48	0,3	19	0,1	14 935
Western Cape	1 593 891	82,4	9 401	0,5	320 022	16,6	10 302	0,5	1 933 616
South Africa	13 404 199	79,2	1 180 745	7,0	2 193 968	13,0	142 271	0,8	16 921 183

Formal dwelling includes (i) House or brick/concrete block structure (ii) Flat (iii) Cluster house in complex (iv) Townhouse (v) Semi-detached house.
Informal dwelling includes (i) Shack in the backyard (ii) Shack not in the backyard.

Provincial profile: Western Cape [Community Survey 2016], Report 03-01-07

Homelessness and unemployment make it easy to become involved in the crime and drug use that happens when living on the streets (Gomez, 2010). Governments across the globe share common obstacles reintegrating the homeless back into society (The Housing Crisis Is Global.

There's A Better Way to Solve It., 2017). Efforts have been made to provide rehabilitation programs for those recovering from substance abuse, as well as assistance with finding jobs. The Cape Town Government provides a substance abuse program to aid in treatment and recovery from drug and alcohol abuse to help people get clean and get back into daily work-life (“Western Cape Government Department of Social Development”, 2019). Partnerships with the Department of Social Development (DOS) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) allow NGOs to provide services without government funding (“Services | Western Cape Government Department of Social Development”). These programs are outlets to those who have experienced traumas that may occur when living on the street. For those who are not clean or on the road to recovery, it is harder to find jobs. On a global scale, successful substance abuse policies curb homelessness and aid in the reintegration back into society.

Section 2.3: Successful Homeless Policies

Two case studies within the United States, located in Salt Lake City and Boston revealed insights about successful strategies used to curb homelessness and unemployment through housing and job opportunities. Salt Lake City, Utah, was the most successful city in battling homelessness within the United States from 2005-2015. Salt Lake City’s success was mainly due to their Housing First Policy, which states that everyone deserves housing, regardless of the complexity or severity of their needs and past life experiences. The policy was aimed towards Salt Lake’s chronically homeless people, who have been homeless for more than one year. They make up only fifteen percent of the homeless population in Salt Lake City, but consume fifty to sixty percent of resources (Bryon, 2018). Housing First supplies individuals with a permanent home before tackling other issues such as addiction and mental illness. The United States Interagency Council of Homelessness states that the approach produced a higher housing stability rate, lowered the rates of return to homelessness, reduced public costs stemming from crisis services and institutions, and decreased the chronically homeless population by ninety-one percent between 2005 and 2015. The Housing First Policy was so successful that cities such as Columbus, Seattle, and one in Finland adopted a similar approach (Nickelsburg, 2018). From 2008 to 2014, Finland reduced the chronically homeless population by 1,200 individuals (Kaakinen, 2016). In 2017, Seattle exited 5,000 people from homelessness into housing through their new policy (Nickelsburg, 2018). Many countries, including South Africa, are unable to implement programs similar to Housing First Policy due to a lack of government funding and resources (Osman, 2019).

Boston, Massachusetts curbed chronic homelessness by providing programs that pair clients with housing and job opportunities. According to Lynn Joliecour of WBUR (Boston’s National Public Radio), Boston has a list of profiles of adults that are chronically homeless. They are paired through a software program with an advocate who will aid them with finding housing and job opportunities.

Boston also implemented The Triage Program, which concentrates on helping the chronically homeless by providing financial support to get on housing waitlists and search for a job. About one fifth of the program's clients find housing and a job within the first month.

Section 2.4: Sociological and Psychological Meaning of a Home

Homelessness is a worldwide problem with underlying psychological causes that emphasize why lacking a home becomes such a hardship. Throughout the world, the definition of a home varies when considering cultural influence and societal standards. The concept of a home is something that is often different for every individual, but ultimately pertains to both physical and emotional contributions that may make it desirable for an individual (Zigmark, 1995).

Being homeless can leave people feeling vulnerable, which is why in order to get their lives to a healthy and secure state, they need a living space that provides a place to recover from their hardships (Bryon, 2018). For a home to serve as a meaningful place where one can rehabilitate from the outside world, more than physical support is needed (Lawson, 2018). It is of great importance to people living on the street that "the sense of being related" and "related to significant places" allows them to feel like they belong in this environment they call home (Zigmark, 1995, page 47).

Location impacts the access to basic needs, familiarity with neighbors, comfort, happiness, and the level of safety homeless people feel (Zigmark, 1995). When taken out of their place of comfort, some homeless people would rather live on the streets than a facilitated structure (Goebel, 2007). Being in an unknown environment causes discomfort due to how location can limit job opportunities and access to resources (Bryon, 2018).

Lawson explains that safety is a form of belonging and security that is a baseline for comfort, "Feeling at home is to live and be in the world in a secure way where one feels a sense of belonging and fit" (Lawson, 2018, page 50). In addition to that, privacy is a significant factor that is necessary for most individuals to be comfortable and safe. In having their own space, people are able to feel unwatched and secure in a way that allows such a vulnerable population to be safe (Lawson, 2018). The combination of personal space and safety are essential to the comfort that defines a home.

Often, using personal items helps claim ownership of the space and tends to mean that "Each of the items you display in your spaces can potentially broadcast something about your identity, or how you think, feel and act in everyday life" (Sinn, 2013). It is still important for people to make a space their own. This creates a sense of ownership and incorporates a person's personality, descent, culture, and identity into their housing (Burns, 2014). Sinn argues that when people feel they are responsible for their things they are more likely to be happy in their living environment and stay longer in their homes (Sinn, 2013).

From the physical state of a home to the emotional feeling of being welcomed and happy in the living environment, there are an overwhelming number of components that contribute to someone claiming a place as their own. In order for a place to belong to someone, they need to have their own environment, personal space, and way of keeping themselves safe. This is why

many homeless people sometimes leave their temporary housing or create their own area living on the street (Goebel, 2017). Once the physical standards, safety, location, and privacy are considered, then people can begin viewing their living situation as something they choose to identify as a home.

Section 2.5: Streetscapes and Our Project

Community support is an important factor in creating stability for homeless people. Streetscapes is an organization in Cape Town aiding homeless people to find a life off the streets. Streetscapes' mission is to help street people suffering from chronic substance abuse and homelessness by providing them with a job opportunity and a community of support. They believe that finding the essential factors that make a home feel welcoming and secure will help create more stable living environments in the future.

Streetscapes has asked our team to understand and identify what the homeless look for in their personal meanings of "home" in order to understand and find ways to improve the current housing problems. Our goal was to identify what satisfies the idea of a home and to provide Streetscapes with a measurement tool to find more permanent solutions to homelessness.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The goal of this project is to investigate the meaning of home amongst the homeless community of Cape Town to provide our sponsor, Streetscapes, with information to help them improve the current housing accommodations offered to the homeless.

We accomplished this by achieving the following four objectives:

1. Understand the experience of people living on the street and in "safe-spaces"
2. Determine the reasons why homeless people stay in or leave their current living or safe spaces.
3. Investigate the emotional and physical attributes of a home among the homeless population.
4. Develop a survey analysis tool that Streetscapes can use to improve their future services to the homeless.

Objective 1: Understand the experience of people living on the street and in "safe-spaces".

It was crucial to understand the experiences of people who are currently living or have lived on the streets and safe spaces, because it gave us insight into their daily life. Streetscapes defined the term safe space as, "A governmental designated city area near markets as well as fenced off locations under bridges." A living space was defined as any other type of non-

governmental location. We spent the first week of our project time developing rapport with interviewees by doing inclusive activities such as gardening and sweeping the streets with them. During this time, we utilized participant observation to become familiar faces to the clients and learn basic information about their lives. The first week was intended to lay the foundation of a trustworthy relationship between us and interviewees. After that, we interviewed 23 homeless people using semi-structured interviews (Questions in Appendices A through C). Appendix A addressed basic lifestyle questions regarding work commutes, sleeping, sanitary conditions, food, water and neighbors. Once we established trust with the interviewees, we were able to probe for in-depth information using Appendices B and C. Prior to each interview, we read a consent statement to the participant acknowledging that their personal information will remain anonymous. Most of the interviewees were street people that work for Streetscapes because they were the most common clients recruited and the ideal population for our research. Interviews preferably were performed in pairs where one person would lead the interview while the other scribed. Responses were recorded by hand because use of technology seemed to create a barrier between the intimacy of the conversation topic.

Objective 2: Determine the reasons why homeless people stay in or leave their current living or safe spaces.

Determining the motive for whether a homeless person decides to stay or leave their location will provide Streetscapes with the opportunity to help beneficiaries attain their future living goals. Through semi-structured interviews, we asked why homeless people choose to stay in their current living or safe spaces and what caused them to leave past living situations.

The semi structured interviews explained in Objective 1 also provided data for this objective. After relationships with the homeless people were developed, we expanded on the interviews by asking questions explained in Appendix B, which includes how they felt about their current and past living situations. The topics consist of specific questions such as what they enjoy about their current and past living spaces, what caused them to relocate and the challenges of the various living spaces. We used the expanded interview protocol of Appendix B for all of the people we interviewed in Appendix A.

Objective 3: Investigate the emotional and physical attributes of a home among the homeless population.

In order to understand what people want in their living spaces, we learned what aspects contribute to the idea of a home. From our participants, we determined whether a connection to their living environment is more emotional or physical by asking questions in Appendix C. We used the responses in our interviews to divide home traits into physical and emotional parts. This was used to assess specifically what favorable attributes people think of when defining their home. We included questions about their opinions, their feelings, and their descriptions of their home, as well as their desires of a home. We also asked about their lifestyles and what

relationships they have in their community. We recorded the responses as emotional if they pertained to feelings and personal relationships. Whereas, responses about structure, space, or material aspects on living environments we considered physical.

From our questions in Appendices A through C, we identified 10 key elements that contribute to a home.

Objective 4: Develop a survey analysis tool that Streetscapes can use to improve future services.

From the data collected in interviews, we developed a ranking scale and created a survey analysis initiative for Streetscapes to annually assess if the living environments have the essential factors of a living situation. The survey tool will be used to make future improvements to services offered to the homeless by Streetscapes. The first few questions request basic demographic information such as name, gender, and years working for Streetscapes. The components of the tool were the top ten physical and emotional elements that make up a home. The top five ranking elements from physical and top five elements from emotional were randomized in the survey to eliminate bias per component. Each element was then listed with a smiley face satisfactory rating below each. Our tool was derived from a similar approach to the Wong- Baker FACES Pain Rating Scale (Wong Baker Faces, 2019). Similar to this approach, our team created a four- optioned survey question tool with faces. The lowest option, a frown, would equate to a twenty-five percent satisfactory score for that element. The low/mid satisfactory option would equate to fifty percent, and the high/ mid satisfactory option would equate to seventy-five percent. The highest score would be a smile, equating to a one-hundred percent satisfactory review. The average score of the responses for both emotional and physical will be taken for these two components. Since there are five options for each of these two components (five emotional and five physical), the responses will be summed up and divided by five, the total number of elements for each, to calculate the results. Two grades will be given; one for emotional and one for physical. It is important to note that these two final grades will not sum to one hundred percent, as these are two separate scores finding the average for each component. For example, if a participant scores a 3/5 for physical elements (sixty percent) and a 2.25/5 for emotional (forty-five percent), the results added together would equal one-hundred and five percent. The purpose of receiving a ranking for each of the physical and emotional elements is for Streetscapes to better understand each individual in the program. Streetscapes will now be able to target services they provide to certain people who would benefit most from them. Someone who scores higher for emotional elements may benefit more from going to the group therapy discussions to talk about their frustrations relating to family life or not feeling safe at night. Someone who scores higher in physical elements may benefit from learning how to apply for a Wendy house. Learning about what elements each individual values will give Streetscapes a personal look into each of the beneficiaries lives and future goals, allowing them to take this data and “mix and match” top ranking elements, physical or emotional, to find the best options for people.

Our team created a database compiling all previous survey responses and background notes from interviews. By storing this repository of information, Streetscapes can analyze if the “meaning of home” has changed over time, as well as use this information for future reference.

Our team has left this survey with Streetscapes for their use. They can choose to share it with other organizations. A Streetscapes employee piloted our survey to beneficiaries who were not interviewed to determine how the process would go with an interviewer less familiar with our tool. We hope that Streetscapes will be able to determine “meaning of home” amongst the beneficiaries through our survey every year to see if there has been any changes to the importance of the elements. If there are, the new information could be added to the database to update the survey tool for the following year.

Chapter 4: Assessing the Experiences and Needs of the Homeless Population in Cape Town

In this chapter we share the results of our research we compiled through observational analysis, interviews and the survey tool. It is organized by four primary topics; the work of Streetscapes, the current experiences of the homeless participants and causes of homelessness, and the top ten elements that represent peoples’ priorities or meaning of home.

4.1 The Work of Streetscapes in Supporting the Homeless

The findings chapter discusses the results of determining the most important elements of a home to the beneficiaries of Streetscapes and presents their experiences in the living spaces currently available to them. Prior to discussing the findings, it is important to have deeper knowledge regarding the services Khulisa Social Solutions provides.

Khulisa Social Solutions is an organization that strives to reintegrate the homeless population back into society and help them create a life they are proud of. Such a challenge requires a program that can guide a once struggling person on their way to being someone who is driven and able to progress through life away from substance abuse and homeless struggles.

Khulisa’s Streetscapes branch recruits the homeless through a selection process. They evaluate and provide work opportunities for the homeless in the form of gardening in 4 locations (Examples of Gardens: Figures 1, 2, 3, 4) and street cleaning. This work opportunity structure is considered a harm-reduction program which is a set of practical strategies aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with substance addiction (Principles of Harm Reduction). Andrew Hepburn-Brown, Opportunity Developer at Streetscapes, states that when keeping a beneficiary occupied with work for several hours a day, he or she is less likely to have time to use drugs. For example, a beneficiary potentially could drop his or her use rate of marijuana from ten times per day to three. A primary goal of Streetscapes harm-reduction program is to keep clients busy and away from substance abuse and issues they face on the streets. The Streetscapes program also acts as a self-reflection period where the clients work for themselves bolstering personal dignity and easing away from dependence on others. Beneficiaries are restricted from using drugs during work hours, therefore their job acts as a gateway to experience life without substance.

To gauge motivation in a vulnerable, chronically homeless, and drug addicted population, Streetscapes opens a personal bank account for each homeless employee and aids them in acquiring a South African ID to grant them the feeling of individuality. If beneficiaries are consistent and go to work each day, they receive R2000 a month. However, the goal is not productivity, but participation and self-reflection. Ms. Laitinen explained that Streetscapes is not concerned if plants perish in the Roeland (Figure 1), Vredehoek (Figure 2), or Trafalgar Gardens (Figure 3) or their work lacks quality. The beneficiaries are there to get a sense of belonging, a purpose through their tasks and ultimately becoming self-reliant.



Figure 1: Roeland Garden
Streetscapes Headquarters.



Figure 2: Vredehoek Garden
Garden overlooked by Table Mountain.



Figure 3: Trafalgar Garden
Donated space from Trafalgar High School.



Figure 4: Kuils River Garden
Streetscapes rehabilitation safe house.

4.2 Current Housing Experiences of the Homeless Participants

We collected data on the experiences of day-to-day life of the beneficiaries in a wide range of living spaces including formal housing, Woodstock Day Hospital, a safe house, informal housing, safe spaces, and the streets of Cape Town (Figure 5). Residents in each location had varying experiences with the community surrounding them, the living conditions, and the utilities.

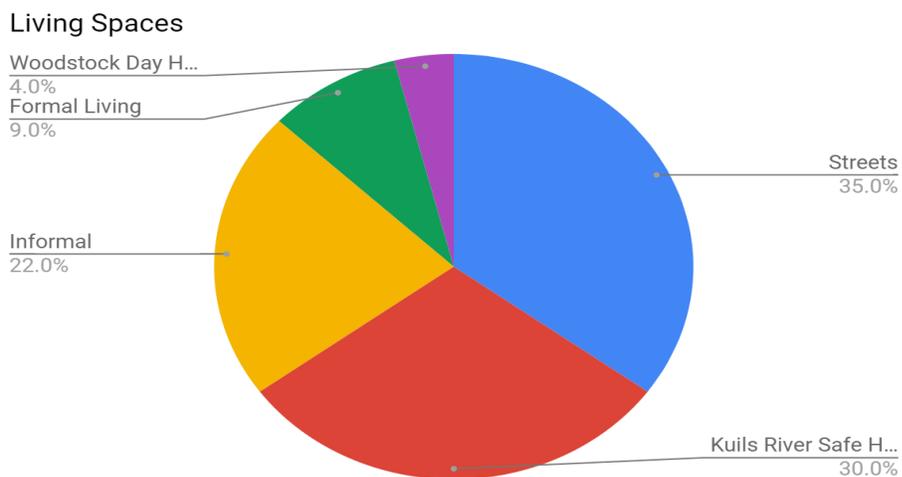


Figure 5: The percentage of interviewees living in various housing types.

Formal housing

Only two of the 23 interviewees were currently living in formal housing, which consists of an apartment or a family home. The experiences of people living in family homes are consistently more positive and happiness is higher. Food and water are easily purchased. Having multiple family members in a home makes budgeting easier. Utilities such as having a TV, microwave, fridge, beds and blankets are all found in the family homes. Their family acts as a community where they have support at all times and can go to them for help. We found that amongst all the interviews, beneficiaries living in formal housing show the happiest feelings in the physical and emotional aspects of a home.

Woodstock Day Hospital

There was only one beneficiary we interviewed who is currently living in the Woodstock Day Hospital. This interviewee stated that the shelter he is staying in currently offers “10 years with no rent to pay” so he feels it is now his time to save up and find his feet once again. He also mentioned that he is now the happiest he has ever been since being homeless, and feels he is a part of a community. Another positive aspect to the Woodstock Day Hospital is that he knows he will not be cold at night or have to worry about people trying to steal his belongings. With this sense of comfort and security, he has been allowed to purchase new additions to improve his living space with utilities and more personal belongings. As seen in Figure 6, Woodstock Day Hospital often makes it possible to have a television, beds, radio and other desired utilities. He is currently happy with his ability to now accommodate his family because in his previous locations, he felt embarrassed to do so. Our team realizes that no real conclusion can be made about the happiness in Woodstock Day Hospital just yet due to the small sample size (one respondent), but it would be worthwhile looking into for the future.



Figure 6: Woodstock Day Hospital Family lying in bed showing comfort and happiness. Feni, Masixole. “News 24.” News 24, Ground Up, <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/pictures-abandoned-woodstock-hospital-becomes-home-to-700-people-20190316>.

Kuils River

Streetscapes owns and runs a safe house named Kuils River (Figure 7) where roughly ten men and women live and work in the gardens. Figure 7 provides a bird's eye view of the safe house presenting the house, greenhouses and gardens. It is a requirement that all residents are entirely sober and if they revert back to any substance, they can be dismissed from living there. Seven out of the 23 interviews came from Kuils River and there is a pattern of overall happiness with living there throughout each interviewee. All residents have access to food through a communal kitchen, water, TV, beds and privacy. Streetscapes provides food which is cooked and prepared every day in the kitchen that has a stove, microwave, running water, and silverware. All of the residents stated that the community plays a major role in their happiness and they all get along very well. Everyone cares for and supports one another, creating their own family. Fifty seven percent of the beneficiaries mentioned that the supervisors are great mentors and have been there for them if they are in need of help. Each beneficiary was stuck on the streets and had abused drugs in their past, so they are very appreciative of the privacy, safety, a roof over their head and the ability to relax after a day's work. Few challenges were brought forth by clients currently living there and numerous beneficiaries see Kuils River as a home that continues to push them to better themselves as long as they are there.



Figure 7: Kuils River Safe House showing Streetscapes safe house and the green houses that hold gardens.

Isaacs, T. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.northernnews.co.za/news/mixed-response-to-relocation-of-homeless-30399401>

Informal Housing

Informal Housing provides shelter for five of our interviewees which consists of Wendy houses or shack. A Wendy house (Figure 8) is a makeshift home created from wood, that usually sits in the backyard of another dwelling. Residents receive the house for free through

Streetscapes or other NGOs but pay rent to the landowner. We found that eight other interviewees want to one day live in Wendy house meaning that more than fifty percent of people interviewed are either living or want to live in Wendy houses. Interviewees are able to use their personal space to support utilities. The Wendy house shown in Figure 8 has a television, microwave, stove, radio, electricity and a bed. Beneficiaries expressed that they found it much easier to feel safe and secure, along with always having a roof over their head providing warmth and protection from the rain and wind.



Figure 8: A standard Wendy House, behind Kuils River safe house.

City of Cape Town Safe Space

A safe space is an organized, covered and secure outdoor area where a community of street people spend the night. The Cape Town safe space (Figure 9) is a government run fenced off area under the Culemborg bridge where roughly 200 people live. We interviewed two beneficiaries living there and both mentioned the same discomforts and challenges. In the safe space, there are lockers where you can lock up your belongings. Everyone shares plastic portable bathrooms that were said to become very unsanitary. Large bins of water provide showers and drinking water and are refilled each week. Safe Spaces are only open at night between 7pm and 6am and individuals cannot stay there during the day. Residents are given a small space where they put together their sleeping quarters which can consist of blankets, pillows, and wooden pallets as seen in Figure 9. The two clients stated that they either have to buy their own food or scavenge trash bins. The large group offers a sense of community where people are there for one another. The biggest complaint is that sleeping at night is very uncomfortable due to wind and rain soaking everyone even if there is a bridge over their head. Neither beneficiary felt safe because people often fight, and the lockers cannot hold all of their belongings at times. Both

beneficiaries feel as though they are thrown there by the government and are not cared for. Although living in the safe space is better than living on the streets, we found that the two beneficiaries were very unhappy and would not want to stay there for an extended period of time.



Figure 9: Sleeping conditions at Culemborg Bridge, which is City of Cape Town's Safe Space (2019). Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/ewnreporter/status/1147031508655456256>

The Streets

The most common living location for our interviewees is the streets of Cape Town. From our 23 interviews, eight interviewees who were currently displaced, live on the streets of the city. Of the 23 people we interviewed who live on the streets, there were many common complaints and frustrations. Each of the interviewees expressed their dissatisfaction with the daily struggle to get food. They explained that if they had some money they would go to a store and buy something small to eat, but if money was tight, they would have to “scavenge” through trash bins in hopes of leftovers. Others mentioned that they go to the soup kitchen, but it is only an option during lunch hours. To complicate their living situation even more, it was often stated that when living on the street, there is no sense of a community. One of the interviewees told us to “trust no one in Cape Town” and that he has to “sleep with one eye open” every night. A beneficiary expressed that he no longer could trust his best friend after he made a selfish decision, resulting in a confrontation with the police. Fifty percent of the interviewees living on the streets explained that they must carry all of their belongings in a backpack with them at all times or all of their valuables would be stolen. An additional concern from the people living on the streets were the sleeping conditions. About eighty-eight percent of the interviewees mentioned that they are cold at night because of the wind. They also stated they had no protection against rain,

leading to everything they have getting soaked. Among the beneficiaries who live on the streets, there were various living spaces. One beneficiary lives in the ditches outside of Company Gardens with only blankets and a cardboard piece to lay on. Tarps, tents and sails are often used to shield away the weather, but these can often be destroyed by the fierce wind in Cape Town. Numerous people live under the canopy of trees in Table Mountain Forest and under the awning of various stores. The interviewees living on the streets of Cape Town are certainly living through the most extreme conditions as seen in Figure 10, and express the most dis-satisfaction out of all of the living spaces.



Figure 10: Man sleeping on Street A homeless man sleeping on the concrete in Cape Town EDITOR, N. T. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.iafrica.com/city-of-cape-town-fines-for-homeless-people-set-by-justice-department-not-city/>

4.3 Causes of Homelessness

After conducting interviews with 23 street people in Cape Town, a pattern emerged from our data showing why people are currently on the street. Unemployment is a social issue that impacted all of the interviewees we spoke with. Additionally, a variety of past experiences have displaced people into street life, consisting of bad family dynamics, physical or emotional abuse/trauma, and drugs and alcohol. These causes were a developing theme throughout our interviews.

After speaking with the interviewees from Streetscapes, each of them talked about how prior to Streetscapes they had various sources of income such as begging, drug dealing, crafting, but no real job. The problem that the beneficiaries noted with all of these jobs is that they would not make nearly enough money to support a new living situation that is off the streets. Nearly all of the beneficiaries also stated that with these jobs came the inability to get away from the life that brought them into homelessness. One interviewee argued that there was no room for

“personal growth” or escaping the “bad habits” that are involved with homelessness in Cape Town. Unemployment is just the beginning of why interviewees live on the streets, but it is often why people are stuck in a cycle that leads them back into the streets.

People suffering from an unstable family dynamic was another leading cause of homelessness. An unstable family dynamic consisted of things such as being left behind after selling a family home, abusive relationships, or a major death in their lives leading to the inability to afford housing. We found that five of the twenty-three beneficiaries we interviewed had been a part of an unstable family dynamic. Women are more commonly at risk of an unstable living condition. One woman we interviewed described that her relationship became sexually and physically abusive, and it became clear to her that she had no choice but to begin her journey on the streets.

Three of the beneficiaries had experienced a major death of someone in their life. All of the interviewees expressed how losing a family member or close friend derailed the course they were on, and led to alternative approaches to coping with pain since they had no one to confide in. There were two men that had lost their family homes due to death within the family, which led to mental trauma for both of them. Both of these men found it difficult to cope with the grief and eventually found themselves on the streets after their lives began to spiral. To give an example, one of the interviewees told us about how close he and his father were. They began to bond through cooking. The interviewee said he would cook something different for his father each night once he came home from work. Eventually the interviewee went on to cooking school to become a chef, but his father passed away while he was in school. This led to extreme alcohol abuse to “take the pain away” and essentially escape from all of his pains. It also led to him flunking out of school and living on the streets since he did not have his father to live with anymore. It is important to realize that the street people working with Streetscapes did not choose to have these traumatic events happen in their lives, but instead had to deal with these extremes.

4.4 The Primary Elements of Home

After analyzing the data from 23 interviews, our team was able to learn what each individual finds important in their past, present, and future living spaces to determine the physical and emotional elements relating to the “meaning of home” (Figure 11).

Overall, there were more emotional elements than physical that the beneficiaries brought up in our interviews. The team decided to only take the top ten highest ranking elements which happened to be five physical and five emotional elements (Figure 11). The elements were distinguished in our interviews by key words the beneficiaries used when describing issues with their current living, important items, goals for the future, and other questions listed in Appendices A, B, and C. These questions were meant to target ideas that lead someone to explain what they did and did not want in a home. The other emotional elements that we did not incorporate into the survey tool were memories and love. The team found that these elements were mostly mentioned when discussing family and therefore were left out of our survey tool.

Element Results

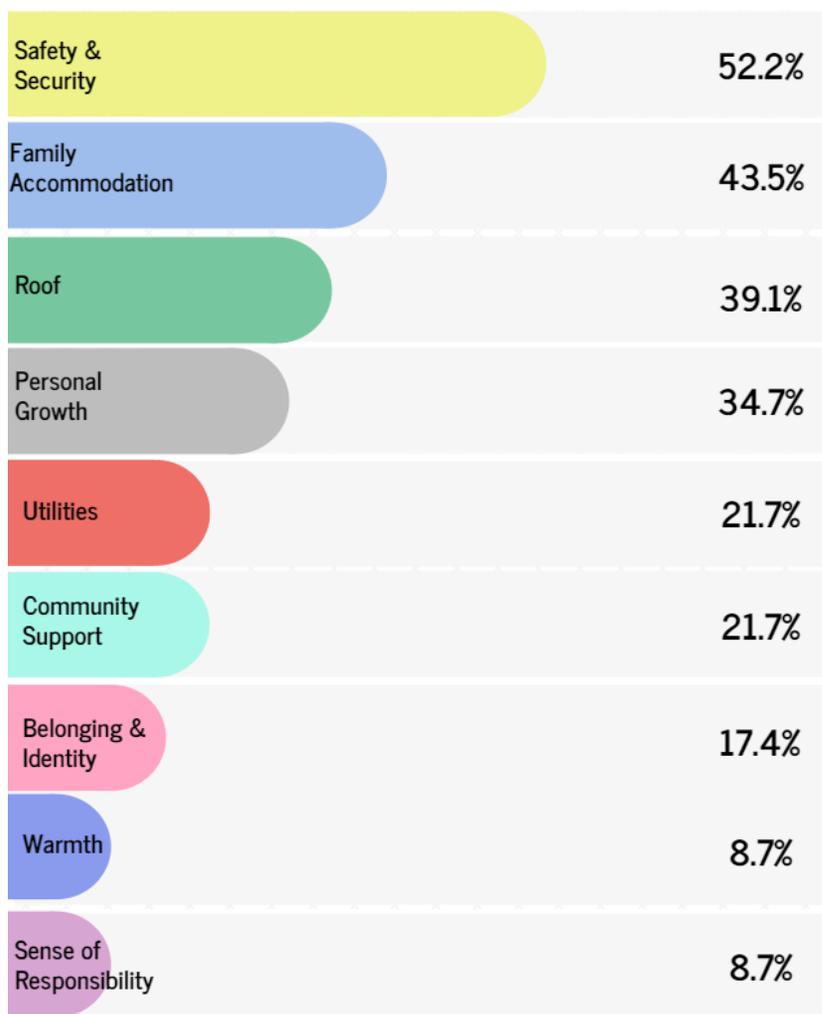


Figure 11; showing the results of elements in order of importance from our interviews.

The top elements for physical attributes of a home were safety, utilities, physical warmth, roof, and personal space/privacy (Appendix H). Safety was the top physical concern listed by the beneficiaries and stood out as a baseline for the unhappiness that surrounds many living environments. It was ranked the highest, with fifty-two percent of the beneficiaries raising it as a concern (Figure 11). In our survey glossary (Appendix I), we defined Safety as, “To be physically safe in your space, that there are locks and other things that keep people out. Whether you are comfortable in your surroundings due to the location or neighbors.” We learned that a lot of people are robbed, or unable to sleep at night due to the fear from others around them. One beneficiary spoke about his concern regarding gangsterism across the street from his house. He felt that his children were unsafe, “If [a] shooting breaks out it’s directly across the street,” and

he did not want his children to grow up in that environment. Another beneficiary discussed how important safety was to him. He described his future goals as: “I want to have my own house. Anywhere. I don’t care the size it can be one room but as long as it’s my own and safe. I want to be safe.” As seen in Appendix J, living location heavily influences whether a beneficiary is not happy or very happy with their current living environment. Safety correlated with overall happiness beneficiaries felt, as seen in our interviews. Survey responses provided data that living on the streets lacked safety and made homeless people unhappy. Attaining this sense of security in a home would be the beneficiaries’ number one ranked element, severely impacting their daily lives.

The top emotional element was family accommodation, followed by personal growth, community support, belonging and identity, and responsibility over space. Family accommodation came up frequently in our data, with further explanations from the beneficiaries saying they would like to be the “host” once in a while versus the one always being “hosted.” Our team defined family accommodation as “To be able to invite your loved ones to visit you and have the option to stay over” (Appendix I). A beneficiary from Kuils River talked to our team about how important family is to her. She explained that her time at Kuils River has allowed her to “grow within herself as the plants grow.” She is very excited that a relationship with her family is still open, after her drug abuse led her to disappoint them many times. She is almost weaned off her addiction now and absolutely loves hosting. Every time we went to the site, she offered us coffee, tea, and snacks. Her dream job is to be a flight attendant!

Forty-seven percent of the 15 beneficiaries who took the survey were very unhappy that they were unable to accommodate their loved ones in their current living locations (Appendix J). Being able to have someone stay over in a place they call their own gives a sense of self-worth and ownership. A beneficiary we interviewed explained how important her tent was to her because it is a place she can stay with her boyfriend and call her own. She carries it on her back every morning to work and takes excellent care of it. She is very excited to one day raise a family in her tent! The sense of being able to accommodate instead of “being accommodated” is very special to the beneficiaries. Almost forty-four percent of our 23 interviewees rated family accommodation as important (Figure 11). The majority of the beneficiaries live on the streets. Our survey results from the streets living location specifically showed that sixty percent were very unhappy with being unable to accommodate family.

Our team derived information from our interviews as to why the remaining eight elements were important to the beneficiaries (Figure 11). When our team analyzed our survey results by location, it coincided with our team’s interviews (Figure 12). The left side of Figure 12 shows our top ten elements from our interviews and the top row shows the beneficiaries current living locations. The eight responses our team received from informal living showed that the beneficiaries were most happy with the elements of personal growth and utilities. From our interviews, one beneficiary explained personal growth as, “To be happy. Have faith in myself. For people to see I have changed.”

Survey Element Results by Location

Elements:	Informal Living (8 Resp.)	Streets (5 Resp.)	Kuils River (4 Resp.)	Formal Living (1 Resp.)	Woodstock Day Hospital (1 Resp.)
Safety & Security	35% 😊	60% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Family Accommodation	38% 😞 & 😊	60% 😞	50% 😊 & 😊	100% 😊	100% 😞
Roof	38% 😊	80% 😞	100% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Personal Growth	50% 😊	80% 😞	50% 😊 & 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Utilities	50% 😊	80% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Community Support	50% 😊	80% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Personal Space & Privacy	50% 😞	80% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Belonging & Identity	38% 😞	100% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Sense of Responsibility	38% 😊	60% 😞	50% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Warmth	38% 😊	80% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊

Key:

- 😞 Very Unhappy
- 😊 Unhappy
- 😊 Happy
- 😄 Very Happy

Figure 12; showing the ranking of each element in comparison to each living condition from our survey.

Our team received five responses for beneficiaries living on the street. We discovered that all ten elements were either not happy or very unhappy living on the streets. Specifically, the beneficiaries on the street were one hundred percent very unhappy with their sense of belonging and identity living there. One beneficiary from our interviews was unsettled by the amount of deaths he has witnessed living on the street. He spoke about how common it was to see a stabbing or someone killed, and how he “slept with one eye open” during the night to make sure

he was safe. Constantly fearing for one's life and feeling out of place is why the streets do not provide any sense of belonging to the homeless living there.

Streetscapes Kuils River was either happy or very happy with all ten elements. Specifically, these beneficiaries were most happy with having a roof over their head. From our interviews, the beneficiaries were happy living in this safehouse as it keeps the rain, wind and cold out. The beneficiaries also mentioned their sense of community and support at Kuils River. As it is a rehabilitation program and everyone there is on the road to recovery.

Our team only received one result for formal living and one for the Woodstock Day Hospital. The Woodstock Day Hospital is a location in Cape Town the homeless have taken over and created their own system of living, similar to a government safe space. There were no beneficiaries staying in the City of Cape Town Government shelter. From these results, our team discovered that the beneficiary staying in informal living was overall happy but was lacking their sense of safety and security. From our interviews, gangsterism came up as a frequent issue in the beneficiaries living locations, making them feel unsafe at night. The beneficiary living at the Woodstock Day Hospital was very happy with his living location, only not satisfied he cannot accommodate family at this location.

The overall takeaways from our survey results were that the beneficiaries on the streets were one hundred percent unsatisfied with their sense of belonging and identity. Living decades on the streets or being homeless for the majority of one's life may make feelings of owning a formal home seem unrealistic. We paired "Belonging & Identity" together because our team agreed that knowing who you are and being accepted as your true self is part of the emotional "meaning of home" to each individual. Each of the beneficiaries are on their own path to self-discovery. One beneficiary said, "I want to continue to benefit myself and grow as a person to be happy with who I am." The Streetscapes program has created this community of belonging and acceptance of all the personalities that come together. Another key takeaway was that the Streetscapes Kuils River Safe house was one hundred percent satisfied with having a roof over their head. The strong winds of Cape Town make other living locations under bridges and on the streets unbearable to sleep at night. A beneficiary explained how her tarps blow off in the night and her belongings can get wet if it is raining.

The most important conclusion derived from our project was that people tended to want what they did not have from our interviews. The majority of beneficiaries in the Streetscapes program have been chronically homeless and have lived on the street. The top-ranking elements of safety and security and family accommodation were viewed as the two most important elements to the beneficiaries. From our survey results, the beneficiaries were most unhappy with these two elements, showing that improvements need to be made in future homeless policies and housing accommodations.

We learned that people want different things, and everyone has a unique meaning of home. Ultimately, a home should be a place where people feel happy and are able to recover from their hardships. Therefore, determining the overall elements was important to rank the priorities of living locations. We have identified these elements as ultimately contributing to the

idea of a home for the homeless population of Cape Town. Through our interviews we distinguished key factors of living and the survey tool helped show how successfully they are being satisfied. When the survey is conducted on a wide scale, one will be able to compare the ranking of the elements within past and present living situations. They will also be able to track yearly responses of an individual to show progress. This could impact the approach to creating new living environments, as well as showcase areas that need improvement.

Chapter 5 Recommendations & Considerations

Through our time and research with the beneficiaries in the Streetscapes program, we have compiled recommendations and considerations for the future of Streetscapes. Recommendations are topics we believe Streetscapes should implement in the coming years. The considerations are issues or situations that we came across during our research process that Streetscapes needs to be aware of when re-introducing the survey tool next year.

5.1 Potential Future Housing Programs

Researching the meaning of home through interviews and observational analysis has provided the team with 10 key elements that can act as points to emphasize for potential future housing programs. A future program that encompassed all of the top elements could result in an overall higher satisfaction rate and possibly aid the homeless population on their personal journeys.

We recommend that Streetscapes determine if it is beneficial to work with another local homeless reintegration services such as the Hope Exchange and use this report as evidence to advocate for the needs of the homeless population. The Hope exchange provides primary accommodations such as showers, food, life skills and social work services (The Hope Exchange, 2019). Together they could establish a housing program that concentrates on the most frequent and emphasized element, safety.

The program with partnered NGOs can work with each homeless person to help meet their needs for safety. If they feel as though they are worried about their belongings, local partnerships can be made with local stores, companies, and landlords who may be open to contributing to a safety system (electric fence, cameras, keys). The safety system would be specific to a site that only a few have access to. If a homeless person feels unsafe in their community, perhaps adopt a buddy system where they decide who they are comfortable with. Not all elements of safety can be solved, but improvements can be made.

We recommend each year Streetscapes should use the tool to get updated information on the key elements to improve the program. If a different element appears to be more important than others, the program with NGOs should be refined accordingly to benefit the beneficiaries and homeless individuals.

5.2 Updating the Database & Survey

It is helpful to add to our database and contribute more information on the elements of a home from the Streetscapes' beneficiaries. During interviews, it is important to probe on topics that they might not have considered when sharing their experiences. Our team recommends continuing interviewing future beneficiaries to see if the elements of a home changes over time. When adding or changing an element to the survey, it is vital to supply a definition to ensure clear and concise wording. This increases the chances of accurate survey responses.

Deliverables

With the responses to interviews and surveys, we formulated a database for Streetscapes, indicating how their beneficiaries felt about their current, past, and future living. The database contains all responses to the interviews we conducted and provides Streetscapes with information about the beneficiaries and their feelings on homes. This allows them to recognize what stood out to the people we interviewed and how they explained the reasoning for wanting these elements of a home.

We then used the top 10 elements, separated by five physical and five emotional to create a survey analysis tool. This survey tool will be used by Streetscapes every year to track their progress and if their changes impact the living locations that the homeless have. The same person will be resurveyed yearly to see if there have been any improvements on their living conditions, based on the survey data from the previous year. This tool could essentially be used to provide evidence that could be used to advocate for the homeless people. With a yearly record, ranking such accommodations, the city of Cape Town can begin improving these conditions and create better housing options.

Conclusion

The meaning of home goes beyond a physical structure; for the homeless people in Cape Town a home is defined as a place that gives the opportunity for rehabilitation from the outside world. By determining the important elements of home among the street people, and developing a tool that Streetscape, and potentially other non-profit organizations, can use to track changes in the importance of these elements, our project has the potential to enhance non-profit organizations' ability to improve housing opportunities for the homeless. Homelessness aid approaches by the government and NGOs should address the housing problems in order to create a space for people to rehabilitate and reintegrate.

While the meaning of home is distinct for every person we interviewed, we were able to separate and identify the top ten physical and emotional elements that are vital to their happiness. With our survey analysis tool Streetscapes will be able to assess if living conditions are meeting people's needs. The ten elements of a home are universal and unique to each individual. Our work with Streetscapes has exposed us to the lives of people living on the streets and the

hardships they encounter every day. We hope that our project tool will speak to what we have learned about the conditions that homeless people face, and that our results will be used to advocate for a significant change in these living environments.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions for Understanding the Current Housing Experience

We asked these questions all in one interview and have separated them to show what specifically addresses each objective. We interviewed participants that our sponsor, Streetscapes, connected us with.

Informed Consent:

We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the United States working in cooperation with Streetscapes to obtain opinions regarding current temporary housing. We would like to ask you questions about this topic so that we can learn from you and show what we learned on our university's website. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and quit at any time. Do you have any questions? Would you mind spending 30 minutes to talk with us? If you have any concerns or questions later, you can reach out to our co-researchers who live here or catch us at the community center on many days when we will be working here in the coming few weeks.

- A. Understand the current housing experience.
 1. How long have you been working with Streetscapes?
 2. How do you commute to work?
 - i. How far is the commute to work?
 - ii. What is your mode of transportation?
 3. How is the structure of your home?
 - i. Where is your bathroom?
 - ii. How far do you travel and have to go to get water?
 - iii. How do you sleep at night?
 - a. Is it warm/cold?
 - b. Does wind or rain get in?
 - c. Are you comfortable, do you have enough space?
 - iv. Where do you get food?
 4. Do you enjoy the company of your neighbors?
 - i. Are they friendly, respectable, and welcoming?

Appendix B: Interview Questions on Why Homeless People are Staying in their Current Living or Safe Spaces

We asked these questions all in one interview and have separated them to show what specifically addresses each objective. We interviewed participants that our sponsor, Streetscapes, will connect us with. These participants are currently living in Streetscapes housing and part of the Cape Town homeless community.

Informed Consent:

We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the United States working in cooperation with Streetscapes to obtain opinions regarding current temporary housing. We would like to ask you questions about this topic so that we can learn from you and post a report on our university's website. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and quit at any time. Do you have any questions? Would you mind spending 30 minutes to talk with us? If you have any concerns or questions later, you can reach out to our co-researchers who live here or catch us at the community center on many days when we will be working here in the coming few weeks.

B. Determine the reasons why homeless people are staying in their current living or safe spaces.

1. How long have you lived in your current location?
2. What do you like about your current living situation?
 - i. Is it the family and/or friends?
 - ii. Is it the physical aspects of the home?
 - iii. Does the location help?
3. What are the challenges with your current living situation?
 - i. How do you feel about it?
4. Where have you lived in the past?
5. What did you like about your past living situation?
 - i. Is it the family and/or friends?
 - ii. Is it the physical aspects of the home?
 - iii. Does the location help?
 - iv. What were the challenges with your past living situation?

Appendix C: Interview Questions on The Emotional and Physical Attributes of a Home

We asked these questions all in one interview and have separated them to show what specifically addresses each objective. We interviewed participants that our sponsor, Streetscapes, would connect us with.

Informed Consent:

We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the United States working in cooperation with Streetscapes to obtain opinions regarding current temporary housing. We would like to ask you questions about this topic so that we can learn from you and show what we learned on our university's website. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and quit at any time. Do you have any questions? Would you mind spending 30 minutes talking with us? If you have any concerns or questions later, you can reach out to our co-researchers who live here or catch us at the community center on many days when we will be working here in the coming few weeks.

- C. To better understand the emotional and physical attributes of a home among the homeless population.
 - 1. What items do you keep in your home?
 - 2. Have you kept any personal items with you from place to place?
 - i. Photos of family?
 - 3. What would you keep in your home that you can not?
 - 4. What do you enjoy about your community?
 - ii. Do you feel comfortable in your community? How so?
 - iii. Who do you go to for help?
 - 5. What is the most important part of a home to you?
 - i. TV, refrigerator, family?
 - 6. What are your goals for the future?
 - i. Wendy house? Apartment?
 - ii. Alone or with family?
 - 7. What is the meaning of home to you?
 - i. Roof, location, community?

Appendix D: Considerations for Interviewing a Vulnerable Population

Our group interacted with a vulnerable population who have suffered from physical and mental trauma with drug and alcohol abuse. Listed are some considerations for the interviewing process.

1. Interviewing people who live on the streets can be overwhelming, therefore we recommend taking breaks to recover from interviews that are mentally challenging.
 - a. On occasion when such conversations became overwhelming, the group was limited in conducting further interviews for that day.
2. Our team recommends that before asking any personal questions, it is important to work with the beneficiaries and gain a firsthand experience of what they go through every day.
 - a. It is important to take into consideration that initially, certain beneficiaries may not want to open up to outsiders.
 - b. Our group remained positive, kept an open mind, and portrayed a welcoming demeanor to the beneficiaries, allowing for close relationships to form with them.
3. We recommend that if beneficiaries are not comfortable or are unable to give in depth responses, to not force more information out of them.
4. Our team recommends coming prepared for a variety of conversation topics in one sitting.
5. It is important not to control the conversations with anyone, as some may open up more quickly than others.
6. Take into consideration that some people have things they would like to share that were not asked about in the interview.
 - a. This lengthened interview time and often included information that was not central to the interview. With the limited time to talk to the beneficiaries, it became vital to keep conversations on track and stay on topic in the most respectful way possible.
7. It has been noted that sometimes beneficiaries will show up to work intoxicated or in a different state of mind than expected. This can lead to uncomfortable situations when people act in ways that compromise/challenge? personal boundaries.
 - a. We recommend avoiding people when they are in this state and coming back another time. It is recommended that you not interview anyone when they are taking substances, as their results cannot be taken with credibility.

Appendix E: Limitations of our Interviews

Our team experienced some limitations including:

1. The beneficiaries from Streetscapes are practicing harm-reduction, have access to social workers and money management services. A chronically homeless person living on the streets or in a Wendy house who is not part of the Streetscapes program could impact our final survey results. This could be possible due to coming from different environments along with drastic differences in daily worker routines. The beneficiaries are making an individual choice to practice harm-reduction because they no longer wish to have their drug be the center of their lives. This different mentality coming from someone living on the streets, who is not practicing harm-reduction, could have produced different results.
2. There are fewer women than men who work for Streetscapes, and only seven out of our twenty-three interviews were women, possibly adding a gender bias to our final results. Biases that could have come into play when analyzing results such as safety, as men and women have different societal factors that come into play. There may have been contrasting opinions between gender when questions about safety came up regarding walking alone at night and sleeping alone in certain neighborhoods.
3. There is a sporadic attendance within the Streetscapes program and is lowest during the end of the month when the beneficiaries get their stipend. This could have affected our final results, only talking to those who show up to work regularly. This could have, in turn, not allowed our group to get the complete perspective of all the beneficiaries' opinions.
4. Some beneficiaries have been part of the Streetscapes Program longer than others and hold different managerial positions. We interviewed a handful of Streetscapes "managers." Their different roles in the program could have provided a sway in final results. Since some of the beneficiaries are given more responsibility than others, there was a possible bias in our interviews when we derived the elements of importance. From our interviews and survey results, the beneficiaries tended to rank elements they did not have as more important.

Appendix F: Survey Element Results by Location

Elements:	Informal Living (8 Resp.)	Streets (5 Resp.)	Kuils River (4 Resp.)	Formal Living (1 Resp.)	Woodstock Day Hospital (1 Resp.)
Safety & Security	35% 😊	60% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😐	100% 😊
Family Accommodation	38% 😞 & 😊	60% 😞	50% 😊 & 😊	100% 😊	100% 😞
Roof	38% 😊	80% 😞	100% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Personal Growth	50% 😊	80% 😞	50% 😊 & 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Utilities	50% 😊	80% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Community Support	50% 😐	80% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Personal Space & Privacy	50% 😞	80% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Belonging & Identity	38% 😞	100% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊
Sense of Responsibility	38% 😊	60% 😐	50% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😐
Warmth	38% 😊	80% 😞	75% 😊	100% 😊	100% 😊

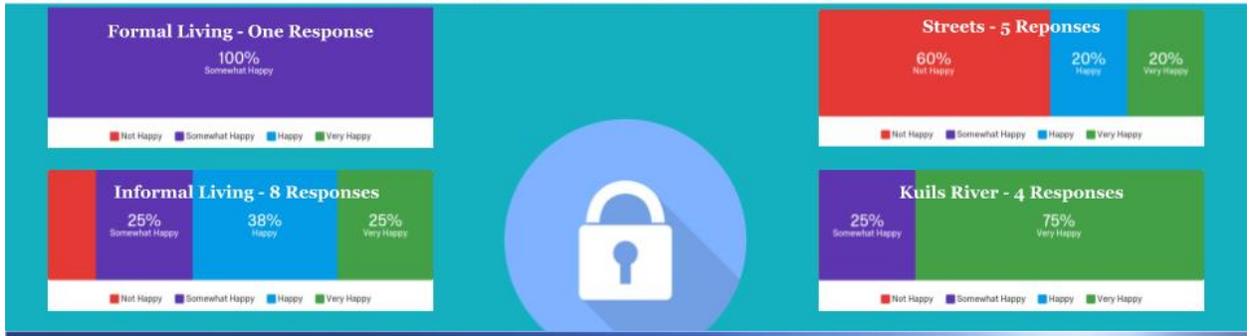
Key:

- 😞 Very Unhappy
- 😐 Unhappy
- 😊 Happy
- 😊 Very Happy

Appendix G: Break Down of Each Element's Ranking from Our Survey Tool

Safety and Security

How physically safe your space is? Are there locks and other things that keep people out? Are you not comfortable in their surroundings due to the location/neighbors.



Family Accommodation

To be able to invite your loved ones to visit you and have the option to stay over.





Roof

To have protection above you, and keep rain and wind out



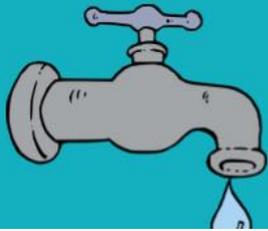
Personal Growth

Is it important to you to practice self reflection to improve as a whole? Always motivated to improve instead of falling back into bad habits



Utilities

To have a TV, microwave, radio, stove, toothbrush, running water, etc.



Community Support

To have people around you that you trust and that you feel comfortable going to for help.



Personal Space & Privacy

To have an area where you can be away from others and have time to yourself without interruption



Belonging & Identity

To feel like you are proud of where you live and know who you are. To also feel comfortable that you are where you should be.



Sense of Responsibility

The ability to make your own decisions and take charge of your home, rather than people telling you what to do, when to do it and how to do it

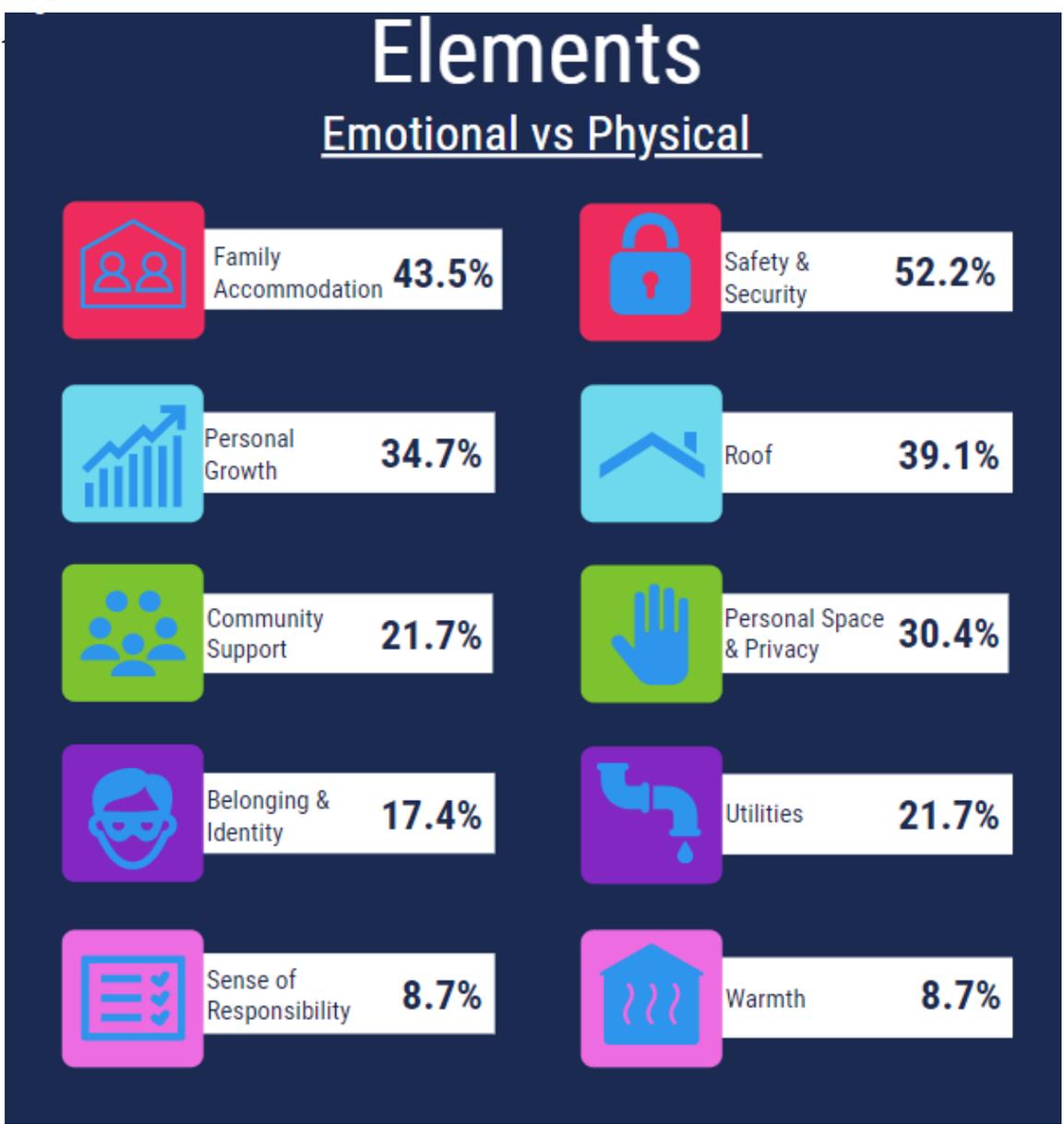


Warmth

Do you feel cold when you are sleeping? Are you dry at night?



Appendix H: Element Break Down by Physical and Emotional



Appendix I: Survey Tool with Glossary and Instructions Attached



Streetscapes
~Growing Better Lives~

Name: _____

Gender: _____

Years Working for Streetscapes: _____

Current Location: _____

Circle the smiley face that depicts how you feel about each element for current location

The Meaning of Home

Safety & Security



Physical Warmth



Community Support



Open to Personal Growth



Responsibility, Control over space



Roof



Utilities & Personal Items



Belonging & Identity



Can Accommodate Family



Personal Space, Privacy



Circle where you have lived:

Formal Living: House, Apartment, Family Home

Informal: Wendy House, Shack

Streetscapes Kuils River

Street

Other: _____

City of Cape Town Shelter

Circle the smiley face that depicts how you feel about each element for past location

Safety & Security



Community Support



Responsibility, Control over space



Utilities & Personal Items



Can Accommodate Family



Physical Warmth



Open to Personal Growth



Roof



Belonging & Identity



Personal Space, Privacy



Element Glossary:

- 1. Safety & Security** - To feel physically safe in your space. To have locks or things to keep people out. To be comfortable due to the location or your neighbors.
- 2. Community Support** - To have people around you that you trust and that you feel comfortable going to for help.
- 3. Responsibility & Control over space** - The ability to make your own decisions and take charge of your home, rather than people telling you what to do/how to do it/ when to do it.
- 4. Utilities & Personal Items** - To have a TV, microwave, music box, stove, toothbrush, running water, etc.
- 5. Can accommodate family** - To be able to invite your loved ones to visit you and have the option to stay over.
- 6. Physical Warmth** - To have protection from the wind and have blankets. To be dry and warm at night.
- 7. Personal Growth** - The location supports self-reflection to improve as a person. To be motivated to grow instead of falling into bad habits.
- 8. Roof** - To have protection above you, and keep rain and wind out.
- 9. Belonging & Identity** - To feel like you are proud of where you live and know who you are. Also, to feel comfortable that you are where you should be.
- 10. Personal Space & Privacy** - To have an area where you can be away from others and have time to yourself without interruption.

Survey Instructions

The following instructions are for future use of the survey tool by Streetscapes and other organizations

The survey is intended to be done alone with the client in order to create a comfortable setting.

To receive the most honest feedback and understanding, we recommend conversing and introduce yourself to break the ice before going further along with finding data.

Initial Introduction

1. Explain to the client that the survey tool is to record how they personally feel about their past and current living situations.
2. Mention that the data is meant to help them for future services given to them. By explaining that you are there to help, we found that the beneficiaries tend to open up easier.

Before Interview

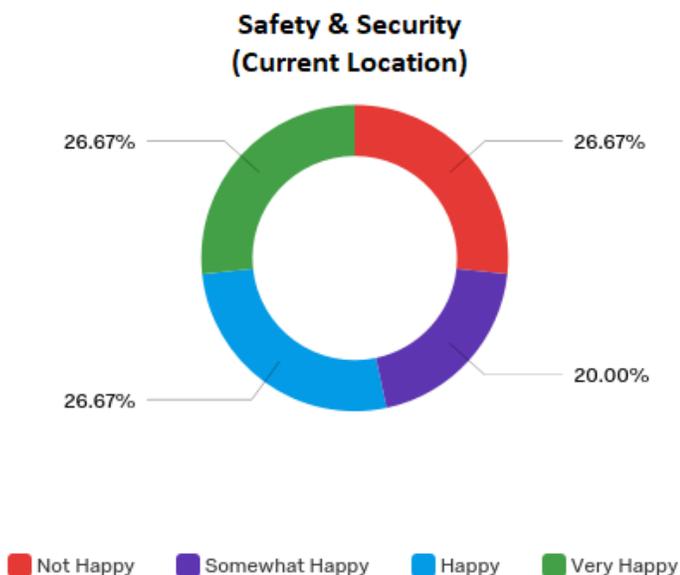
1. Depending if they are comfortable writing, fill out their name, gender, and time working with Streetscapes.
2. Walk through each element with the client using the glossary definitions to ensure that every person has the same understanding.
3. Ask them where they are currently staying and two past living locations.
4. Explain what the different smiley faces mean.
 - a. Sad Face: Very Unhappy
 - b. Straight Face: Unhappy
 - c. Smiling Face: Happy

- d. Large Smiley Face: Very happy

During Interview

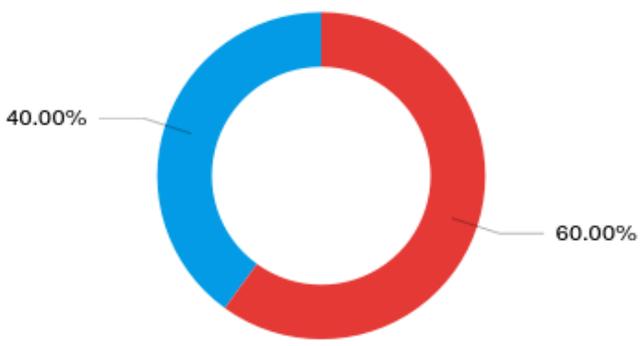
1. Follow along while they do the survey by circling smiley faces for them.
2. Clarify any confusion.
 - a. At times it may require you to probe examples of each element to give them the correct idea, but do not answer for them.
3. At the end, make sure to thank them for their time.

Appendix J: Element Ranking from Survey Tool in Order of Highest Ranked Elements



Graph J.1; showing the safety and security ranking for beneficiaries current living location using our survey tool across all living types.

Accommodate Family (Current Location Streets)



■ Not Happy ■ Somewhat Happy ■ Happy ■ Very Happy

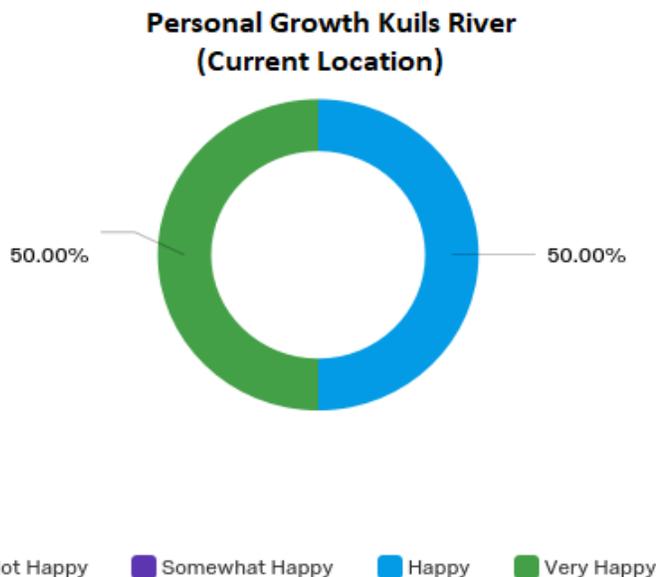
Graph J.2; showing the ranking of family accommodation for beneficiaries currently living on the streets using our survey tool across all living types.

Roof

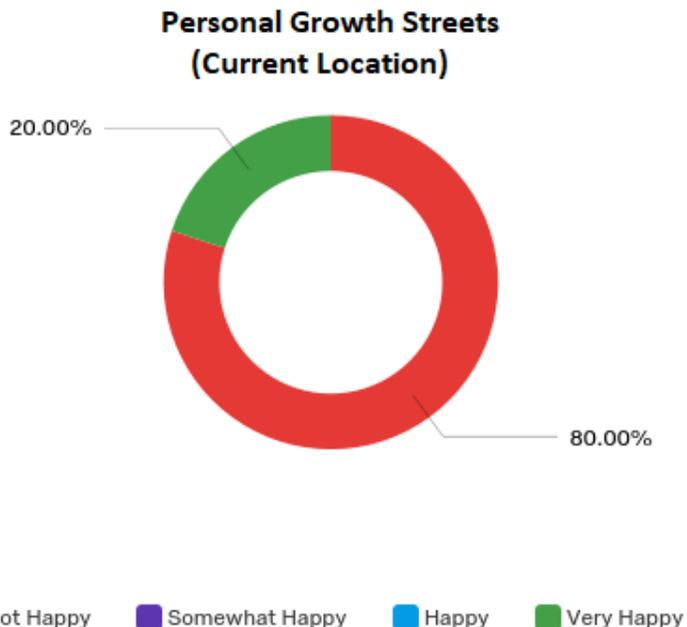


■ Not Happy ■ Somewhat Happy ■ Happy ■ Very Happy

Graph J.3; showing the satisfaction with roofs of beneficiaries current living location using our survey tool across all living types.

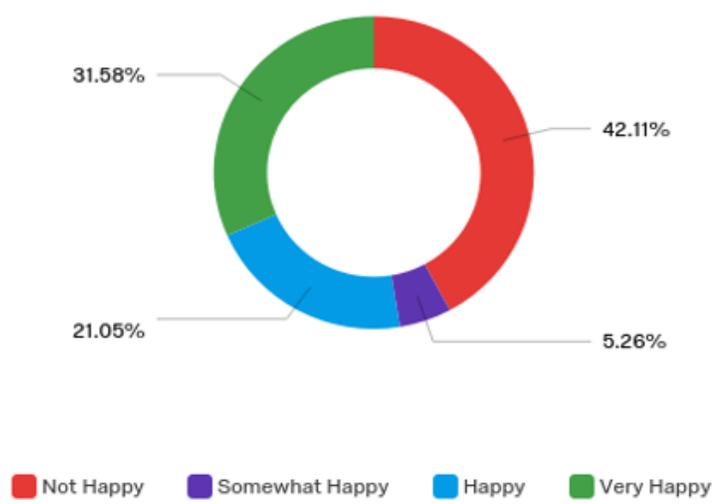


Graph J.4; showing the personal growth rating specifically for Kuils River for beneficiaries currently living there using our survey tool across all living types.



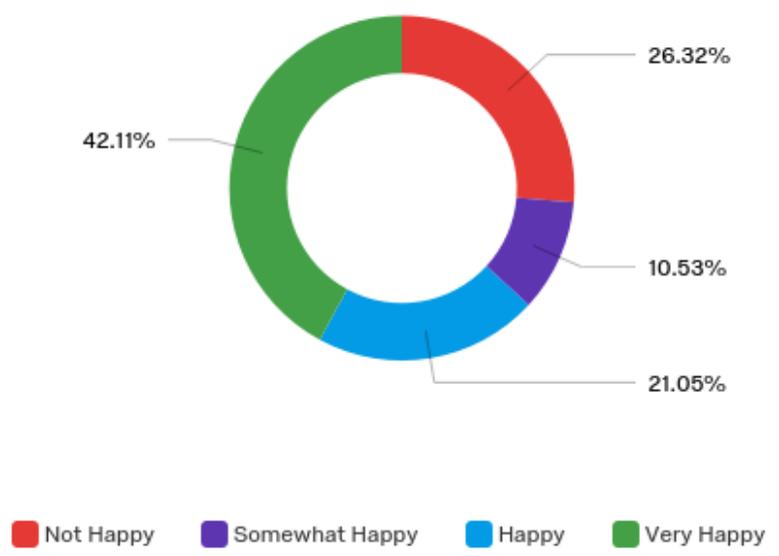
Graph J.5; showing the personal growth rating specifically for streets for beneficiaries currently living there using our survey tool across all living types.

Personal Space, Privacy



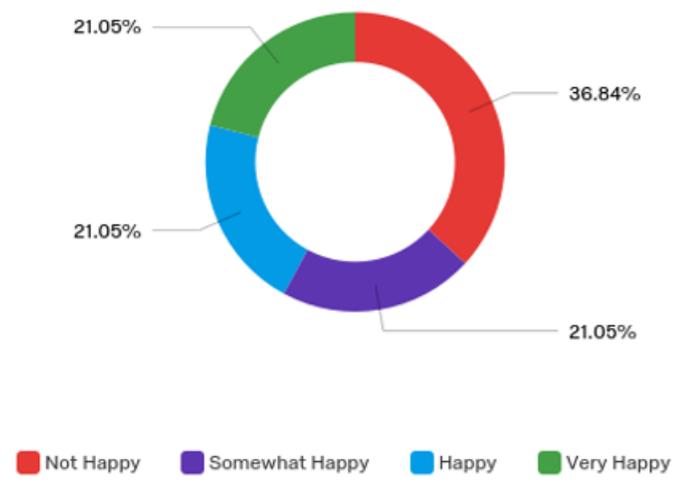
Graph J.6; showing the personal space and privacy ranking for beneficiaries current living location using our survey tool across all living types.

Community Support (Current Location)



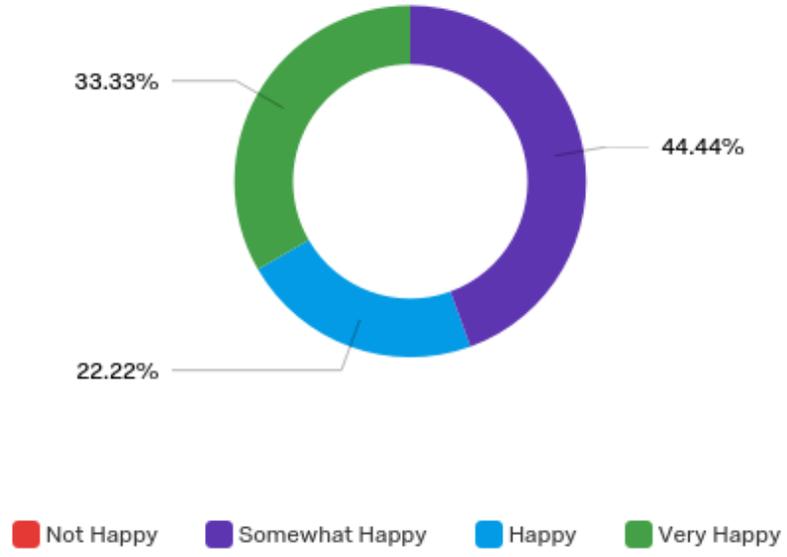
Graph J.7; showing the community support ranking for beneficiaries current living location using our survey tool across all living types.

Utilities & Personal Items

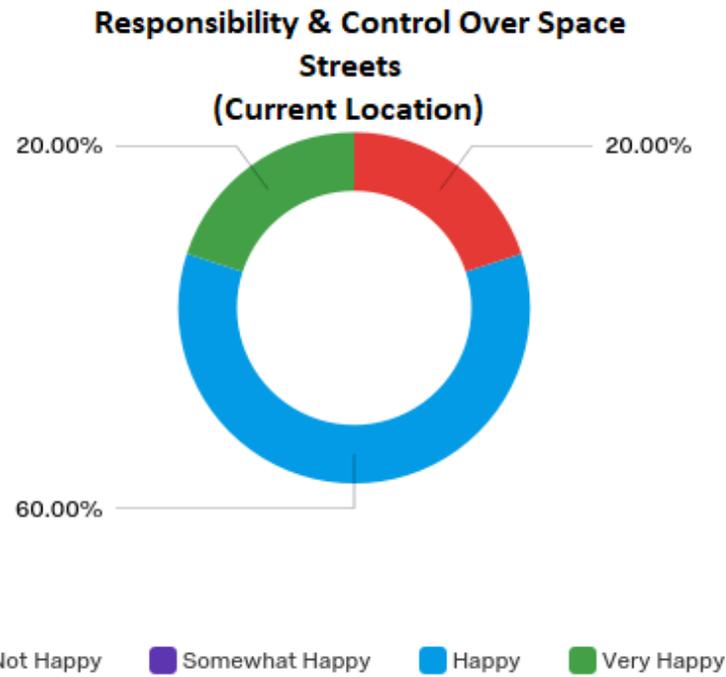


Graph J.8; showing the Utilities ranking for beneficiaries current living location using our survey tool across all living types.

Responsibility & Control Over Space Formal & Informal (Current Location)

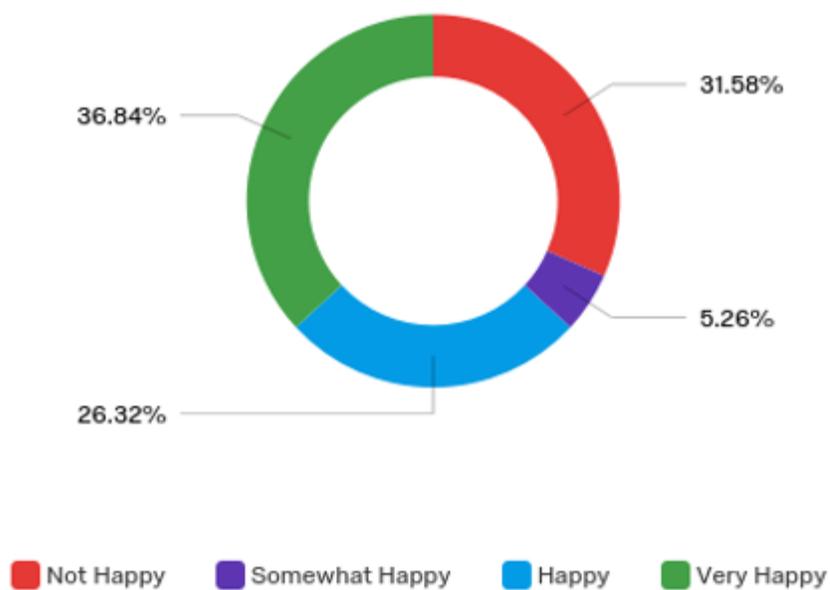


Graph J.9; showing the responsibility ranking beneficiaries current living in formal or informal environments using our survey tool across all living types.



Graph J.10; showing the responsibility ranking beneficiaries current living on the streets using our survey tool across all living types.

Physical Warmth



Graph J.11; showing the physical warmth ranking for beneficiaries current living location using our survey tool across all living types.