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## OPENING GOVERNANCE

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# ‘You Have to Raise a Fist!’: Seeing and Speaking to the State in South Africa

**Elizabeth Mills**

**Abstract** Since joining the Open Governance Partnership in 2011, South Africa has been committed to addressing the ‘grand challenge’ of open governance through improving public services, creating safer communities and increasing accountability. This article contrasts this supranational commitment to open governance with accounts of citizens’ everyday engagement with the state at a micro-level. Based on a year of multi-sited ethnography, the article highlights the value of bringing people – in this case, HIV-positive citizens living in Khayelitsha, Cape Town – into focus through a series of visual participatory processes in which they share their experience of public service provision and engagement with the state. The article reflects, first, on how citizens ‘see’ the state in relation to service delivery and, second, on how they ‘speak’ to the state as members of civil society. It offers an understanding of how citizens themselves perceive ‘open governance’ in their everyday lives.

## **1 Introduction: South Africa’s commitment to open government**

Open government policies no longer refer to those that only promote accountability. New modes of citizen engagement and new efficiencies in government services now share the spotlight with the older goal of governmental accountability, which once had this felicitous phrase all to itself (Yu and Robinson 2012: 202).

In 2015, South Africa became the co-chair of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), an initiative launched in 2011 to encourage governments to become more open, accountable and responsive to citizens (see McGee and Edwards, this *IDS Bulletin*, and the OGP website).<sup>1</sup> Growing from eight countries in 2011 to 66 countries in 2015, the OGP has an ambitious international agenda that chimes with evolving political theory and policy approaches to technology, governance and citizenship. Eligibility to join the OGP is determined by a country’s performance in four key areas: fiscal transparency, access to information, public official asset disclosure and citizen engagement. Although eligible in principle, the extent to which South Africa’s

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engagement in the OGP actually represents an ambitious national agenda for open governance remains far from clear.<sup>2</sup>

In 2013, following contested consultations with civil society organisations (CSOs),<sup>3</sup> the South African government made a commitment to addressing the 'grand challenge' of open governance by adopting an OGP Action Plan.<sup>4</sup> Specifically, it made a commitment to strengthening public integrity by improving public services, creating safer communities, effectively managing public resources and increasing accountability (IRM 2013).<sup>5</sup>

While first coined in the 1950s, the concept of 'open governance' has recently gained momentum in political theory and policy as a result of shifts in technological innovation and the corresponding generation of data; understanding the relationship between technology and open governance has gained importance in international political and policy discourse. As highlighted by McGee and Edwards (this *IDS Bulletin*), there is a risk of burdening the term with diverse, even contradictory, theoretical and practical meanings.

International initiatives, like the OGP, lend themselves to a critique of the disjuncture between on one hand the conceptual and policy rhetoric of 'open governance', and on the other, its practice (Mosse 2005). One could argue – and some have (Hill and Hupe 2002) – that global initiatives are valuable in themselves because they serve as a reflection of an inevitably flawed national government's visible commitment to move 'in the right direction'. But there is a risk that *solely* highlighting the disjuncture between the rhetoric and practice of 'open governance' at a macro-level, we not only miss the boat for learning how to make productive 'open governance' strategies work in difficult settings, but we might also be missing a key point – the people.

Based on 12 months of multi-sited ethnographic research,<sup>6</sup> this article proposes that there is value in bringing people – in this case, HIV-positive citizens of Khayelitsha in Cape Town, South Africa – into focus, and in understanding how citizens themselves perceive the limits and possibilities of 'open governance' in their everyday lives.

This article cannot, and does not seek to, comment on South Africa's performance in the OGP. Instead, it firstly links the centrality of service delivery in South Africa's vision of 'open governance' in the OGP to the centrality of service delivery in the overarching narrative through which citizens describe 'seeing the state' in the research. Service delivery is not the only aspect of open governance, but in South Africa, it is a vital component in the effort to address the country's stark socioeconomic inequalities.

Secondly, it contrasts the OGP's statement that collaboration between governments and civil society is a key component of 'open governance', with citizen narratives of a strained relationship between state and civil society. The ethnographic research traces this tension at a micro-level in Khayelitsha, with a focus on 'speaking to the state'. In doing so, the

findings offer reflections on governance linked to service delivery and civil society engagement, from people who have worked as activists for decades in a range of CSOs spanning the apartheid and post-apartheid eras.

## **2 Everyday citizens in Khayelitsha**

The ethnography reported in more detail below reflects the value of understanding ‘everyday citizenship’ as it is lived and embodied in the most quotidian sense (Cornwall, Robins and von Lieres 2011; Robins, Cornwall and von Lieres 2008), speaking to a more nuanced understanding of particular contexts or states of citizenship as they unfold across time and in very different spaces.

Rather than seeking a unified definition of citizenship that covers all dimensions of human action, entitlement and belonging, we are interested in the everyday, and often highly contingent and improvisational, negotiations and performances through which people define and pursue their desires and aspirations (Cornwall, Robins and von Lieres 2011: 8).

Cornwall and colleagues articulate two pertinent imaginaries – how citizens see the state (Corbridge 2005) and how states see citizens (Scott 1999) – that generate the ‘mutually constitutive nature of the citizen–state relationship, and the extent to which different kinds of states make different kinds of citizenship possible’ (Cornwall, Robins and von Lieres 2011: 8). There is very little research on governance and citizenship that explores the extent to which these imaginaries shape what it means to be a citizen. As such, this article draws on findings from visual participatory research with HIV-positive citizens living in Khayelitsha, to explore the ways in which they see and speak the South African state – the same one that has signed up to the OGP’s principles of open governance.

Khayelitsha (‘new home’ in isiXhosa) is a semi-formal housing area that lies across 45km of Cape Town’s Metropole district. Like the majority of the people I worked with, most of Khayelitsha’s residents have migrated from the Eastern Cape to access better health care, education and employment opportunities. The mix of formal and informal housing makes it difficult to gauge the total population;<sup>7</sup> the most recent reliable estimate, published by the City of Cape Town in 2005, indicated that Khayelitsha’s population was 406,799 (DPLG 2005), of whom 45.6 per cent were aged between 15 and 34. More than half (57.4 per cent) lived in informal cardboard and corrugated iron homes, and nearly a third (30 per cent) in formal brick homes. A large majority (71.8 per cent) earned below the official Household Subsistence Level.<sup>8</sup>

Khayelitsha has long been a site of political resistance. It was also the first place that antiretroviral (ARV) treatment was provided to South Africans through a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) trial in 2001 (Robins 2005). My ethnographic research took place a decade after the MSF trial and South Africa’s historic struggle to access life-saving ARVs through the public health sector.<sup>9</sup> It brings to the fore the precarious

nature of everyday life for people living in Khayelitsha, linked to the absence of vital state resources and public services, which reflect a far longer history of structural violence and inequality. 'Open governance' could serve as a powerful counterpoint to the form of 'closed governance' that was modelled during apartheid, but would require the state to put the principles it subscribes to as a member of the OGP into practice in places like Khayelitsha.

Although South Africa joined the OGP in 2011, neither I nor many of the people I worked with later in Khayelitsha knew about or used the term 'open governance'. Our work cannot therefore be described as an 'ethnography on open governance'. Instead, it reflects a series of ethnographic accounts of citizens' perceptions of the state in their lives that speak to the main 'commitments' made by South Africa through the OGP.

### **3 Background to the ethnographic research**

Over the course of 12 months in 2010 and 2011, I conducted multi-sited ethnographic research in South Africa and Brazil.<sup>10</sup> In this article, I reflect specifically on my engagement with a group of women living in Khayelitsha who had, as activists, fought to access the life-saving ARV treatment that would enable them, and the almost 6 million other South Africans who were HIV-positive, to live a long life with HIV (NDOH 2011). Together, between 2001 and 2009 they had engaged with the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) at the height of the struggle for ARVs, calling for the democratically elected government to fulfil its constitutional contract with its citizens and ensure their right to life, and to health, through the provision of these essential medicines (TAC 2010). When the TAC began in 1998, this struggle for ARVs represented a fundamental 'opening out' of governance, in which citizens mobilised across the country to compel the post-apartheid state to provide better access to health resources and services (Chigwedere *et al.* 2008; Fassin 2007; Robins 2005). Building on strategies – including songs and dances – of the anti-apartheid era, TAC's activist cadre called on the state to 'listen' to the needs of its citizens in light of the country's hard-won democracy.

I drew on Susan Whyte's (2009) approach to health research and her observation that comparative ethnography offers a way to move out from a narrow focus on health in order to anchor people's lives in their social, economic and political relations (*cf* Whyte, Van der Geest and Hardon 2002). A multi-sited approach to conducting ethnography enabled me to trace the networks that linked women's experience of health, and of life, to the broader politics of service provision in post-apartheid South Africa, and to international policy dynamics that played a role in South Africa's capacity to provide these services and resources to its citizens.

Using visual methods, like participatory photography, body mapping and participatory film, it became evident through the ethnography that the struggle for life in South Africa was not simply about the struggle for life-saving medicines. At that time, when South Africa had the

largest ARV programme in the world (NDOH 2011), I found that the struggle to live on ARVs was contingent on a broader set of struggles including access to employment, education, water, safe toilets and electricity. While the core concerns of the people I engaged with had opened out beyond access to medicines, the perception that the post-apartheid government should 'listen' to the basic needs of its citizens was still strongly emphasised. In fact, as I discuss below, the people I worked with in Khayelitsha suggested that because the government had been democratically elected, its leaders had a mandate to listen to civil society, and its members.

#### **4 Seeing and speaking to the state**

The first part of the ethnography presented in this section reflects on how the people I worked with 'saw the state'. Given the presence of historic socioeconomic inequality in Khayelitsha's corrugated iron houses and under-staffed health centres, many 'saw' and 'spoke to' the state's poor delivery of basic services. This was evident through their participation in CSOs that were fighting for better service delivery, and through their narratives of how the absence of proper services fundamentally undermined their sense of dignity and their hope for a responsive and accountable post-apartheid government. Their narratives reflect the struggles of citizens and CSOs to hold the South African government to account in delivering basic services.

The second part of the ethnography presented below describes a series of snapshots of citizen (dis)engagement, and outlines some of the ways that citizens and CSOs 'speak to the state'.

These accounts centre on the micro-level interactions between citizens and the state that I observed, and frame them in a larger concern with engaging with civil society actors in ensuring governments are truly 'open'.

##### **4.1 'When [President] Zuma came': seeing the state**

Walking through Khayelitsha one day, Yandisa pointed to the sandals on my feet and told me to wear tougher shoes. By way of explanation, she pointed down to the ground we were standing on. It took me a bit of time before I saw the cables; they were camouflaged by sand and snaked along the gravel road. In some places the flex had been worn down by car tyres, the sun or people's shoes, and tiny wires bundled out into the sand. My eyes adjusted to reading the sand and I learnt to discern the character of the cables quickly enough to miss walking over the live wires; I also started wearing thick rubber-soled shoes. I was privileged to be able to purchase this degree of safety. Most of the people with whom I worked, however, were not. South Africa's OGP commitment to promoting socioeconomic rights comes down to the very soles of people's feet, when the failure of the state to provide essential services like safe electricity, becomes an everyday risk walking to and from one's home.

Miriam, who lived two minutes' walk from Yandisa's home, told me about the neighbour who lived in the house between them. Her child had gone out in the middle of a thunderstorm to collect water from

the tap shared by all of Nkanini's residents. On the way to the tap the child had stepped on one of these worn-down cables, screaming in shock; when the mother ran out to pull him away, she was electrocuted. The neighbours rushed out to try and help her, but she really needed emergency medical attention and by the time the sluggish ambulance arrived, she had died. The government refused to sufficiently subsidise electricity costs through its national company, Eskom.

These accounts reflect the cost of the state's absence in the presence of these wires: electricity was too expensive for most people in Khayelitsha to afford and so some residents chose to pay people to siphon illegal electricity lines away from the neighbouring wealthier suburb into their homes. Illegal electricity, however, came at a cost that was experienced by everyone who was connected – often not by choice – along the winding routes that these lines followed across their roofs, along their roads, and sometimes under their feet.

The participatory photography processes I facilitated generated many photographs in which people saw the state in large piles of rubbish that collected in the roads, and siphoned around people's homes. Sibongile had, for example, taken a series of photographs in which she had 'seen the state' in the open field just over the road from her home. Through these photographs she told me about President Zuma's visit to her neighbourhood, as part of the African National Congress' (ANC) election campaign.

Over the course of many photographs, I watched an unfolding picture in which two different imaginaries of the state ran alongside each other. The first imaginary of seeing the state was, quite literally, of seeing President Zuma arriving to speak to a group of supporters at the rally. In these photographs, we see, first, the supporters waiting for his arrival; this is followed by a set of photographs of bodyguards surrounding President Zuma as he walked to the stage to, eventually, address the assembled supporters. Sibongile watched this visit unfold with her two children, all watching this spectacle from a distance and recording it with her camera. She said, 'These are the pictures I took when Zuma came. My street actually. He passed by my house. I was standing by the gate. It was kind of like amazing, the president passing by my house. I couldn't capture a full picture of him, you know everyone coming to see the president.' For Sibongile, who felt a tremendous distance and barrier between her and the state, this physical proximity was almost overwhelming – and yet the proximity was a mirage, an electoral gimmick, as her photographs of rubbish went on to illustrate.

Her photographs captured another powerful picture of the state and inadequate service delivery, as she pointed to the large open rubbish dump that featured in the foreground of the photographs that she had taken documenting President Zuma's visit. She explained to me that the municipality had stopped collecting rubbish from her neighbourhood, and so she and her neighbours had started piling their rubbish on this

site during the week. Each Saturday they would burn the rubbish in the morning, but on this day they had postponed the fire until President Zuma left because the smoke would have sullied the slick preparations. I asked Sibongile if she was going to vote in the elections, and she said, quite strongly, ‘Yes, my grandmother fought hard for the ANC; I will only ever vote for them myself. But I don’t think they will do anything to make my life better.’

Sibongile’s concern with sanitation was reflected in the many photographs of various kinds of public toilets – sometimes broken, or locked – that were scattered around Khayelitsha. Yvonne took a photograph showing that each toilet has a lock on it. Even where public toilets had been constructed, therefore, many people were unable to use them if they had not negotiated with their neighbours to claim – with a lock – a particular cubicle. The women I worked with were particularly concerned about their safety at night because of the numerous accounts of women who were raped when using the toilets. An interim measure, one that was still not acceptable but that was preferable to public toilets, were small portable toilets that had a detachable waste-carrier. Yandisa and Miriam each had one of these toilets in their homes. Yandisa said, showing me the second photograph on the left hand side, that these toilets were an indication that, ‘This government does not want dignity for us.’

The OGP highlights dignity as one of its core values. The above accounts suggest that the women with whom I worked ‘saw the state’ in its absence, in its failure to provide basic services, and therefore in its failure to meaningfully transform its citizens experience of socioeconomic inequality. This inequality, experienced in the stench of rotting rubbish and unserved toilets, undermined any sense that the state respected the women’s dignity.

Yandisa’s sentiment that ‘the government does not want dignity for us’ was echoed by thousands of other people a few months after my fieldwork, at a march in Khayelitsha that was organised by a CSO called the Social Justice Coalition. The march was held on Freedom Day – a day that marks South Africa’s first democratic election in 1994. On this day, in 2011, almost 2,500 people queued outside a set of public toilets in Khayelitsha to draw attention to the government’s failure to provide basic services and explicitly link the struggle for freedom and democracy in 1994 with the struggle for basic rights and services in 2011. The role of civil society in holding governments accountable is foregrounded in the OGP’s mission statement, and it is also echoed in South Africa’s ‘grand vision’ of service delivery. The following section on ‘speaking to the state’ turns to explore how South African citizens – and civil society more broadly – view the potential for engaging with the state around these core concerns linked to service delivery and the democratic governance.

#### **4.2 ‘My vote must speak for me’: speaking to the state**

In May, a week after the municipal elections, Thandeka and I were walking down Queen Victoria Street in central Cape Town. Not only did the name of the street speak to the colonial legacy of South Africa,

but the memorialised 'Slegs Blankes/Whites Only' bench that we passed outside the High Court was a reminder of South Africa's more recent history and the struggle for ARV treatment that had played out in that court room. When we met earlier that day, the first thing she did was to show me the indelible black stain on her thumbnail – a sign that she had voted. I asked her why she had chosen to vote. She replied, 'I voted for my treatment.'

Thandeka's stained thumb pointed to a set of beliefs held by all of the women with whom I worked in the core group. On the whole, they conceived voting as part of an array of citizen practices, like marches and civil disobedience campaigns, that were necessary to make the government listen. Throughout my fieldwork, when people – including those who had not been AIDS activists – spoke about why they were going to vote, the word most often used in their explanation was 'voice'. For example, Witness said, 'It is said that your vote is your voice.' Bongiwe, similarly, said, 'I vote so that I have the right to speak out; the right to voice out my opinion... My vote must speak for me.'

Khayelitsha's streets offered a slightly different story. These stories, spray-painted on walls or scrawled over posters near Khayelitsha's Magistrate's Court, reflected a disdain towards the electoral system and towards the leading party. One message encouraged people to boycott the elections and it had been pasted on the walls of clinics, streets, taxi ranks and bus shelters. The locations of these messages speak to the conjunction past and present, with messages written along a wall bordering a street named after one of South Africa's most prominent anti-apartheid activists, and the founder of the Black Consciousness movement, Steve Biko. The frustration held in the graffiti on the walls also spoke to a sociospatial intersection: the history of the struggle for democracy signified by Steve Biko's name, and the presence of an overburdened judicial system, ran along the walls where people had expressed their frustration with the failure of the government to meet their needs, and provide the basic services that, in principle, are guaranteed in the constitution and reflected in South Africa's OGP action plan.

Over time, but especially around the time of the provincial elections, I heard how many of the people I spent time with believed that voting would not generate positive change. Instead, they explained, voting was a matter of principle, an assertion of a hard-won right that extended beyond the struggle for ARVs to the struggle for democracy. For example, Nozuko said, 'I vote because it is free to vote; before Black people never got the chance to vote. They were just decided for. For me it's good to make a contribution by voting.' Also looking towards a history in which voting was limited to the white population, Nomphuthumo said, 'I am a South African citizen. Before [under apartheid] things were hard... Now where we stand, things are better.'

When we spoke about specific articulations of 'voice' that were necessary to make the government listen, the people I spent time with in

Khayelitsha, including the former HIV activists, spoke about the role of civil society and collective public action through strikes and marches as mechanisms for ‘showing a fist’ to the government.

Ntombentsha is a 30-year-old HIV-positive woman who echoed the majority of participants’ assertions on how to make the government listen when she said, ‘People strike, burn tyres, or go to parliament with posters... When people *toyi toyi*,<sup>11</sup> the government ends up responding to them.’ *Toyi toyi*, as a way to express discontent in public spaces, echoes activist strategies under apartheid; when challenged by the apartheid police, the activists would argue that they were simply singing and dancing. Because the songs were predominantly sung in local languages and not in English, the apartheid police did not understand the political content and were unable to justify intervention. *Toyi toying* and amended protest songs were also characteristic of the marches that the TAC organised to challenge the post-apartheid government, especially during the height of the government’s AIDS denialism (see Robins 2010). *Toyi toyi* as a form of collective action, and a way to speak to the state, sustained its anti-apartheid legacy in the marches I observed and participated in during my fieldwork. As Noncedo, a 47-year-old HIV-positive woman, notes, ‘In this time it’s like those old days... where people were burning tyres. You see, we are going back to the past because every time we want the government to listen we have to do action instead of just talking, you need to show a fist!’

This section suggests that ‘voice’ itself is highly nuanced. On the one hand, democracy has engendered tools through which people can articulate some of their concerns. Under apartheid, public marches, for example, would have been banned. However, the struggle for services – and for the dignity that is tied into these services – suggests a distinction between having voice and being heard. As discussed above, many of the people I worked with felt entirely unheard. At worst, this calls into question the depth and sincerity of the government of South Africa’s commitment to OGP values. At best, it shows what a very long hard journey it is going to be for South Africa to put those values into practice in a way that is experienced or even perceived by people like Bongiwe or Witness.

## 5 Conclusion

As South Africa takes on the leadership of the OGP, the government has been dogged with allegations of corruption, fiscal mismanagement and poor services. In July 2015 a group of CSOs submitted an open letter to South Africa’s government representative on the OGP.<sup>12</sup> They outlined numerous issues, including concerns about secret government surveillance of activists, proposed censorship regulations, the Regulation of Gatherings Act that seeks to limit the right to protest, and secrecy about large-scale state-funded procurement. The signatories said that if the government did not address their concerns by the time South Africa takes over as chair of the OGP, they would launch an official complaint.

This article suggests that these contemporary concerns around South Africa's performance on the OGP reflect a longer history. The space of Khayelitsha speaks to this history and the role that citizens have played to call for a more 'open governance' that addresses historic socioeconomic inequalities through effective service provision, and that pays attention to the concerns raised by citizens and CSOs about the absence of these services. The ethnographic research offers a historical perspective on some of the limits of South Africa's rhetorical commitment to 'open governance' at an international level.

By paying closer attention to the everyday experiences of citizens in Khayelitsha as they saw and spoke to the state, this article seeks to push back against the danger of dislocating 'open governance' policy language from people's everyday encounters with the state, or its absence. In doing so, these historical ethnographic accounts offer three overarching observations, on service delivery and civil society engagement, that bear relevance to the present as South Africa prepares to take on the leadership of the OGP in 2015.

First, the core concerns raised by citizens when 'seeing the state' centred on poor service delivery in Khayelitsha. In failing to provide services, the state is complicit in eroding citizens' sense of dignity. As a core value in the OGP, dignity is closely linked to the practice of open governance. There is a striking dissonance, then, in South Africa signing up to this core value on the international stage, while denying so basic a degree of dignity to its citizens at a local level.

Second, the different articulations of voice that emerged in the ethnographic accounts of citizens 'speaking to the state' suggest that citizens, in their everyday lives, have an ambiguous relationship with the state. While many remained committed to voting in elections, they also expressed a sense of dislocation from the state, embodied by the difficulties that they experienced in finding avenues to be 'heard' when communicating their everyday struggles through engaged action. These concerns speak to the limits of South Africa's rhetorical commitment to 'open governance' through meaningful engagement with civil society at an international level in the OGP, and its struggle to follow through on its own national policy commitments to 'listen' to its citizens at a domestic level. They also speak to the limits of political parties as ways for representing citizens to the state.

Finally, the findings underpin the value of shifting away from a narrow focus on the provision of essential medicines to a recognition that health and wellbeing are connected to a broad array of public services and resources (see Marsland 2012; Le Marcis 2012). Conversely, ill-health and ill-being, including a lack of dignity, need to be understood as fundamentally linked to the myriad socioeconomic inequalities that shape most South African's lives. Citizens' accounts provide a set of micro-level observations on the direct implications of the government's attempts to follow through on the supranational principles of 'open

governance' that it has committed to through the OGP and through its constitution and public policies at a domestic level.

The ethnographic accounts bring people's lives into focus, moving beyond an analysis of the disjuncture between supranational commitments on the OGP and domestic policy. They are a step towards a dialogue that advances constructive avenues to hold governments to account for implementing the principles of 'open governance'. It is dialogue – between states, citizens and civil society – that appears to be central to the framing of the OGP, and this framing implies that these actors are required to collaborate with each other if the principles of open governance are to be positively advanced. In South Africa's case, this might entail measures to ensure the state does a better job of listening to its citizens and its civil society; and in turn, it might mean that in order to be heard, citizens do not feel the need 'to raise a fist'.

### Notes

- 1 [www.opengovpartnership.org](http://www.opengovpartnership.org).
- 2 Independent biannual progress reports are produced for each country by the OGP's Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM). South Africa's most recently published IRM report notes that of the eight commitments it made in its action plan, South Africa had only successfully fulfilled one – the commitment to set up an anti-corruption forum and anti-corruption hotline.
- 3 CSOs challenged the extent to which the OGP was genuinely consultative, and claimed that they were given a very tight deadline to respond to calls for engagement and that the final action plan was largely shaped by internal government consultation (IRM 2013).
- 4 The OGP Action Plan also detailed eight commitments against a set of targets to measure progress.
- 5 Specific measures included strengthening corruption-combating instruments and mechanisms for meaningful citizen engagement in service delivery improvement, and an accountability management framework for public servants.
- 6 Here, 'multi-sited' refers to fieldwork that works across scale, with women living in Khayelitsha, the activist organisation they had worked with, the actors and activists in Brazil to whom South Africa had looked during the struggle for antiretroviral drugs, and national and international policy actors who made decisions about these women's ability to access basic services.
- 7 There are at least 22 residential sub-sections comprising older formal areas (with basic brick homes), as well as newer, informal areas.
- 8 [http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/?page\\_id=1021&id=city-of-cape-town-municipality](http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1021&id=city-of-cape-town-municipality).
- 9 This struggle was led by the Treatment Action Campaign, also initially based in Khayelitsha.
- 10 Ethics approval for this research was secured from the University of Sussex's Cross-Schools Research Ethics Committee. I conceptualise ethnography as co-constructed through the relationships I formed with people and institutions in the course of my fieldwork. The

methods I used emerged from these relationships and I therefore refer to the people who form the core of this ethnography as 'the people I worked with' and not as 'participants' or 'respondents'.  
 11 A Southern African dance used in political protests in South Africa.  
 12 [www.r2k.org.za/2015/07/27/is-the-sa-government-open/](http://www.r2k.org.za/2015/07/27/is-the-sa-government-open/).

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