In 1996, when the post-apartheid South African government wrote its constitution, it enshrined the right to access to adequate housing in the document, and called for the state to [take](https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/humanresources/documents/employmentequity/Constitution%20of%20the%20Republic%20of%20South%20Africa%201.pdf) “reasonable legislative and other measures...toward the progressive realization of this right.”

But since then, the backlog of people waiting for adequate housing in the country has actually increased, from 1.5 million in 1994 to 2.1 million [today](http://www.financialmail.co.za/specialreports/budget2016/2016/02/25/human-settlements-housing-backlog-widens). One big problem is the proliferation of informal settlements—areas where groups of people build houses, often one-room shacks, on land they don’t own.

In Johannesburg’s Alexandra Township, the largest informal settlement is Setswetla, built on the banks of the Jukskei River that splits the township in half. In this audio slideshow, Christian Belanger takes a look at the challenges Setswetla’s residents face.