



XENOPHOBIA

AND

OUTSIDER EXCLUSION

Addressing Frail Social Cohesion in
South Africa's Diverse Communities

Grahamstown Case Study
October 2017

I. Executive Summary

Grahamstown is physically divided along socioeconomic and racial lines in that residents of Grahamstown East are relatively poor whereas those who live Grahamstown West are relatively well off. Grahamstown does not have a history of xenophobic violence, and as a result, its residents were shocked at the collective violence against foreign nationals in October 2015. After the incident, community members cited the shortcomings of local leadership to act, and to some extent police capacity. The SAPS had been unable to dispel rumours that implicated foreign nationals in murder, which gave room for people with personal motives to manipulate a misinformed and fearful community into collective violence against foreign nationals. Young males, who lack employment opportunities and other meaningful activities, were identified by many as the perpetrators of such violence.

While there is clearly a strong desire in the community of Grahamstown to have foreign nationals present, it seems that this is at least in part motivated by economic benefit. In this community, foreign nationals own spaza shops and often provide locals with groceries on credit. Despite these 'business relations', the findings suggest that there is no conscious effort from local community members and authorities to make foreign nationals part of the community at a deeper level, and as such foreign nationals tend to be excluded and exclude themselves from many community activities and processes.

The current existing narrative in relation to service delivery and social ills in Grahamstown is that government, in its many spheres, has failed the community. This mistrust emanates from the history of corruption within the local municipality and the long-term inaccessibility of the local councillors, and has led to a deep-rooted apathy and complacency in addressing social problems.

This report is divided into six main sections. The report covers the methodology in Section II. Section III provides background information of Grahamstown in terms of its geography, socio-economic characteristics and its crime profile. Section IV highlights the social interactions among different groups of people, including social-economic divisions, relations

between locals and foreign nationals, the role of church and civic organisations. Section V discusses the leadership structures, and the ways in which they relate to each other as well as residents. It also includes a discussion on existing conflict resolution mechanisms and their perception of effectiveness. Section VI provides an overview of protest action in the area and the ways in which foreign nationals have been excluded from community activities by non-violent means. It contains an anti-outsider violence profile focusing on a recent incident of xenophobic violence, examines the underlying triggers and examines the responses from different role players. Lastly, Section VII covers the socio-economic implications of the violence.

II. Methodology

The research presented in this paper is an amalgamation of desktop background research undertaken prior to site entry, and semi-structured, in-depth interviews conducted during the fieldwork. It includes background materials from the 2011 Census, election results, crime statistics, as well as media, academic and government sources. The SaVI research team conducted Phase I of the research in Grahamstown from 16 – 20 May 2016. During this phase, the research team conducted 33 interviews with 45 respondents.¹ Thirty interviews were conducted in the selected site during the fieldwork, and three were telephonic interviews.

The second phase of the research took place from 4 – 7 February 2017. Since the research team already had some knowledge of the research site, fewer interviews were conducted in the second phase. The team interviewed 9 individuals, three of whom were foreign nationals. This provided the team with much-needed information on the life of the foreign national in Grahamstown. Our respondents were aged between 26 and 58, representing a variety of racial groups such as Black African, Coloured, White, and Indian. While the majority were South African, there was the opportunity to interview a few foreign nationals from Ethiopia, Somalia, and Pakistan. These interviews took place at coffee shops, respondents' places of work, and public facilities such as the Fingo Library and the City Hall.

¹ 7 group interviews and 26 one-on-one interviews.

The people approached for these interviews were generally welcoming and happy to speak to the researchers, providing the team with more connections and contacts.² Interviewees spoke openly and freely about the issues of the community. It is worth noting that, unlike in some of the other sites visited, people did not act with any suspicion towards the team, nor did they display any reluctance in speaking about xenophobic violence. In many cases the research team found that people welcomed the opportunity to have their views heard.

In Phase I, it was difficult for the research team to make direct contact with the mayor and the ward councillors. This is potentially because it was preceding election time, and the councillors were all busy. They were, however, seen as being generally inaccessible to the community, and the fact that they would be unresponsive could just be 'normal behaviour'. In Phase II of research, the team managed to access all those individuals that were missed in Phase I. This included interviews with a newly-elected councillor and a SANCO representative.

III. Background

Grahamstown still resembles much of the legacy of Apartheid in terms of spatial inequalities. This section, through exploring the town's geography, demographics and crime information, explores the effects of the spatial inequalities, with special attention paid to the poorer Grahamstown East.

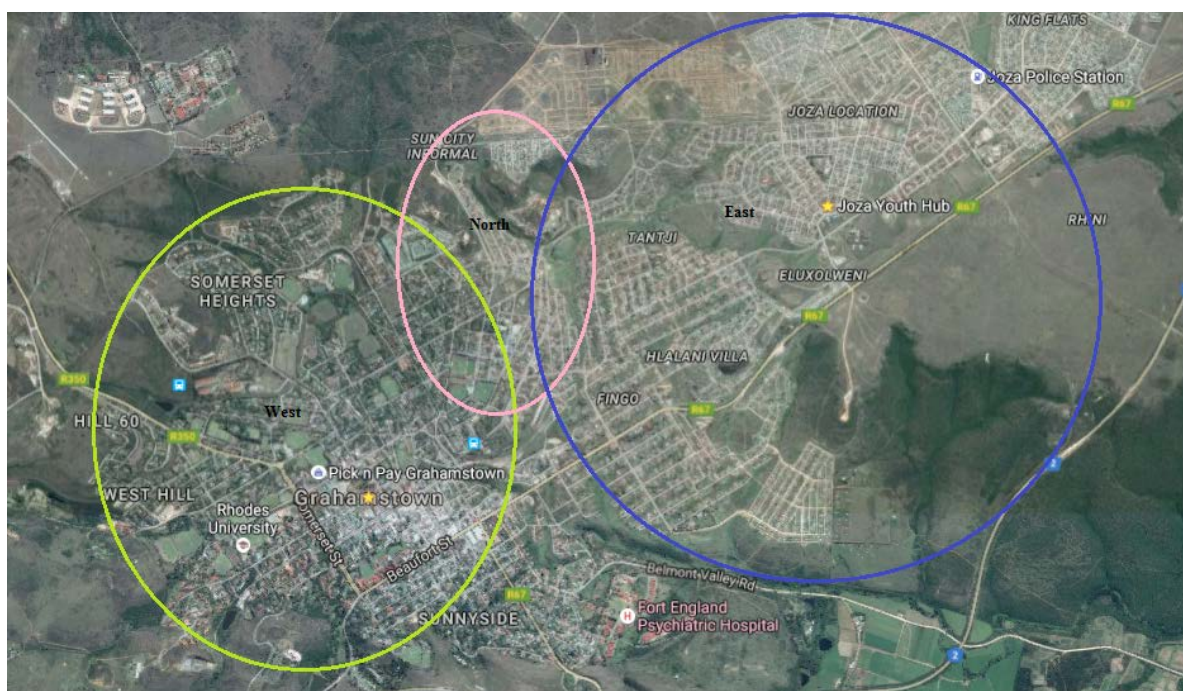
The Geography

Grahamstown is a small town situated in the Eastern Cape Province, between two of the province's main business centres: 110km northeast of Port Elizabeth, and 130km southeast of East London. The town falls under the jurisdiction of Makana Local Municipality, which is part of the greater Cacadu District Municipality. Nearby towns and villages that make up the rest of Makana include Alicedale, Riebeek East, Fort Brown, Salem, Sidbury, and Seven Fountains.

² The majority of the interviews were pre-arranged. Few were arranged after asking respondents to refer the team to more people they believed would be relevant and helpful in this research. None were random interviews with people on the street.

Grahamstown is essentially divided into two parts, East and West. There is arguably a third, which serves as a ‘buffer’ between the two, namely the coloured community in the North. These areas have been marked on Figure 1 below. Starting at the bottom edge of town, all the way up to the top of the famous Makana’s Kop hill, facing town, Grahamstown East is the black township area. In Grahamstown East (shown in Figure 3, below), there are four identified townships – Joza, Tantiyi, Fingo, and Hlalani – forming a broader area often referred to as Rhini. Many people – both those from the East and the West – refer to Grahamstown’s township areas as ‘the locations’, still using colonial language to describe the area. These townships have schools (from pre-primary to secondary), churches, libraries, and *shebeens*.

Figure 1. Grahamstown – West, North, and East



Source: Open Street Map, Grahamstown, <https://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=14/-33.2982/26.5600&layers=C>

Joza seems to be the best resourced in terms of facilities. It has a post office, Department of Social Development (DSD) offices, a recreational centre (although this did not appear to be functioning when research took place) as well as the modern-looking South African Police Service (SAPS) station, which opened in February 2014 (pictured in Figure 2).

Figure 2: Joza SAPS Complex

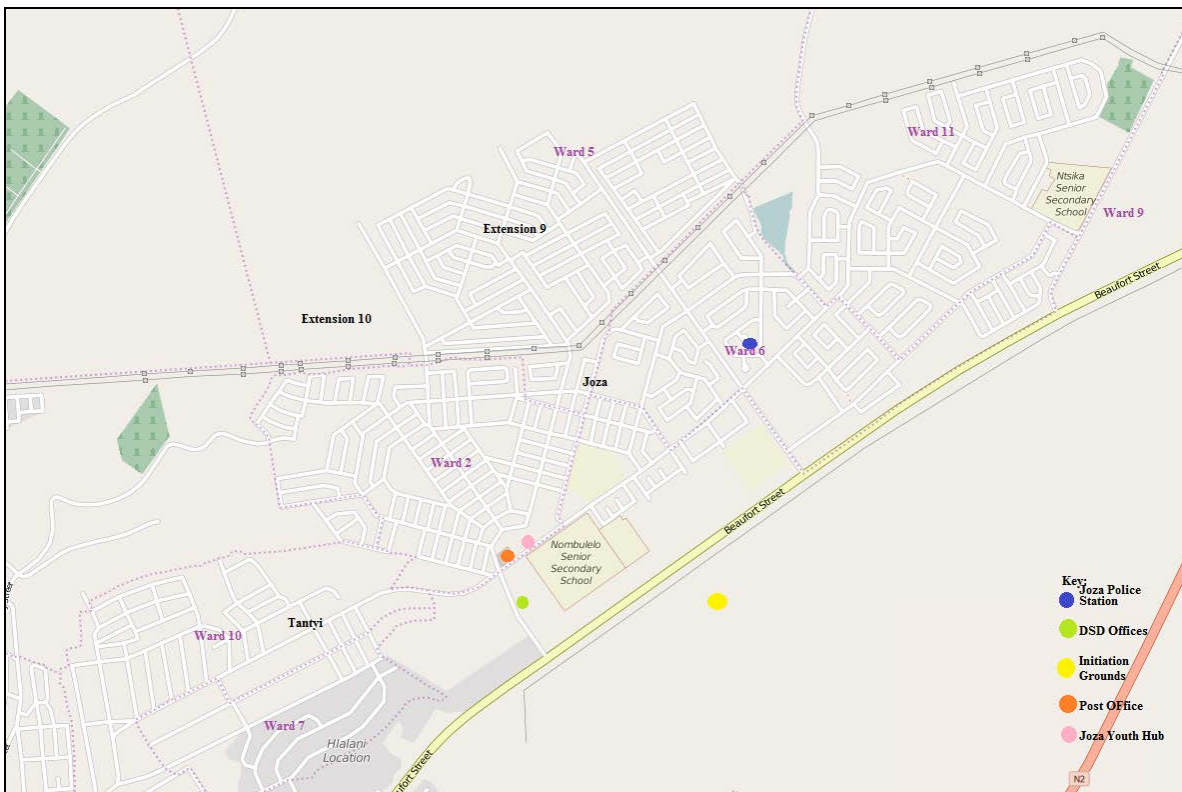


Source: SaVI, Field Research Notes, May 2016

The houses surrounding the station are formal, but they are small, traditional brick houses. While there are several houses that stand out with their bright paint and humorous lawn furnishings, most houses are dull, with chipped paint and some with broken walls. The cows grazing along the road give the place a rural feel. Despite all these facilities, and plentiful open ground (some of which looked like it was being used as a dumping site), the team did not see much in the form of playgrounds and sports fields, the absence of which was observed in most parts of the East. There are also no malls or shopping centres in Grahamstown East, which means that people have to travel into town to do their monthly grocery shopping, and shopping for other goods that may not be available in the spaza shops in the townships. Researchers did notice a Builder's Warehouse when driving towards Fingo from town, as well as a bottle store along the main road towards Joza.³

³ SaVI, Field Research Notes, May 16-20, 2016.

Figure 3: Grahamstown East

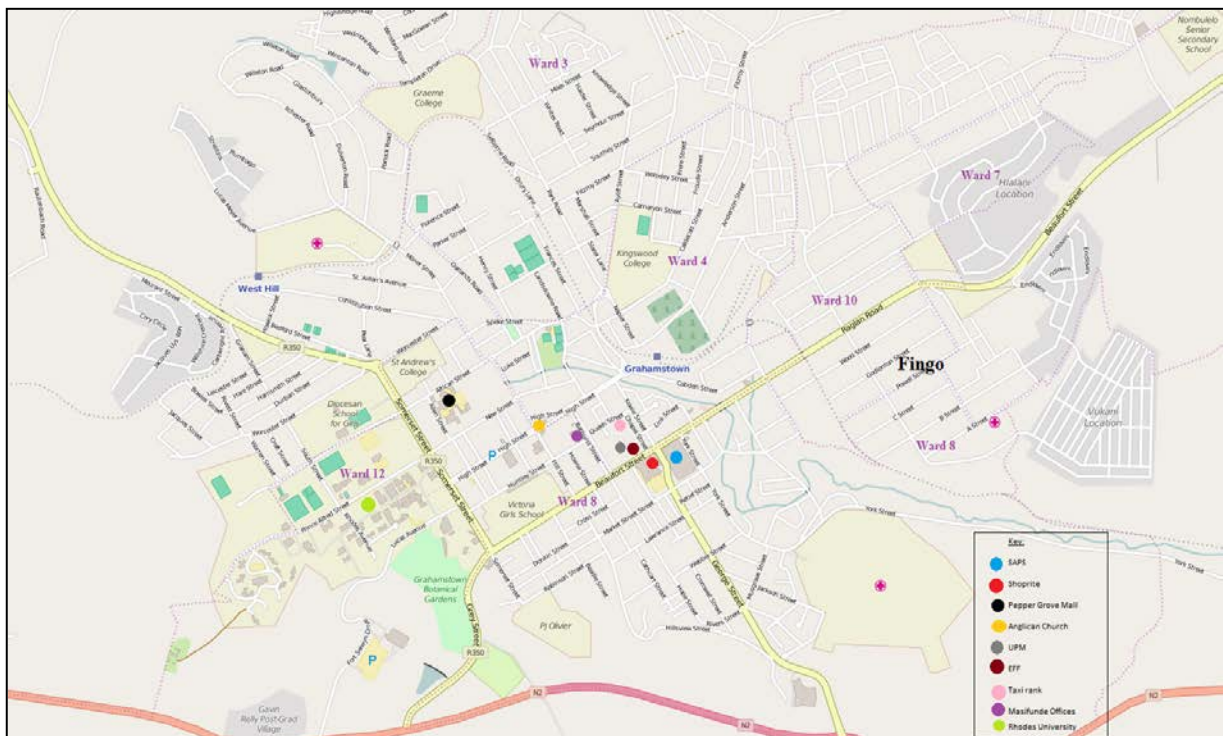


Source: Open Street Maps,

Grahamstown, <https://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=14/33.2982/26.5600&layers=C>

Grahamstown West (shown in Figure 4) is the more affluent, predominantly white town centre, and is adorned with churches and a cathedral, with colonial architecture all along its main roads. The culture and affluence of the West is best observed on High Street. Here, the team came across several coffee shops and restaurants that clearly service an affluent clientele, as well as Rhodes University. These circumstances are to be found in most streets in the West, not very far from residential areas. High Street is considered to be the legal hub hosting the High Court, Magistrate's Court, Legal Resources Centre, as well as the Advocates' Chambers, all in very close proximity. At the bottom of the High Street sits one of the oldest and largest cathedrals in town. The position of the Anglican Cathedral places it at the heart of the town, a physical symbol of the historical significance of the church and religion in the town. At the very top of High Street is Rhodes University, with its position signifying the importance of the institution as a centre for education, arts and culture.

Figure 4: Grahamstown West



Source: Open Street Maps, Grahamstown, <https://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=14/-33.2982/26.5600&layers=C>

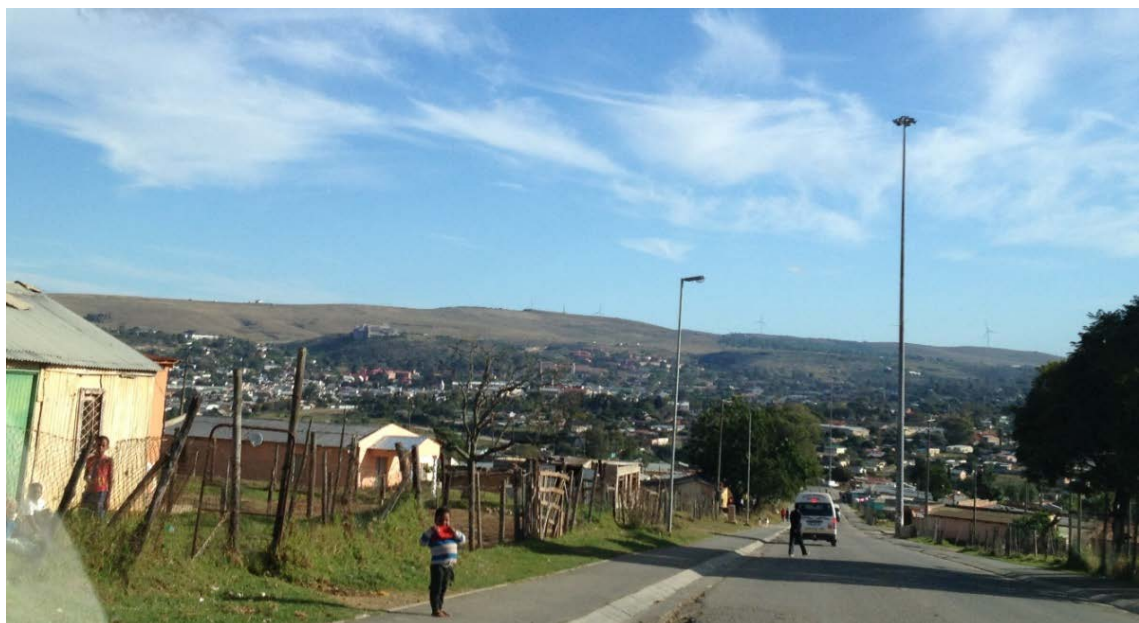
There are several other streets of importance in town. These include lower High street, in which the City Hall houses the local municipal offices. There is also Bathurst Street where the offices of several organisations that are active in Grahamstown can be found, namely the Raphael Centre (assisting HIV/AIDS infected/affected people), the Sunflower Foundation Hospice Shop, and Masifunde Education and Development Trust. Bathurst Street is also home to a couple of hardware wholesalers, as well as a market that houses businesses including tailor shops, hair salons, clothing stores, and small canteens, predominantly run by foreign nationals. Just off Bathurst Street is a taxi rank and around the corner, off Chapel Street, are the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and Unemployed People’s Movement (UPM) offices. Beaufort Street is the main road that serves as a bridge between town and the townships. The top of Beaufort Street is mostly residential, but the bottom part – towards Grahamstown East – is very busy. There are wholesale grocers, street vendors, wholesale liquor stores, a furniture shop, a couple of fast food restaurants, and the Grahamstown SAPS station. Further below the station is a small bridge that crosses into Fingo where there is a library and onto the main road that leads into the rest of

Grahamstown East. The following photographs (Figures 5 and 6) show that the East and West are clearly visible to one another. It will become evident that even though there is very little integration between the two areas, the residents of each area are very much aware that the other exists, most probably because the two areas face each other so directly.

Figure 5: A view from Beaufort Street, looking from Grahamstown West to Grahamstown East



Figure 6: A view from Grahamstown East looking to Grahamstown West



Source: SaVI, Field Research Notes, May 2016

Demographics

According to the 2011 national census, there are 13,427 households for a population of 50,217 in Grahamstown as shown below in Table 1 below. Of these households, less than 10% are shacks or informal dwellings.⁴ The majority of the population of Grahamstown is Black African, with the second largest population group being Coloured, followed by the White population. The Indian and Asian groups are a very small minority. The majority of the population in Grahamstown was born in South Africa (98%), and only 1% was born outside the country, providing an indication of the size of the population of foreign nationals in Grahamstown.

Table 1: Grahamstown population by race group

	Grahamstown East				Grahamstown
	Hlalani	Fingo	Joza	Tantyi	East and West
Population	6 492	4 015	504	931	50217
Black	98.54%	97.53%	97.80%	97.64%	72.78%
Coloured	0.65%	0.85%	1.59%	2.15%	14.29%
Indian/Asian	0.12%	0.17%	0.60%	0.00%	11.22%
White	0.20%	1.10%	0	0	0.94%
Other	0.51%	0.32%	0	0.21%	0.76%

Source: StatsSA, Census 2011

Unfortunately, census data does not provide details on which countries non-South Africans migrated from.⁵ A Pakistani respondent estimated that there were around 160 Pakistanis in Grahamstown, and that the Ethiopians were the largest group. Although he could not tell us how many of each group of foreign nationals there are, he did tell us that there is quite a variety of nationalities, which includes Bangladeshis, Somalis, Sudanese, Nigerians, and Zimbabweans. The most notable groups appear to be those of Pakistani, Ethiopian and Bangladeshi descent.

⁴ These statistics are outdated; however, the 2011 Census is currently the most recent national census conducted by StatsSA and most reliable information the team could use in this town.

⁵ Statistics South Africa, "My Settlement: Grahamstown", 2011, http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=4286&id=554; Adrian Frith, "Census 2011", <http://census2011.adrianfrith.com/place/2>

The vast majority (90%) of foreign nationals live in the townships, but there are a few with apartments in town. The same respondent said that Pakistanis had been in Grahamstown the longest, namely since 2008.⁶ However, in another interview with two Ethiopian shopkeepers, one shopkeeper said that he had been in Grahamstown for 11 years (since 2005).⁷ Perhaps smaller numbers of Ethiopians have been in town longer than Pakistanis, but the noticeable and rapid growth of the Ethiopian community is said to be more recent.⁸

Although the population of Joza is only 504 people, the team discovered that this number excluded some of the extensions that are considered part of Joza, particularly new extensions 9 and 10. Based on our observations, Joza is certainly larger than this, and it is most likely that this number is a reflection of Joza main place, but not the entirety of the township. Furthermore, it is possible that Joza has expanded more rapidly than other areas since the Census took place in 2011.

As shown in Table 2, isiXhosa is the most widely spoken language, followed by Afrikaans and English. Furthermore, the team noted that despite Afrikaans being the second most spoken language in Grahamstown, the percentage of the population that speaks the language in the four townships is quite low. This, along with the very high population percentage that speak isiXhosa, perhaps indicates that the larger concentration of Afrikaans speakers is found in the coloured area (Grahamstown North) and in town (Grahamstown West).

Table 2: First language statistics of Grahamstown

	Grahamstown East				Grahamstown
	Hlalani	Fingo	Joza	Tantyi	East and West
Languages	6 492	4 015	504	931	50217
isiXhosa	95.54%	90.09%	95.24%	93.02%	66.53%
English	1.49%	3.40%	1.98%	1.72%	12.49%
Afrikaans	0.42%	2.22%	0.00%	1.83%	17.27%
Other	1.03%	0.82%	0.00%	0.75%	1.18%

Source: StatsSA, Census 2011

⁶ Interview, Pakistani Male Respondent, Businessman, May 19, 2016.

⁷ Interview, Ethiopian Male Respondents, Shopkeepers, May 20, 2016.

⁸ Interview, Pakistani Male Respondent, Businessman, May 19, 2016.

In Ward 10 (Fingo Village and surroundings), 30% of the population are employed, of which 61% are employed in the formal sector. In Ward 7 (Hlalani area), 34.4% of the population are employed, with 60% employed in the formal sector; and in Ward 5 (Joza area) 29.7% of the population are employed, of which 72% are employed in the formal sector.⁹ This means that unemployment and those who are economically inactive rests between 65.6% and 70.3% of the populations of Fingo, Hlalani and Joza (the East), and there is a substantial percentage that is only informally employed. Furthermore, an estimated 40% of the entire Makana population are living in poverty.¹⁰ According to Statistics South Africa, 13.2% of the households in Grahamstown did not earn an income in 2011, while 4% had an annual income between just R1 and R4 800, and 5.4% had an annual income of R4 801 – R9 600. This means that 22.6% of Grahamstown's households were living under the poverty line.¹¹

High unemployment in Grahamstown is, at least in part, due to the absence of any significant industry in the town. There are some kaolin (clay) mining operations in place, but this has reportedly been monopolised by the municipality.¹² A member of the Makana United Business Chamber claimed that the municipality often gave tenders for mining to contractors from outside Grahamstown, thereby denying local business and local people of employment opportunities.¹³ Historically, Grahamstown has relied on the university and the schools for employment (since their establishment in the late-1800s to early-1900s). The majority of shops and/or spazas in the townships and on Bathurst Street are run and owned by foreign nationals. Although there are spaza shops owned by South Africans, these are said to be a minority in Grahamstown East, and some respondents have also commented that they are not as successful because foreign nationals provide better credit and more competitive prices.¹⁴ Other people are employed by the municipality as street sweepers,

⁹ Frith, Census 2011.

¹⁰ Mandy De Waal, "Poverty and Waste – the other side of Grahamstown", GroudUp, November 20, 2013, <http://www.groundup.org.za/article/poverty-and-waste-other-side-grahamstown/>

¹¹ Statistics South Africa, "My Settlement: Grahamstown", 2011, http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=4286&id=554

¹² Unfortunately, the team could not find more recent data for Grahamstown to verify this, as most recent data available is for the whole of the Eastern Cape, with no break-down by city.

¹³ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Member of Makana United Business Chamber, May 17, 2016.

¹⁴ Interview, Black Female Respondent, Community Member, May 18, 2016.

garbage collectors, and postmen. However, these jobs do not provide much income and as such, many people who do have such employment are living below the poverty line.¹⁵

In impoverished communities where there is poor sanitation, lack of information, illiteracy, and stigma attached to certain illnesses, health conditions ensue. In Grahamstown East, the biggest health challenges are tuberculosis (TB) and HIV/AIDS. While talking to us about the challenges they have faced, community workers at the Department of Social Development (DSD) commented that there are many people with TB in the townships, but they do not take their treatment correctly. For example, they may not have food to take it with, or are not aware of when and how they should be taking the pills. Hence, the department started programmes where they provide meals for patients so that they are able to take their medication with food.¹⁶ This shows the extent of poverty within the Grahamstown East community.

Crime

Along with the socio-economic difficulties, crime is considered to be a major challenge. When respondents were asked to explain the nature of crime in the town, most people said it took the form of house break-ins, muggings and theft. A police official explained that, in a way, Grahamstown was still a relatively safe community, and that it was mainly opportunistic crime such as robberies affecting the community.¹⁷

Murder, or other violence, was not mentioned as a major issue by respondents. Many people emphasised, however, that rape is a very serious problem all across Grahamstown. It is difficult to determine whether this has been a long-standing perception, or whether people's consciousness of the prevalence of rape in Grahamstown was triggered by the Naked March¹⁸ held by females at Rhodes University, just a couple of weeks prior to the research team's arrival in Phase I.

¹⁵ Chiweshe, "A baseline assessment of demand for rental housing for the poor in Makana Municipality, Grahamstown", Public Service Accountability Monitor, August, 2014.

¹⁶ Interview, Five Respondents, DSD Community Project Workers, May 18, 2016.

¹⁷ Interview with police official, Grahamstown, 18 May 2016

¹⁸ Sisonke Msimang, "South Africa's topless protesters are fighting shame on their own terms", 5 May 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/05/south-africas-topless-protesters-are-fighting-shame-on-their-own-terms>

People tended to highlight that mischievous acts and crime were carried out mostly by ‘troublesome’ youth in the townships. Young males were often identified as perpetrators, which is attributed to the absence of employment opportunities and other initiatives for them. It is said that they look for items to sell, so that they can purchase drugs and alcohol, as a municipal worker explains:

“...But, I think it’s these kids, the youth. You see? The ones smoking drugs, weed, and everything. And they’re doing these things maybe because they would tell you that they don’t work and stuff, they break into people’s houses, break into people’s cars, and all those things.”¹⁹

Grahamstown’s crime data seem to corroborate people’s perceptions of the nature of crime, with the emphasis on burglary and rape. However, in comparison, assault seems to be understated in people’s accounts (see Table 3 below). The SAPS Joza police station was only officially opened in 2014, and therefore, for the years 2009 to 2014, only statistics for the Grahamstown precinct are available.²⁰ Since data from Joza police station is available from 2014, Table 3 tries to compare the statistics for Grahamstown and Joza.

Table 3: Grahamstown Crime Data

Crime Category	Crime Statistics by area										
	Grahamstown					Grahamstown	Joza	Grahamstown	Joza	Grahamstown	Joza
Contact Crimes	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2014	2015	2015	2016	2016
Murder	35	42	34	30	32	28	5	11	26	16	21
Total Sexual Offences	172	160	178	188	190	188	15	73	136	85	113
Attempted Murder	34	46	26	24	18	30	4	12	18	16	13
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous	753	732	659	679	649	653	67	229	328	248	318
Common Assault	635	690	664	587	493	511	46	338	248	329	303
Common Robbery	150	117	165	159	113	110	5	113	58	101	41
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	186	251	342	416	303	287	19	144	126	167	106
Contact-Related Crimes											
Arson	19	16	16	21	13	22	0	4	2	7	7
Malicious Injury to Property	341	386	420	338	338	327	18	220	171	188	152
Property Related Crimes											
Burglary at non-residential premises	148	127	108	126	121	122	10	56	38	51	38
Burglary at residential premises	916	1005	1050	1123	915	692	60	475	278	515	299
Theft of motor vehicle and motorcycle	40	58	80	58	48	59	2	51	18	37	22
Theft out of or from motor vehicle	417	362	509	589	371	376	8	346	63	272	56
Stock-theft	83	85	79	60	51	39	0	31	9	35	26

Source: SAPS Crime Data, Grahamstown and Joza, Financial Years 2008-2009 to 2015-2016

¹⁹ Interview, Black Female Respondent, Municipal Worker, May 20, 2016.

²⁰ It is worth noting that crime figures for 2013-2014 are small for Joza, because it had only been open for one month at the time of data collection.

For most categories of crime, the cumulative total (where Joza and Grahamstown are included) remains stable over the years. However, both Joza and Grahamstown SAPS report a much higher rate of contact crimes, which include assault with intent to inflict grievously body harm, common assault, sexual offences, and common robbery. In addition, we see that property-related crimes are higher for the more affluent SAPS Grahamstown precinct than Joza. Crimes related to commercial property, such as stock theft, or burglary at non-residential premises are more prevalent in town, as there are far fewer businesses operating in the townships, in comparison to the town.

Joza SAPS is said to work very closely with the Community Protection Forums (CPFs), holding regular meetings, and collaborating on community safety initiatives.²¹ The relationship between the community and SAPS in Grahamstown is mostly passive. However, there is some hostility because there is a perception held by the people in Grahamstown East that the police are less responsive to the townships, and more responsive to calls in town. There is the perception that there is more care taken with the town community, while the townships are seen as unimportant and neglected. The UPM leader explains:

“It is also not by accident that in the township people will fight and will call the police, and the police will only be there after 30-40 hours. But I can tell you, if you are saying Pick ‘n Pay is under threat, or there are people robbing Pick ‘n Pay, they will be there in no minute.”²²

In an interview with a municipal official, the relationship between the community and the police is explained differently:

“You see the problem with the police, for example, with regards to their job and justice, police can apprehend you, one gets taken to court and the court will find there is not enough evidence to prosecute. That person is out, and to the public

²¹ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Police Official, May 19, 2016.

²² Interview, Black Male Respondent, Leader of the Unemployed People’s Movement, May 17, 2016.

it's not justice, it's the police who are not doing their job. You understand? So there is that misunderstanding."²³

The perception that the SAPS do not service Grahamstown East as well as the West may be surprising, given the opening of the SAPS Joza police station in 2014. Sentiments may be reflective of the situation before the Joza police station was opened, and considering how new it is, it may take a while for people's perceptions of the police to change. Furthermore, the relationship with the police may be good in some areas of the East, but not in all. The station is located in Joza, and slightly further from places like Hlalani and Fingo, where people might feel that the police are not responsive. The opening of the SAPS Joza resulted in the splitting of SAPS Grahamstown. One visible police representative in SAPS Grahamstown explained that the split led to a 49-51 split of personnel, slightly in favour of Grahamstown East. However, the same officer explained that the precinct area of SAPS Grahamstown is significantly bigger, including many of the surrounding farms. SAPS Grahamstown also takes the lead on handling public order issues, given that most protests take place on the Rhodes campus and surrounds, or near the municipal offices. This would suggest that SAPS Joza is relatively well serviced. Nonetheless, daily experiences of crime and a lack of safety are certainly higher in Grahamstown East.²⁴

IV. Social Interactions

Not only are the divisions between East and West based on economic inequality, but they are further fuelled by the perception of the municipality's style of governance. Furthermore, poor governance in this town has created opportunities for social movements to emerge and openly criticise local authorities. In this sense, there is a confrontational dynamic between civil society and government authorities.

²³ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Municipal Official, May 20, 2016.

²⁴ Interview, White Male Respondent, Police Official, May 17, 2016.

Socio-economic divisions

Interactions between the residents of Grahamstown East and West are limited to people's daily business activities whether it be between those working in the stores, at the university, the municipality, domestic work, or people going into town to do their shopping. The stark economic inequalities limit the degree to which people can interact. For instance, the wealthier population of the West has a relatively upmarket shopping centre, Pepper Grove Mall, with a large Pick 'n Pay, a small fresh fruit and vegetable market, an organic store, a trendy coffee shop, a clothing boutique, and a few restaurants. It is situated away from the main roads and closer to the suburban areas of the West, but still within in walking distance from Rhodes University.

Meanwhile, lower Beaufort Street is where the population of the East does most of their shopping. The wholesale grocery and wholesale liquor stores offer affordability. The pavements outside the stores are lined with street vendors and their stalls, selling fresh fruit and vegetables.

Figure 7: Street Vendors on Beaufort Street



Source: SaVI, Field Research Notes, May 2016

Locals and Foreign Nationals

The East is predominantly comprised of Black African residents, and it is in these townships that foreign nationals live. They live on the same streets as South African nationals, some renting the houses of nationals, and others renting structures in their backyards. The spaza shops owned by foreign nationals are run out of garage spaces owned by locals, and in some cases locals have created structures or erected containers in their yards to rent out to

foreign nationals. However, despite sharing space, foreign nationals in the East tend not to socialise much with the locals. A constable at the Joza police station explained that foreign nationals tend not to get involved in the community:

“There are quite a number of foreign nationals who have shops here, but you won’t find them involved in community things, you’ll only see them when you go to the shop to buy something, or as police, when we visit their shops to check if there aren’t any problems they are encountering, then we see them then. So they’re not part, they don’t take initiative in getting involved in the community... it might be because of their culture. Maybe it doesn’t allow them to associate with the community, I’m not sure...”²⁵

Similar points were made by many South African respondents in terms of the perceptions of the activeness of foreign nationals in their communities. Other respondents commented that foreign nationals refrained from participating in the community because they fear what may happen to them if they decided to be more outspoken and active. This indicates that there is a perception or understanding that foreign nationals do not feel safe in these communities.²⁶ Furthermore, the respondents’ views seem to suggest that there is minimal social interaction between foreign nationals and locals. Interactions mostly happen during business transactions, which may be due to language and cultural barriers specifically between locals and Somalis/Ethiopians or Pakistanis. Foreign nationals from Southern African Development Community (SADC) tend to integrate more easily. During Phase II, researchers observed Zimbabweans and locals drinking together in one of the popular *tshisa nyamas*, and outside a Bangladeshi’s shop in town.

In an interview with foreign national shopkeepers who live in town, they shared that they were not comfortable being in the townships because they did not feel safe there. The men seemed particularly concerned about their wives going to the townships. The perception of foreign nationals is that they feel threatened by the locals, and that the atmosphere in the

²⁵ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Police Official, May 18, 2016.

²⁶ Interview, Black Male Respondent, UPM Leader, May 17, 2016.

townships is hostile and unsafe for women.²⁷ During Phase II, one of the respondents from Ethiopia operating in Joza township showed the researchers a *panga* (machete) that he keeps in the shop to scare criminals and deter robberies. He maintained that the community is generally good but there is a criminal element among young males. However, the respondent also mentioned he had also been helped by a local community member:

“I do not have problem with locals. After the violence in 2015 I lost everything. Luckily, I knew someone whom I rented his place before. He helped me with money to restart again and accommodate me. Last months I had a problem with electricity box...he came and help me out.”²⁸

The perception that foreign nationals seem to have of the townships and their preference to keep their families in town suggests that they consider staying in town a much safer option. In an interview with two female respondents working at a shop in Bathurst Street, one South African and the other Zimbabwean, they indicated that in town locals and foreign nationals socialise in their living spaces. The apartment block these female respondents live in is occupied by multiple people who have daily interactions, and have formed their own little community.²⁹ This sentiment was echoed by a Somali shopkeeper, who commented that Grahamstown West is relatively cosmopolitan, in that there is a greater mix of people from all backgrounds, thereby making the foreign nationals feel more comfortable.

There was the perception noted in Phase I that foreign national spaza shop owners tend not to employ local South Africans in their shops. This was because they prefer to run their own shops and, when they are not able to do so, they employ their family members to assist. In Phase II, the situation was explained for the team by a prominent Muslim community member:

“Normally how it works in the spaza shops...see some of those people they are married and the husband and wife work together. Now if it [the business] is

²⁷ Interview, Two Ethiopian Male Respondents, Shopkeepers, May 20, 2016.

²⁸ Interview, Ethiopian shopkeeper, Joza Township, February 2017.

²⁹ Interview, Two Black Female Respondents, Shopkeepers, May 20, 2016.

getting bigger, how do you employ? Some of the shops, they employ people from the foreign origin also. Sometimes, it is not a one-man show... maybe there can be a bigger business man, he can maybe have 3 or 4 shops, but most of the time it is not just owned by him. Then he is having a partnership. And they also create employment, where they also offer jobs to the local community. But definitely, that is always a limited thing. You can only employ so many.”³⁰

More generally, people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds tend to only socialise in their working environment because the space requires interaction. However, in Grahamstown, there is no shared or collective working environment to foster better social interaction between locals and foreign nationals.

Among themselves, foreign nationals are said to have their own informal organisation, albeit a business-oriented one. The Constable at Joza police station explains how this organisation came about:

“[T]hey do have a structure... that only involves them as shop owners here, around the Joza area... Even that structure that foreign nationals have, they formed it because it was the SAPSs’ initiative to say...things will be much easier if you have a structure, so that whatever things are your concern, you can raise them in that structure. And then the people in the committee bring the issue to the SAPS, rather than coming to a crowd, as a large group.”³¹

There are four main groups of foreign nationals represented within the structure, namely: Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Ethiopian. Two members from each of these countries is on the forum.³² These groups are likely better represented in the organisation due to the fact that they own the most businesses within Grahamstown itself. This forum plays an important role in resolving disputes particularly among foreign nationals themselves. As a Somali shopkeeper said:

³⁰ Interview, Muslim Male Respondent, February 6, 2017.

³¹ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Police Official, May 18, 2016.

³² Interview, Muslim Male Respondent, February 6, 2017.

“If for example someone try to open a shop next to you, you report to the forum and that person will be fined, and the shop close down.”³³

Religion and Society

Grahamstown is nicknamed the ‘City of Saints’ because of the number of churches, estimated to number around 64, representing more than five denominations of the Christian faith. Most of these churches are embedded in various areas in town, with the Anglican Church being the most dominant.³⁴ The larger churches are found in town, while the churches in the townships are smaller and more numerous.

The most influential religious movement in Grahamstown is the Ministers’ Fraternal, a group of Christian ministers. They played a critical role in ending the previous xenophobic tensions, hosting meetings with the community, and trying to clear up rumours that foreign nationals were attacking people.³⁵ They also play a role in attempting to create social cohesion within Grahamstown. A leader in the Ministers’ Fraternal said that racial divisions even permeated through church structures, where it is often found that the white church leadership and the black church leadership do not interact with one another. He argued that Grahamstown had not quite rid itself of apartheid attitudes.³⁶ Thus, while the peacebuilding potential of churches is significant, there are notable racial divisions, as one cleric describes:

“The two sides don’t work together in terms of church leadership. There is no effort to help develop black pastors in theology. There is racism between black, white, and coloured church communities, and it is often justified by difference in culture.”³⁷

³³ Interview, Pakistani Male Respondent, Businessman, May 19, 2016; Interview, Ethiopian shopkeeper, Joza Township, February 2017

³⁴ South Africa – Eastern Cape -L Archives, “Grahamstown Churches”, Roots Web, October 24, 2008, <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/SOUTHAFRICA/EASTERNCAPE/200810/1223980095>

³⁵ David MacGregor, 2015, “Township residents want foreign traders back”, *Sowetan Live*, November 7, 2015, <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2015/11/07/township-residents-want-foreign-traders-back>

³⁶ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Member of Ministers Fraternal, June 6, 2016.

³⁷ Telephonic Interview, Black Male Respondent, Reverend, 6 June 2016.

He went on to explain that the Ministers' Fraternal was created in order to bridge these divides.

It is unclear whether or not foreign nationals attend church with locals. However, based on the composition of the foreign national community, it is highly unlikely that many do, as many are presumably Muslims, and Grahamstown does not have any mosques. The closest mosque is in King William's Town and as such people worship in their homes and shops. During Phase II of research, one respondent noted that places for Muslims to worship are always temporary and that many of them have tried to approach the municipality with regards to finding an appropriate place to worship and bury the dead:

"The other thing was also with the graveyard. Even as a Christian, you have that specific space to be buried in. As a Muslim, we also wanted to have this specific area, when if a Muslim dies he can be buried there. Unfortunately, there is nothing like that. If someone dies here now, we have to take them to P.E. [Port Elizabeth] or King William's Town."³⁸

The only foreign national group that has its own church is the Ethiopians, with the Ethiopian Episcopal Church, which is also represented in the Ministers' Fraternal.

Religion is certainly important to people, but whether or not the various churches foster a sense of community everywhere, or is simply part of people's routine, cannot be concluded based on the presence of churches especially in Joza township. The church's involvement in Grahamstown is perceived differently in different parts of the town. The people in the West are not only involved in the church but feel that the church is involved in the community. On the other hand, people in the East attend church but do not necessarily feel that the church is very active in community matters. Some respondents said that the intervention process following the xenophobic attacks was the first time they had seen the church so actively involved. However, they did acknowledge that in this instance the Ministers' Fraternal

³⁸ Interview, Muslim Male Respondent, February 6, 2017.

played an important role as a peacemaker, outside the church setting and within.³⁹ What is interesting is that the church community sees itself as very active in the community of Grahamstown. In an interview, a pastor said that they often go to the schools to speak to youth, to discourage them from dropping out of school.⁴⁰

Social Life and Entertainment

Life for youth on the streets of Grahamstown's townships is characterised by continuous exposure to numerous social ills such as drug and alcohol abuse. There are several shebeens and taverns that appear to be the only source of entertainment in Grahamstown East. While there is a youth centre in Joza which is supposed to provide some activities, researchers were informed that it stopped functioning in early 2016 because the person who was championing it found a new job in town. A few decades ago, there were at least some forms of entertainment in Grahamstown that have since declined in popularity among the youth, or no longer exist. An example of this is the old cinema located in Grahamstown West (pictured in Figure 8). This forms part of the larger issue whereby there are very few recreational amenities or initiatives in Grahamstown. This respondent explains the situation:

"Yho... that is actually the one thing that is a problem for us here. You see, there aren't many places here, you mostly find people in taverns more than anything, taverns. We don't have many places that people can go to. Like I remember we grew up going to the cinema, we don't have that anymore, there is no longer a cinema here in Grahamstown. We grew up going to the library. Yes, we have libraries and all that stuff, but most people don't use them. Mostly it's all about fun, it's all about fun with us."⁴¹

³⁹ Interview, Black Female Respondent, Community Member, May 18, 2016.

⁴⁰ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Member of Ministers Fraternal, June 6, 2016. The high drop-out rate in Grahamstown East has made youth a focus for the churches in this area, and youth development is among the objectives of the Ministers Fraternal.

⁴¹ Interview, Black Female Respondent, Community Member, May 18, 2016

Figure 8: Old Cinema – Bathurst Street



Source: SaVI, Field Research Notes, May 2016

Indeed, it is within the various racial groups that people socialise mostly at pubs, shebeens and clubs. Those who can afford it go to nightclubs in town, but a respondent commented that they do so very rarely because it is expensive. Each part of town – West, North and East – has its own popular nightclubs.

Figure 9: Albany Lounge, a popular bar in Grahamstown North



Source: SaVI, Field Research Notes, May 2016

The National Arts Festival that takes place in Grahamstown annually is yet another occasion that some respondents have expressed that they feel is exclusive to the West. The events are said to be too expensive for the people in the townships, thus financially excluding them from being a part of the festivities. A member of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) explained that in recent years there have been attempts to include the townships, by hosting some of the concerts and parties in the East. However, he explained that “they don’t want to come to this side” in reference to the population of the West.⁴² He also said that the Fingo Festival that is held in conjunction with the Arts Festival as an effort to bring the festival to the people of the townships, although a much welcome effort, was yet another way of making the festivities in the West exclusive. A leader of the EFF in Grahamstown explains:

“These are two different worlds that become visible also during the National Arts Festival... the Arts Festival has been moved to Rhodes University, it used to be here in Village Greens. They have moved it to Rhodes University, where you feel like you do not have money, where you feel that you do not belong...”⁴³

Our observations of ordinary people in the streets of Grahamstown were that everyone went about their business, and it seemed as though, unless people knew each other, greetings were not exchanged. In a few interviews, the team was told that people often keep to themselves unless there is a death in someone’s family; then the community around that family comes together to assist in any way they can. A municipal worker explains:

“There are things, you see for instance in my area, if maybe there is a death in your family, maybe your mother or anyone in your family, in the area I live in, you would find that people are collecting money, put ten rands together to assist with the funeral, or whatever is going to be done there. But that money will be taken to that family. So, the area I live in, shame, we’re close in that way. We’re close in that way.”⁴⁴

⁴² Interview, Black Male Respondent, Leader of Economic Freedom Fighters Grahamstown, May 19, 2016.

⁴³ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Leader of the Unemployed People’s Movement, May 17, 2016.

⁴⁴ Interview, Black Female Respondent, Municipal Worker, May 20, 2016.

Collective Action and Authority

Poor service delivery, prolonged water cuts and lack of housing were all issues highlighted by respondents as problems they have with the local municipality. While the water cuts affect all of Grahamstown, housing problems and poor sanitation largely affected the townships. Interestingly, in 2014 and 2015, water cuts brought the communities of the East and West together in protest against the municipality. However, it is a perception in the East that the West only joined the protests on water cuts when the issue began to affect the West and the university community directly, and that the quality of water in the West is generally better than it is in the East. Indeed, service delivery complaints highlight perceptions that the town has better services, while the townships are neglected. A municipal worker explained:

"... because in matters of service delivery you find... too many potholes in the township, and we'd feel that sometimes this area is treated better than the township when it comes to services... There is that thing because white people will always say that they are paying for services, you see? So we in the township are not paying for water, you see? They have that mentality, that maybe we're not paying for municipal services, yet some of us, we do..."⁴⁵

The perceptions revealed in this respondent's comments indicate that it is not only the people in the townships that view the town as getting better service. There is a sense that the white population in town feels more entitled to services, because they have this misperception that people in townships do not pay for services.

Whilst the residents of the East occasionally organise protests to the municipality around service delivery issues, they appear to be complacent around corruption which is a much bigger issue. The knowledge around the alleged misuse of municipal funds by officials is publicly available and widely known. The corruption was considered so severe that the municipality was investigated and placed under provincial government administration in

⁴⁵ Interview, Black Female Respondent, Municipal Worker, May 20, 2016.

2015. The investigation led to the compilation of the Kabuso Report, which was clearly covered in the local newspaper, the Grocott's Mail. The report revealed irregularities in municipal expenditure, irregular payments, and appointments that did not follow protocol.⁴⁶ A member of the business forum explained that people often do not react to the corruption or rise up against it, because of the lack of information accessible to them.⁴⁷ In general, residents seem to have become disillusioned with the municipality.

Figure 10: Discarded, uncollected waste, Joza



Source: SaVI, Field Research Notes, May 2016

Social Movements and Local Authority

While the general population seems inactive in bringing the municipality to account for its alleged corrupt practices, social movements in Grahamstown have been more vocal on this matter. There are two social movements that stand out in this regard: Masifunde Education and Development Trust, and the Unemployed People's Movement (UPM). These movements are close allies, and in our respective interviews with their leaders, each mentioned that they often collaborate on social programmes, particularly raising awareness about socio-political issues.

However, there is a rift that exists between these social movements and local authority. The social movements are highly critical of the municipality and the police. Various leaders

⁴⁶ Anele Mjekula, "Kabuso Report Finally Out", Grocott's Mail, October 8, 2015, <http://www.grocotts.co.za/content/newskabuso-report-finally-out-08-10-2015>

⁴⁷ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Member of Makana United Business Forum, May 17, 2016.

of social movements have often accused the municipality of corruption, abuse of power, and neglecting the community of Grahamstown East. This criticism of local authority seems to be part of a broader rhetoric about poor governance in South Africa as a whole and disdain with the current leadership of the country.⁴⁸

The municipality appears to view these social movements as antagonists. The view of some authority figures is that the leadership of the UPM, Ayanda Kota in particular, places his personal ambitions above those of the community, and is “disruptive.”⁴⁹ A female police official said she suspected that Kota had plans to become a political leader in the near future, and that he was antagonising the police and the municipality to gain popularity among the people.⁵⁰ As confirmation of this tension between authority and these organisations, at the end of his interview a municipal official said, “You can go there to Masifunde now and I am sure they will have a very different story about us, that they will be happy to tell you!”⁵¹ There are reports that in 2012 Ayanda Kota was assaulted while in police custody in Grahamstown police station. He eventually sued the SAPS for damages and was awarded R120 000 in financial compensation.⁵²

While social movements claim to represent the people of Grahamstown, in several interviews it became apparent that although people are aware of these civic organisations, they do not necessarily believe they have much of an impact in the everyday issues faced in the community of Grahamstown East. A Joza CPF member made this comment regarding the UPM:

“When I first heard about it, it said it was fighting for unemployed people, that’s what the name is. But when I assess it for myself, I find that they are very active during elections, you see, as though it is competing with the ruling government. It likes to expose things during election years. But, I don’t want to say they are

⁴⁸ Interview, Black Male Respondent, UPM, May 18, 2016.

⁴⁹ Interview with municipal worker, May 20, 2016.

⁵⁰ Interview, Indian Female Respondent, Grahamstown Police Official, May 18, 2016. A quote could not be provided as the respondent requested that this part of the interview be off the record.

⁵¹ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Municipal Official, May 20, 2016.

⁵² David Doochin, “Activist to get compensated following police assault”, *GroundUp*, October 18, 2016, <http://www.groundup.org.za/article/activist-get-compensated-following-police-assault/>

*exposing lies, it is the truth. But in my view, I will not speak for other people, they do this at the wrong time, in the wrong place. I mean, after the elections, they go quiet, but I feel that if they are doing what they are supposed to be doing, they ought to active at all times...*⁵³

The close proximity of the EFF and UPM offices – directly next to one another – means that the individuals associated with one come into close contact with the other. An EFF representative confirmed this association in an interview, when he disclosed that he had founded the movement alongside Kota, and had worked as the movement’s secretary before leading the EFF in Grahamstown.⁵⁴

V. Leadership and Conflict Resolution

Leadership in Grahamstown comes in many varieties, but it appears that community leadership is more valued than party political leadership. This may be due to the internal challenges and weaknesses/failures in the political sphere. Furthermore, community leadership is a much stronger feature of the township communities than it seems to be in the suburban areas of town. Although there may be some dissatisfaction with the police, community structures have a cooperative working relationship with the SAPS, and reliance on the services and functions they perform is maintained, in coordination with these community structures.

As alluded to above, the business forum representing foreign nationals was initiated by the police and other relevant community structures with an aim to limit business-related conflicts and to facilitate communication between local community structures and foreign nationals. According to one of the foreign national respondents, when there is a dispute between foreign nationals and locals or among foreign nationals, the business forum leaders intervene to resolve the matter. If found guilty, the leaders of the forum order the offender to pay an agreed fine of R2000.⁵⁵ However, if the dispute is about opening a shop, street

⁵³ Interview, Black Female Respondent, Joza CPF Member, May 19, 2016.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Interview, Ethiopian shopkeeper, Joza Township, February 2017

committees approach a local member who rented out the space while the business forum deal with the foreign national in question.

While street committees handle minor disputes, such as the unsanctioned opening of a shop and petty crime, the CPFs work with the police for safer communities, and Community Development Workers (CDWs) work with government institutions such as the DSD, Home Affairs, and SASSA. In order for people to know which community actors to approach in different situations, they need to be informed about them by the councillors who are not always available. This CDW explains that people often approach them with issues that are meant to be dealt with by their councillor:

“...It does result in some kind of strain, because if the public gets frustrated to the point of giving up on a councillor, it is us now who are expected to... deal with their problems, and explain properly as to what is the problem, and how far the process is and when things are going to happen...”⁵⁶

The community policing forums (CPF) are mostly active in patrolling the streets and working with the police to create safer neighbourhoods.⁵⁷ A police officer explained that the CPFs act as a linkage between the community and the police within Grahamstown. It also seems that the CPFs and police work effectively with each other and with other departments in addressing the needs of the community:

“We’ve got a community policing officer that works with the community directly, listening to their needs. So we’ve got a community policing structure, a CPF structure, where we sit at regular meetings with the community, and where they bring forth their problems and their challenges, where we try and address them. If it is more to do with other social issues, the other departments at our joint structure, these issues are brought through there.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Interview, Ethiopian shopkeeper, Joza Township, February 2017

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Interview with police officer, Grahamstown, 18 May 2016

While CPF members seem to think they are very active and visible, some community members do not agree. For example, a municipal worker said:

“There are CPFs.... they are there, but I would say I don’t really feel their effect. As I was saying these people are there, but they are not visible. Even in my area, I don’t know my CPF, I don’t want to lie.”⁵⁹

Street committees are very active in some areas, and mostly inactive in others.⁶⁰ A foreign national who is part of a street committee explains how the committee works and the limitations of street committees:

“The role of the street committees [is to] act as a link between the government institutions and the community of that street... The crime here... like the crime is high or if there is robbery at night, the community will meet on the streets and talk and say what must we do. Who should we call, must we call the police, must we call the councillor to do this and this and this. Yes, that is the business approach of the street committees. For me as a foreigner, people have different complaints. They will say someone robbed me and I know who it was, this and this and this. They will have different complaints than to the indigenous people. And in fact...yes...and their power is very limited. Their thing is...they can only take the complaint on their behalf and go to the relevant authority. We take it to the police station or somewhere else.”⁶¹

At times, the street committee will intervene in terms of assaulting a perpetrator of crime. When a CPF and street committee member was asked whether she thought this was vigilantism, she said “no, because it is not very serious, it is just to reprimand.”⁶² This may mean that although people are beaten, it is not done with the *intention* of causing severe bodily harm, or killing (but actually may result in serious injuries, trauma and even death).

⁵⁹ Interview, Black Female Respondent, Municipal Worker, May 20, 2016.

⁶⁰ In addition, a police officer commented that a neighbourhood watch was present, though “very, very few are active.” Interview with police officer, Grahamstown, 18 May 2016

⁶¹ Interview, Somalian Male Respondent, Community Member, May 17, 2016.

⁶² Interview, Black Female Respondent, Joza CPF Member, May 19, 2016.

The above-mentioned community safety structures are more prominent in the townships than in town. This is most likely because the suburbs are patrolled by a private security company – Hi-Tec – and, as such, may not have a need for CPFs and street committees. Hi-Tec is said to operate in the wealthier suburban areas of the town, as well as in the university community, and student residences/off-campus accommodation. This company is also used by shop owners in town, such as the shops on Bathurst Street. As one non-national respondent proclaimed: “Hi-Tec are the police in Grahamstown”.⁶³

Political Leadership

Political leadership comes in the form of the mayor’s office and various political parties and groups. Table 4 illustrates the 2016 local government election results by area. Grahamstown has been an ANC stronghold since 1994, with the DA as the ruling party’s main competitor. The DA has found more popularity in the West, while the ANC had tended to dominate in the East and North.

Table 4: Grahamstown 2016 Local Government Elections

	North:	East:	West:
Ward:	3 and 4	2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 11	4, 8, and 12
Voter Turnout:	3 035	11 252	4 887
Votes:	ANC: 1 421 (46.82%) DA: 1 192 (39.27%) EFF: 75 (2.47%)	ANC: 9 358 (83.16%) DA: 748 (6.64%) EFF: 675 (5.99%)	ANC: 675 (13.81%) DA: 3 736 (76.44%) EFF: 210 (4.29%)

Source: Electoral Commission of South Africa, “Municipal Election Results”, www.elections.org.za/

The ANC is clearly the dominant party in the Makana municipality, as shown by the voting statistics below. During the 2016 local government elections in August, the ANC received 62.38 percent of the vote, with the DA trailing at 29.69 percent. This is despite the ruling party’s level of support falling by just over 11 percentage points since the 2011 elections, and the DA’s increasing by just over 8 percentage points.⁶⁴

⁶³ Interview, Ethiopian Male Respondent, Shopkeeper, May 20, 2016.

⁶⁴ Electoral Commission of South Africa, “Municipal Election Results”, www.elections.org.za/

Table 5: Makana Municipality 2011 and 2016 Local Government Elections

Party Name	2011	2016
African National Congress	73.77%	62.38%
Democratic Alliance	21.43%	29.69%
Economic Freedom Fighters	0.00%	5.43%
Independent	0.18%	1.26%

Source: Electoral Commission of South Africa, "Municipal Election Results", www.elections.org.za/

The leadership of the municipality has been undermined by alleged corruption, and while ward councillors are meant to serve as community leaders, their absence has made their leadership ineffective in the eyes of the communities they serve. In some instances, ward councillors from other wards take it upon themselves to facilitate community-building activities. A police official explains in his capacity as a community member:

*"For instance, in this area there are sports games that are initiated by a councillor of another ward, but in that you won't see other councillors taking part. You won't even see them on the match day, just to be there and support the other councillor who initiated that. You won't see them."*⁶⁵

Community Leadership

SANCO is a prominent community structure with a presence in Grahamstown. However, as in other parts of the Eastern Cape, SANCO has earned the reputation of being affiliated with the ANC instead of being an impartial and apolitical organisation. It was created in order to, address community needs, to strengthen governance and to create a vibrant civic society.⁶⁶ Its perceived affiliation with the ruling party hinders SANCO's ability to remain impartial and to make an impact on the living conditions in certain wards because members of other political parties do not necessarily trust SANCO.

⁶⁵ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Police Official Joza SAPS, May 18, 2016.

⁶⁶ South African National Civic Organisation, 1996, "Constitution of the South African National Civic Organisation", April 24, 2017, http://www.sanco.org.za/images/stories/SANCO%20static/Constitution_2015.pdf

As a town surrounded by villages and rural communities, Grahamstown hosts the House of Traditional Leaders. Among the responsibilities of traditional leaders in Grahamstown is granting permission for the use of land during initiation seasons (in June and December/January), which happen around Grahamstown (see the map in Figure 3, and photo in Figure 11). While traditional leadership remains important in cultural matters, the urban lifestyle of Grahamstown (West and East) does not allow much room for it to be very active. As such, in conversations with respondents, traditional leadership was rarely mentioned, and some respondents did not seem to know that there was traditional leadership in Grahamstown.

Figure 11: Land used for initiation and cattle grazing



Source: SaVI, Field Research Notes, May 2016

VI. Protest Action, Exclusion, and Anti-Outsider Violence

Political violence and protest violence do not appear to be a regular feature of Grahamstown, though when protests do occur, they have the potential to turn violent. This is evident in the “poo protests” that took place in 2011, and the protests on the Rhodes University campus since 2015.⁶⁷ Having said that, when it comes to service delivery protests in a broader sense, a municipal official explains here that those tend to be peaceful:

⁶⁷ The “Poo Protests” referred to here are the protest during which citizens dumped faeces in municipal offices at City Hall, protesting against the bucket system some people were still using in the locations. This took place in Grahamstown following instances in Cape Town around the same time.

“...you will get rumours of not servicing people properly, that might lead to service delivery protests, but they are not rife at the moment... And the processes here are not violent, they tend to be peaceful, because nothing is vandalised... They will just toyi-toyi and it will end there, that’s it... It’s just to register the problem or the grievance, and they do march, they do organise, and come here and they address, and they leave peacefully after that.”⁶⁸

During the ‘poo protests’, perpetrators – those who threw faeces at municipal offices – included a group of young people led by Ayanda Kota and an EFF leader affiliated with Kota. Other protests have been said to have been led by Kota, and his ‘comrades’.⁶⁹ This seems to confirm the concerns that authority figures have expressed about his involvement in somewhat political, or politicised matters. It may be the source of the antagonistic relationship between Kota, the social and political movements with which he is affiliated, and the local authorities in Grahamstown. But this also highlights the power and ability he has to mobilise people around a cause, which may make him a threat to authority.

Grahamstown is not characterised by a history of violent exclusion of foreign nationals, and respondents were genuinely surprised that xenophobic violence occurred in October 2015. However, foreign nationals do experience some level of non-violent exclusion. Some of the foreign nationals interviewed said that while they would like to live in town, as it is deemed safer, they cannot afford to do so because they cannot afford the rent and landlords often hike up rent prices for foreign nationals.⁷⁰

What is interesting though is the non-violent exclusion of people who come to work in Grahamstown from other parts of the Eastern Cape, and the rest of South Africa. People who come to work in Grahamstown are perceived to be, and seem to see themselves, as outsiders. It has been said that their attitude is that they are only in Grahamstown to work, and as such, make no effort to become part of the community and often isolate themselves.

⁶⁸ Interview, 2 Black Male and Female Respondents, Municipal Official and Municipal Worker, May 20, 2016.

⁶⁹ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Leader of the Unemployed People’s Movement, May 17, 2016; Interview, Black Male Respondent, Leader of Economic Freedom Fighters Grahamstown, May 19, 2016.

⁷⁰ Interview, Somali Male Respondent, Shop Owner/Community Member, May 17, 2016.

Members of the community who have lived there almost all their lives feel that these people get jobs that could be given to locals, but this has not yet led to any violence against these ‘outsiders’. Expressing her frustration, a community member complains:

“Another thing we’ve found is that the workers, like with our municipality here in Grahamstown, most of the people who work there are not from Grahamstown. How can you take someone from elsewhere, and bring them here? They’re not going to feel affected by the problems of this place, because they know that on the weekends they are going to pack their bags and go back to where they came from... Then you find that the people who are employed are just doing this for the money; it’s not about the community and them wanting to help the community, and such”.⁷¹

Profile of Anti-Outsider Violence

It is a matter of community intrigue as to who instigated the wide-scale looting of shops owned by foreign nationals in Grahamstown East and West in October 2015. Attacks occurred under the backdrop of rumours about murders being committed by a ‘bearded Muslim man’. While 200-300 shops were looted in a matter of hours (from which it is reasonable to conclude that the looting was organised) there is very little knowledge or confirmed facts about how it took place. Some respondents pointed fingers at the Taxi Association, with the looting beginning shortly after an uncharacteristic taxi protest at the municipal offices.⁷² Others say the attacks were somehow politically motivated, with social movements taking political advantage and playing ‘sides’ off one another. Others still blame the police, for failing to dispel the rumours of the murdering Muslim. This section provides an account of the xenophobic violence that took place in Grahamstown in 2015, and the actors who were part of the efforts to resolve the violence.

⁷¹ Interview, Black Female Respondent, Community Member, May 18, 2016.

⁷² Although the most recent xenophobic attacks were linked to taxi owners and drivers, taxi violence is said to be an uncommon form of violence in this town. The Taxi Association in Grahamstown does not seem to be very active in protests and other form of organised community action.

The violence that broke out on the 21st October 2015, where around 300 shops owned by foreign nationals were looted in Grahamstown East, came about as a result of a combination of factors including misinformation, pre-existing xenophobic sentiments, resistance to business competition and miscommunication. Shops belonging to Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Ethiopian, Somali, Nigerian, Malawian, Zimbabwean, Egyptian, Senegalese, Sudanese, Palestinian and Chinese foreign nationals were looted and some even burnt.

On the 21st of October, the Taxi Association marched to City Hall to protest against the poor state of the roads in Grahamstown. Shortly after the protest in front of the municipal offices, the gathering rapidly turned into looting, with the targets being shops owned by foreign nationals. The looting in the shops in town was immediately halted by the police and Hi-Tec security. Bathurst Street was immediately secured and shut down by police, with assistance from the Port Elizabeth and East London divisions. Such high security in town ensured that the looting would no longer affect Grahamstown West. The looting in town swiftly moved to the townships, where it allegedly spread like wildfire, starting in Joza, and spreading all across Grahamstown East. It has been said that police presence in Grahamstown East was very weak, as the main areas of concern were the University and the shops in the West. During this time, there was no resistance on the part of the foreign nationals, perhaps as a precautionary measure to avoid escalating the situation, as the looting did not lead to direct attacks on the foreign nationals themselves.⁷³

No one seems to know who initiated the looting, and how people organised as quickly as they did, but every respondent the team asked about this incident emphasised how rapid the action was:

“As for who got the message to the location, that I cannot tell you, but I am telling you all the shops, in every street corner, in every part of this town in terms of the location, were looted in less than two hours. Two hours was long enough...”⁷⁴

⁷³ This is a point many people stressed, in their justification of why they did not perceive this looting as xenophobic violence.

⁷⁴ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Municipal Official, May 20, 2016.

Some people said that it seemed as though a chain message was passing through all of Grahamstown, giving instruction that the looting should start. A pastor said that the message to begin the looting had been circulated via SMS, but there is no proof that this is how this happened.⁷⁵ Others believe that the taxi drivers were the organisers, as this followed directly after they ended their protest at City Hall. There certainly seems to be some motive for the taxi drivers to start the violence, as a foreign national had recently started his own taxi business, which presented direct competition to already existing taxi companies. A foreign national shopkeeper in the township expressed that the manner in which the looting took place led him to believe that it was organised: “Then you can see the group that did that and the group in town were very connected. There was a connection”.⁷⁶

The municipality, working with the SAPS and Hi-Tec, immediately made plans to evacuate the displaced, and were assisted by a stakeholder in the business association, Mr Tariq Hayat (a Grahamstown businessman of Pakistani descent), with a safe place for the foreign nationals.⁷⁷ The temporary accommodation was provided at Stone Crescent Hotel, an establishment owned by Hayat, just 10km out of town.⁷⁸ Here, close to 500 men were hosted, while the women and children were left behind in the townships and town.⁷⁹

In a couple of news reports and first-hand accounts, a few people claim that they saw derogatory statements directed at foreign nationals painted on the taxis, but there is yet to be proof of this, as news reports do not contain any illustrative photographs. Giving an account of what he witnessed, a municipal official said:

⁷⁵ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Member of Ministers Fraternal, June 6, 2016.

⁷⁶ Interview, Somalian Male Respondent, Community Member, May 17, 2016.

⁷⁷ Sue MacLennan, “Displaced Residents: Council Takes Charge”, Grocott’s Mail Online, November 8, 2015 <http://www.grocotts.co.za/content/displacedresidentscounciltakescharge081120150>; Makana Municipality, “Community Members Displace Foreign Nationals”, Press Statement, October 22, 2015

⁷⁸ Loyiso Dyongman and Anele Mjekula, “Mixed Fortunes for Shopkeepers”, Grocott’s Mail Online, November 27, 2015, <http://www.grocotts.co.za/content/mixed-fortunes-shopkeepers-27-11-2015>

⁷⁹ The number displaced foreign nationals suggests that the foreign national population must be larger than 500. This further confirms that the statistics currently available on the demographics in Grahamstown are outdated, and signifies an urgent need for new data to be collected, to create datasets representative of the current state of affairs in the town.

“On the day it happened, the taxi drivers were here, blockading this part of the road, protesting about the bad state of the road, which had nothing to do with the rumour that I am telling you about. But their taxis were painted “stop killing our---” [does not complete what was painted on taxis], which sends a message that the protest has nothing to do with the state of the roads. And on their way out of town, back to the townships, they started looting the shops that are in town.”⁸⁰

A South African female respondent married to a foreign national gives her account of what she saw written on the taxis:

“So as we approach the taxi rank... we saw the messages written on the taxis: 'Foreigners must go', 'amakwerekwere', and the women holding banners, we are selling our bodies to the foreigners, that's why we are married to them. Lots of things were written there: 'bitches' and things like 'we are selling ourselves out' and things like that.”⁸¹

Some police officials and several other members of the Grahamstown community also believe that Ayanda Kota of the UPM, although not necessarily a perpetrator, was an instigator of the violence, or at least had a hand in prolonging it. A police official at the Grahamstown SAPS commented that Kota was always present at meetings where plans were being made to resolve the conflicts, and he would go back and forth between parties, assuming the role of peacemaker, but one with a “hidden agenda”.⁸² However, it should be emphasised that the connections some police officers and municipal workers make between Ayanda Kota and the violence are purely suspicions. They could be a closer reflection of the dysfunctionality and disagreements between the UPM/Masifunde and the municipality/police, rather than a reflection of any facts or insight into the instigators. The chairman of Masifunde was certainly taken aback by the accusations that Masifunde and

⁸⁰ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Municipal Official, May 20, 2016.

⁸¹ Interview, Coloured Female Respondent, Member of Wives of Foreign Nationals Social Movement, May 18, 2016.

⁸² Interview, Indian Female Respondent, Grahamstown Police Official, May 18, 2016.

the UPM may have had any influence on the attacks, and once again attributed these accusations to the poor relations between local authority and the social movements.⁸³

Although the police and the municipality made attempts to find a temporary living arrangement for the displaced people, and engaged in reintegration processes, the view among the foreign nationals seems to be that they had not done enough to protect foreign nationals from the violence to begin with. Some of the foreign national women told news reporters that had the authorities responded to the grievances of the people, the looting would not have happened.⁸⁴ Police had allegedly stood by and watched as people were looting goods from shops.⁸⁵ Some of the foreign national women and South African wives of foreign nationals told reporters that they were mostly helped by the UPM and the local EFF branch, as well as the DA.⁸⁶

During the looting, some people have said that it was mostly youth looting the shops. A Somali shopkeeper gave an account of how his store in Vukani was looted:

"I should not generalise, in fact, yes, it is part of the community, but not everybody. Not everybody. A good percentage of them were youngsters and very few bystanders who see all... My friends were telling me I took that and that from shop. If it wasn't me, someone else would have taken it. In fact, logically, that is true, those few in the townships who were led by hooligans."⁸⁷

The Somali shopkeeper tells us how he stood by and watched people loot his shop, and some of his regular customers came to take goods because they knew if they did not take them, other people would. Another foreign national shopkeeper said he had even called some of his regular customers when the looting started to come fetch goods before they ran

⁸³ Interview. Black Male Respondent, Chairperson at Masifunde Education and Development Trust, May 20, 2016.

⁸⁴ KJ VAN RENSBURG, F MTHONTI & M ERSKOG, "Xenophobia in Grahamstown: 'We are not leaving!'", Daily Maverick, October 29, 2015, <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/20151029xenophobiaingrahamstownwearenotleaving/#.VwZxIvI96Uk>

⁸⁵ PRAAG, "#FeesMustFall", PRAAG.org, October 28, 2015.

⁸⁶ Van Rensburg, Mthonti and Erskog, "Xenophobia in Grahamstown", Daily Maverick, October 29, 2015; Interview, Coloured Female Respondent, Member of Wives of Foreign Nationals Social Movement, May 18, 2016.

⁸⁷ Interview, Somalian Male Respondent, May 17, 2016.

out.⁸⁸ This is probably because being such a small minority in largely homogenous townships, foreign nationals realised that they could not fight back, and were much safer allowing the looting to take its course: “To be small in such a big community...”⁸⁹

In an effort to dispel the perception of the looting as xenophobia, some of the South African respondents (including a police official) emphasised that “it was just looting”. This indicates a possible distortion in people’s definition of xenophobia, because when some of these respondents were asked to explain why then the targets were foreign nationals, they could not make the connection between xenophobic attitudes and the looting.

Underlying Triggers

The xenophobic violence was sparked by several complaints two months prior to the looting, when three bodies, with missing body parts, were found in fields in Grahamstown East. The discovery of the bodies sparked panic over the possible presence of a serial killer. The rumour evolved over time, and the alleged serial killer developed an identity. While at first he started off as an elusive bearded character, news articles from the Grocott’s mail revealed that people believed that it was the most successful foreign national business owner in town who was suspected of being the “serial killer”, using the body parts for *muti* (traditional medicine) to make his business grow. According to this businessman, the rumour in fact implicated his brother in the murder of women, not him. As a result, people became increasingly suspicious of Muslim men, as they were seen to fit the description of the suspected murderer.

However, according to police, these were bodies of people who had died in an open field; one man was said to have died of natural causes, and investigation revealed that their bodies are likely to have been mauled by wild animals and/or dogs. The rumours had been spread without police verification of what had happened, and without any evidence that a person had cut the body parts off. The rumours travelled throughout Grahamstown East via conversation on taxis. In October, while the Fees Must Fall campaign was taking place at

⁸⁸ Interview, Ethiopian Male Respondent, Shopkeeper, May 20, 2016.

⁸⁹ Interview, Somalian Male Respondent, May 17, 2016.

Rhodes University, tensions over this rumour were brewing in the townships. The rumour took on a life of its own, causing significant fear in residents' minds.

The taxi protest provided the catalyst to the xenophobic looting. The protest, along with the reports of hate speech painted on taxis seen on that day, suggests that the Taxi Association may have had an agenda against foreign nationals. Furthermore, a respondent revealed that the foreign national who was implicated in the rumoured *muti* killings had recently started running his own taxi, and as such this was motivation for taxi drivers to try to get rid of the growing competition.⁹⁰ Taxi drivers would also benefit from the absence of the spaza shop owners in the townships. People would need to travel to town more frequently to purchase food and other essentials, as the convenience of a wide range of goods sold by the foreign nationals in their spaza shops would no longer be available. It was also mentioned in some interviews that South African-owned spaza shops were left untouched. People suspected that the owners of these shops may have had a hand in the looting, in an attempt to eliminate competition.

On the other hand, the police's delayed response to the murder rumours allowed for frustration in such communities to fester, and this in turn was manipulated by some individuals that incited hatred towards foreign nationals. It is important to note that although there is no historical precedent that indicates historical tensions and violence towards foreign nationals, some respondents made it very clear that there were pockets (not specific about where) within the communities of the East that do not want foreign nationals around, and who are actually xenophobic. In an interview, the researchers encountered one such individual, who expressed that he believed that foreign nationals were occupying already limited space, and would soon grow to overtake the population of South Africans in Grahamstown, and "take over".⁹¹

Furthermore, there does not seem to be consensus on whether the police informed everyone about the findings of the investigation on the dismembered bodies. While some people say that the police did come to the community to let them know that the bodies had

⁹⁰ Interview, Pakistani Male Respondent, Businessman, May 18, 2016.

⁹¹ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Member of EFF, May 19, 2016.

been mutilated by animals, some still seem to believe and maintain the narrative of the rumour. It is also unclear whether the police gave this feedback to the community before the looting or in its aftermath, as some people have mentioned this as part of the meetings held in an attempt to bring an end to the looting, and finding a way to reintegrate the displaced foreign nationals.⁹²

The looting can be seen as a result of built up frustration and fear. The mistrust and suspicion of foreign nationals, driven by rumours and envy of their success, along with the lack of police communication to dispel false rumours, created a space in which such violence against foreign nationals could occur. This was manipulated by opportunists, people who had business interests, and individuals who generally had xenophobic attitudes.

Response and solidarity

A peace march was held in Grahamstown on 24 April 2015, six months before foreign nationals were attacked. The march, which was co-ordinated by Rhodes University, was reported to be a gesture of respect for people affected by the xenophobic violence that had rocked South Africa over the previous two weeks, and a call to halt it.⁹³

When the attacks on foreign national shops started on 24 October 2015, large numbers of non-nationals were displaced. In the aftermath, there was a need to reintegrate. Rather than taking a combined path, two reintegration processes were initiated. On the one hand, there was a much larger local government and NGO sector engagement. This comprised the municipality, SAPS, the Ministers' Fraternal, formal community structures including NGOs, and international organisations such as the UNHCR and the Red Cross. On the other hand stood a smaller collection of social movements: the UPM, Masifunde, the Wives of Foreign Nationals group (which had emerged at the outbreak of attacks), and the EFF. As a result, there were two groups working, to some degree, against each other, towards the same goal in the reintegration process. The view from the government coalition seems to be that the

⁹² Interview, Black Female Respondent, Community Member, May 18, 2016; Interview, Black Female Respondent, Municipal Worker, May 20, 2016.

⁹³ Sue MacLennan, Hundreds gather for Grahamstown peace march, October 2015, <http://www.grocotts.co.za/content/hundreds-gather-grahamstown-peace-march-24-04-2015>

social movements failed to show a willingness to engage and cooperate with them, and were instead highly critical of the efforts of the police and the municipality.

However, the reintegration process of foreign nationals back into their communities was inclusive and relatively comprehensive. The UNHCR and other external bodies played a significant role, providing their expertise on reintegration. The three-step reintegration plan included stabilisation of the unrest, normalisation, which included addressing misperceptions about foreign nationals, and reintegration of the displaced foreign nationals into the community. The ease with which this has occurred has led some to suggest that the motives behind the lootings was not entirely based on xenophobic sentiments, but rather due to a combination of other interests and immediate needs.

On 23rd October, the municipality convened a stakeholders' meeting to discuss the way forward in dealing with the displacement of foreign nationals, their safety and planning for reintegration. The result was the creation of the Joint Operating Committee that was led by the Grahamstown SAPS. The committee was made up of representatives from various organisations, including the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO), the Department of Social Development, and the defence force.⁹⁴ The SAPS Joint Operation Committee established to respond to this crisis collaborated with the Red Cross, Council of Churches and UNHCR to form a coalition that would embark on creating a reintegration plan for the displaced foreign nationals.

On 27th October, the Ministers' Fraternal held meetings with the public. These meetings were held in Seven Fountains, Fingo and Hoeggenoeg, with the theme 'Stand up for peace in Makana'. The Ministers' Fraternal in collaboration with the SAPS and councillors, sought to create a platform where people could discuss the recent xenophobic violence, and address the concerns of the people that triggered the looting. It is in this forum where the SAPS were given an opportunity to explain the findings of their investigations of the mutilated bodies.⁹⁵ The Anti-Xenophobic Group, which emerged in Grahamstown in response to the

⁹⁴ MacLennan, "Looting", Grocott's Mail Online, October 24, 2015.

⁹⁵ Sue MacLennan and Anele Mjekula, "Churches Lead Move to Reunite Communities", Grocott's Mail Online, October 29, 2015, <http://www.grocotts.co.za/content/newschurchesleadmovereuniteshatteredcommunities29102015>

looting, also took part in the meetings to address misperception about foreign nationals being murderers and using *muti*.⁹⁶

From the first night of the looting, the municipality, SASSA, the DSD and representatives from the business forum provided food for the displaced.⁹⁷ It is unclear how the women were assisted by these organisations, but based on the information received from Masifunde, the UPM and Masifunde housed and fed some women in Masifunde's offices. This helped establish a bond between the two social movements, and the women's movements that emerged during this period, Wives of Foreign Nationals, and Voices of Women of Africa.⁹⁸

In early November, the municipality began working on plans to move foreign nationals out of Stone Crescent and back into the community. This started with their relocation from the hotel to the Joza Multipurpose Centre on 10th November.⁹⁹ According to an Ethiopian respondent, there was a large community meeting held at a stadium in the East to officially invite foreign nationals to return to the communities. Following this, peace agreements were signed as a way of securing the safe return of foreign nationals.¹⁰⁰ These agreements were facilitated by peace committees established by the aforementioned government coalition but it is unclear which organisations were represented in these committees.¹⁰¹

While there was clearly a process of reintegration of foreign nationals that took place in Grahamstown which involved multiple stakeholders, there has been no clear investigation of the causes of the large-scale looting.¹⁰² While some arrests for public disorder were made, the SAPS have not conducted the investigation, nor made any other substantive arrests. Furthermore, the struggle between the two coalitions in this process highlights the depth of the differences between local authorities and the identified opposing social movements.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Sue MacLennan, "Displaced Residents", *Grocott's Mail Online*, November 8, 2015.

⁹⁸ Interview, Black Male Respondent, Chairman of Masifunde Education and Development Trust, May 20, 2016.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Interview, Ethiopian Male Respondent, Shopkeeper, May 20, 2016.

¹⁰¹ Interview, Coloured Male Respondent, Black Sash Grahamstown, May 18, 2016.

¹⁰² Interview, White Male Respondent, Community Member, May 18, 2016.

Figure 12: Anti-Xenophobia Campaign Posters – Masifunde Offices (Bathurst Street)



Source: SaVI, Field Research Notes, May 2016

Socio-Economic Implications of Violence

Although many people had taken part in the looting, it was not long after most shop owners were displaced, that the majority of community members began to realise the inconvenience of now having to go to town for their daily essentials. Most people said that the communities were calling for the foreign nationals to be reintegrated into the community so that they could reopen their shops.

For the foreign nationals, this violence had serious economic implications in that not only did they have to start over when they returned, restocking the shops, but they had also lost two months' worth of income. According to the Grahamstown Business Forum, the looting cost R50 million, and some shops were not able to recover, and did not reopen.¹⁰³ This not only affected stores owned by foreign nationals, but also had a huge impact on a local wholesale shop that served as a creditor to the spaza shop owners. It was forced to shut down, as its clients lost their stock during the looting, and were unable to repay their credit.

During the displacement process, families were also involuntarily separated for quite some time, and the women said that they felt they had been left vulnerable in the absence of

¹⁰³ Interview, White Male Respondent, Grahamstown Business Forum, May 17, 2016; Interview, Pakistani Male Respondent, Businessman, May 19, 2016; Interview, Ethiopian Male Respondent, Shopkeeper, May 20, 2016.

their husbands. The foreign nationals that had been displaced and housed at Stone Crescent for two months were men only. Women were left in the townships and in their homes in town. Feeling frustrated and abandoned, the wives of foreign nationals, who included both South Africans and foreign national women, organised a march to the municipal offices. The purpose of this march was to demand that the municipality intervene, and facilitate the return of their husbands. A representative of this women's group said that they had received assistance from the UPM and Masifunde during this process.¹⁰⁴ This indicates that women and children were not seen as a priority during the evacuation of foreign national men. Women were forced to organise themselves, and make demands on behalf of their husbands, so that their families may be reunited.

The looting certainly created tensions in the relationship between foreign nationals and locals. While the foreign nationals have been reintegrated into most of the areas, it has been mentioned by respondents that there are a couple of areas in which they remain unwelcome. Some shopkeepers were told directly they could not reopen their shops, as some residents did not want them to come back. For instance, an Ethiopian shopkeeper told the research team that he was not able to reopen his shop in Extension 8, because the community refused to allow it, potentially because there were some real xenophobic sentiments in this area.¹⁰⁵

Foreign nationals appeared to be more cautious when dealing with locals during Phase II of research, but continued to interact with South Africans as they did before. They feel they were not fully part of the community, and in some instances, were regularly reminded by community members that they were not South African. Foreign nationals seem to perceive this as a way that South Africans seek to 'keep them in their place'. This certainly created outsiders, because despite living in the same neighbourhoods, and occupying the same spaces as South Africans, the verbal daily reminders, though not physically violent, ensured that foreign nationals always feel like outsiders. The looting of foreign national shops possibly solidified this feeling of not belonging, or South Africa not fully being home. A

¹⁰⁴ Interview, Coloured Female Respondent, Member of Wives of Foreign Nationals Social Movement, May 18, 2016.

¹⁰⁵ Interview, Ethiopian Male Respondent, Shopkeeper, May 20, 2016.

foreign national shared his experience of being made to feel like he does not belong in South Africa:

"...there is that fear of the unknown. I am not saying 24/7 there is a fight or this thing going on, but people call me saying you are a foreigner, but there is a fear of what will happen next time. It can be tomorrow, tonight somebody coming for you, there is that fear... Even if a foreigner stays here for the next 25 years, you will still have that stigma of being a foreigner. People look at you in a different way than the other population.... Yes, when you come to town nobody will bother that much about you, but in the townships, you will feel you are very different..."¹⁰⁶

This excerpt reveals that there is a feeling among foreign nationals that they are always in some kind of danger, and that at any moment, they may be under attack again.

VII. Conclusion

The narrative of East and West throughout this report is reflective of how people in Grahamstown see their town. Unfortunately, what this means is that the coloured community of the North is often forgotten in narratives about Grahamstown, and perhaps this is the fate of the coloured community as the 'buffer' community. The differences and tensions between town and the townships are reflected in every aspect of life: politics, religion, social welfare, health, and the economy.

Grahamstown faces many socioeconomic problems, the biggest being unemployment, particularly in Grahamstown East. This problem has become divisive, as it arguably contributes to anger, frustration and crime, particularly among young men. The general lack of exemplary leadership in the local government, and the perception that certain parts of town are better governed, exacerbates such divisions. This has contributed to tensions

¹⁰⁶ Interview, Somali Male Respondent, Community Member, May 17, 2016.

between civil society and government, and in particular, the friction between the local municipality and UPM/Masifunde.

Exclusion has not only been directed at foreign nationals, but has also affected South Africans from other parts of the Eastern Cape and South Africa. They are generally met with suspicion because they are seen to distance themselves from the existing community, and are perceived to treat Grahamstown primarily as a place to generate an income and then leave.

Foreign nationals perceive 'town' to not only be safer, but more tolerant towards them, and for this reason, prefer town to the townships. However, they continue to live and own shops in the townships because the high rental in town excludes them from being able to live there, and there is more demand for goods in the townships, due to the absence of malls or shopping centres. Although not violent, the othering language used towards them, the reminders that they do not belong, and the general lack of their involvement in their communities, has contributed to making foreign nationals relative outsiders within Grahamstown.

The collective violence that targeted foreign nationals revealed that certain groups or individuals are perceived to have the ability to mobilise collective community action and protest. However, these perceptions are based on the suspicions of local authorities. While the Taxi Association may not exercise this power often, the alleged connection between their strike and the looting suggests that they have considerable potential to mobilise collective violence. While the looting reveals much about the absence of community cohesion between South Africans and foreign nationals, and how this has bred mistrust and misunderstanding, it also highlights the value of communication and accurate information. The manner in which the police engaged with the rumours that sparked the violence was problematic. Although the looting in 2015 was the first large-scale xenophobic incident Grahamstown has ever experienced, there is clearly a pre-existing set of attitudes and prejudices against foreign nationals. The lack of community cohesion between locals and foreign nationals highlights this and further perpetuates these attitudes.



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