



XENOPHOBIA AND OUTSIDER EXCLUSION

Addressing Frail Social Cohesion in
South Africa's Diverse Communities

Orange Farm Case Study
October 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

This case study presents findings of a research conducted in May 2016 and in May 2017 by the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) in Orange Farm, City of Johannesburg, Gauteng Province. Part of parallel research conducted in 15 other South African communities, this study aims to document and explain the status of social cohesion across the country. More specifically, it aims to identify the causes of group-based conflicts, communal violence, and patterns of violent exclusion. Through these efforts, the research can contribute to developing more effective intervention programmes by relevant stakeholders together with members of the community to promote social cohesion and peaceful cohabitation.

The findings presented here are informed by qualitative individual interviews and focus group discussions with residents and relevant key informants conducted between 16 and 20 May 2016 as well as between 2 and 8 May 2017. The research process involved conducting qualitative interviews with relevant stakeholders. A team of four ACMS researchers spent five days in the area and conducted a total of 31 individual interviews and three focus group discussions. Participants included South Africans and foreign residents as well as key informants including representatives of the local authority, community leaders, faith-based and community based organisations. We rely on secondary literature to provide additional background and insight. Recognising that perceptions drive social interactions and mobilisation as much as facts¹, our approach documents and where possible distinguishes between the two.

1.2. Primary findings and conclusions

Orange Farm is a township beset with socio-economic and political challenges which together foster violence while decreasing residents' quality of life. The township is also fraught with serious social cohesion challenges summarised as follows:

1. *Socio-economic challenges and hardships:* Many of the Orange Farm residents face significant socio-economic challenges ranging from unemployment, poverty, poor service delivery, violence and crime. Socio-economic hardships are a serious obstacle to social cohesion because they lead to other social ills that have the potential to fray the social fabric;
2. *Outsiders' limited social and institutional interactions:* South African citizens treat foreign nationals differently based on physical appearance, mastery of local languages, shared cultures, and religion. Those more similar to locals integrate more easily and therefore have a higher level of social and institutional interactions. This contrasts with the *Amakula* (or foreign nationals of Somali, Ethiopian and

¹ See for example Misago, J. P. (2011). "Disorder in a Changing Society: Authority and the Micro-Politics of Violence" in Landau, L. B. (ed.) *Exorcising the Demon Within: Xenophobia, Violence, and Statecraft in Contemporary South Africa*. Wits University Press

Pakistani origin) who have remarkably limited social interactions with local residents and institutions;

3. *Negative perceptions and attitudes towards outsiders:* Locals generally perceive foreign nationals as threatening their lives and livelihoods. Locals also accuse foreign nationals of excluding themselves from local activities and not showing solidarity with local politics and challenges. These perceptions are not only a symptom of strained social relations but also an obstacle to building social cohesion as they are often mobilised for anti-outsider violence;
4. *Lack of trust in authorities and lack of non-violent conflict resolution mechanisms:* There is a widespread distrust in structures of authority in Orange Farm. In most cases, the approach to conflict resolution is violent as residents believe the government cares little about them and only pays attention when they loot, burn property, or kill immigrants. Violence as a conflict resolution mechanism is a major challenge to social cohesion as it undermines the rule of law and due process, and leads to anti-outsider violent exclusion;
5. *Xenophobic violence:* Dating back from 2008, Orange Farm has repeatedly experienced violence against foreign nationals. The results include injury, death, property destruction and displacement. The presence of local leaders and civic organisations that are invested in eradicating xenophobic violence has contributed to the lower incidence of such violence in Orange Farm and has mitigated its impact when prevention was not possible;
6. *Local politics as trigger of violence against foreigners:* Local politics trigger violence against outsiders when local political players and other influential groups such local business owners take advantage of service delivery protests to instigate such violence (hiring local gangs and drug addicts) to claim or consolidate their power; to attract relevant authorities' attention to local socio-economic grievances or get rid of business competition the presence of foreign nationals represents;
7. *Uncertain future interactions:* Both local and foreign nationals could not express certainty in non-violent future interactions. Some community leaders expressed hope for peaceful interactions but were uncertain when violence would end. Foreign victims of violence were less confident about future interactions. Failure by relevant institutions to address service delivery issues is seen by some community leaders as a direct cause of violence now and in the future. The perceived impunity perpetrators enjoy means that they remain in the community and their presence increases the uncertainty and fear among foreign nationals that they may strike again.

Following this introduction the report proceeds through three main sections. The first offers background information in terms of socio-economic data on the research site. The second includes detailed findings. The final and concluding section summarises these core findings and implications.

2. BACKGROUND

Orange Farm is a township located in Region G on the southern edge of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality in Gauteng Province. The Township is a peri-urban settlement with a mixture of RDP houses and shacks and it is situated approximately 55 km south of Johannesburg. It was established in 1989 when displaced people from Mshenguville in Soweto, Alexandra, Evaton, and other areas started putting up galvanized iron shacks in the area.²

Image 1: Map of Orange Farm and Surrounding Areas



The research site falls within Ward 4 of the City of Johannesburg. In 2011 the population of Ward 4 was 41,617 individuals living in 11,589 households. The following table describes the sociodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Ward 4, based on information from the 2011 South Africa Census and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).

² http://www.alhdc.org.za/static_content/?p=1342

Table 1: Socio-economic data of Orange Farm; Ward 4, City of Johannesburg

Variables	Characteristics
Sociodemographic	
Total population	41 617
Number of households	11 589
Age	40% of the population is aged between 10 -29 years; 36% is under the age of 18.
Gender	51% of the population is female; 48% is male.
Linguistic Diversity	48% of the population mostly speaks IsiZulu at home; 25% mostly speaks Sesotho; 8% mostly speaks IsiXhosa at home.
Ethnic Diversity	Over 99% of the population is Black African.
Migration	94% of the population was born in SA; 68% was born in Gauteng; 5% was born outside SA.
Voter Turnout	Of the 18 299 registered voters, 54% voted in the 2016 municipal elections
Voting Patterns	80% voted for the African National Congress (ANC); 8% voted for the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF); 7% voted for the Democratic Alliance (DA).
Socioeconomic	
Employment	39% of the population of workers over the age of 15 is unemployed or not economically active.
Income Levels	24% of households have an annual income of R0; 16% have an income between R10 000-20 000; 21% of households have incomes between R20 000 - 40 000; 15% of households have an annual income of R40 000 -75 000.
Poverty Rate	38% of households have an annual income of below R9 600.
Education Levels	68% completed Grade 9 or higher
Household (HH)Types	34% of households are shacks/informal dwellings; 62% are classified as houses
Head of HH	39% of households are headed by women; 61% are headed by men.
Service Provision	
Water	97% of the population receives water from a regional/local service provider.
Electricity	3% of households have electricity for some cooking, heating or lighting; 97% of households have electricity for all three; 0.5% have no electricity.
Flush Toilet	44% of the population have access to a flush toilet either with a septic tank or connected to sewerage system.

Refuse Disposal	98% of the population has access to regular refuse removal by a local authority or private company.
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3. FINDINGS

3.1. Nature of Community and Social Interactions

Orange Farm hosts a heterogeneous population made up of mixed ethnic groups of South Africans from all nine South Africa's provinces. The majority of the South African local residents (hereinafter referred to as 'locals') are from Gauteng, Limpopo, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu Natal. Orange Farm also hosts a significant number of foreign nationals including Mozambicans, Zimbabweans, Malawians, Zambians, Basotho, Swazis, Somalis, Ethiopians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis. Although a variety of languages are spoken, Zulu and Sotho are the dominant languages in the area. Other languages include English, Shangaan/Tsonga, Sepedi, Venda, Shona, and Ndebele. One community leader explained:

In Orange Farm languages like Zulu, Tswana, Sotho, the Venda were also here, the Shangaani were also here, yes, and the Pedi, especially where we lived. The majority language is Zulu because it is easy to speak even for those who may not be Zulu, they can also speak Sotho. So those are the leading languages.³

Another local respondent observed about the Orange Farm population composition: "If you look at Orange Farm, it is on the southern side of Johannesburg, there were people from Mozambique, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe, and those who came later were people from Somalia and Bangladesh"⁴. Other respondents felt that the lower cost of living in Orange Farm is responsible for attracting most residents. According to one of them, "Most people ran away from paying high rentals in eGoli, and saw that staying in the location saves a lot of money."⁵

Christianity is the dominant religion in Orange Farm, followed by Islam which is mainly practised by foreign shop owners. The primary spaces of social interaction include community centres; sporting activities; self-help groups for youth, men and women; funeral societies; stokvels; churches; political party meetings; work and business places. Many residents consider sport to be their main social activity and see it as playing a pivotal role not only in unifying the community but also as a way to raise awareness against crime. A young South African male and youth leader stated: "We had sports against crime where we had the Bangladesh, Pakistani and others..."⁶

The community demonstrates collective efficacy (i.e., when community members work together to solve common problems), whenever community members have to mobilise and collectively i) protest to demand something (e.g., service delivery); ii) protest against something (e.g., the unwanted leadership of the Ward 4 Councillor in the area); and iii) solve common problems such as crime and youth drug abuse.

³Interview with community leader, Ward 4, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁴Interview with community leader, Ward 5, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁵Interview with local resident, Ward 4, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

⁶Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

3.2. Profile of Outsiders

As indicated above, Orange Farm's local residents generally consider outsiders to be foreign nationals coming from Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Somalia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Residents migrating from other provinces in South Africa are considered insiders. However, the outsiders and insiders distinction is not as clear cut in Orange Farm as it may be elsewhere. For instance, some locals consider the Basotho and the Swazi 'insiders', while other Africans from the SADC region are also relatively considered 'insiders' although not entirely (as discussed later in this report). In the insider/outsider discourse it is the foreign shopkeepers from Somalia, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Ethiopia mainly referred to as *Amakula* (Indians), who are consistently and unanimously considered as 'outsiders'. Interviews with locals revealed the following reasoning and sentiments towards foreigners:

...Zimbabweans or the Sothos or those from Mozambique. They have been here for long and they are now a part of the community; they have families here and their children are our children, they have married our sisters. Even if there can be these statements about oh, that Shangaani, but the fact remains they are now a part of those who dwell here. But the Somalis got here and isolated themselves; they lived their own lives between their shops and their prayer place.⁷

3.2.1 Outsiders' social interactions and public participation

There are varying degrees of social interactions between insiders and outsiders. Foreign nationals from the SADC region have the most prevalent interactions with insiders through sporting activities, self-help groups, funeral societies, stokvels, taverns, shebeens and public meetings, while foreign shop owners (*Amakula*) have limited interactions with the community which mainly consist of business transactions. A community leader acknowledged the level of interactions between foreign nationals and locals as follows:

...like the ones from Mozambique and Zimbabwe, they also participate in our activities. For example when we went to deal with the drug issue, they also joined us, they were there. And then the other ones the challenge is that they don't understand our languages so when we call for public meetings they don't see the point to attend because they will hear nothing. The ones from Mozambique can understand and participate and give their input and things are solved as a collective.⁸

Orange Farm residents have experimented with activities to help the community socialise while solving its problems. As one community leader pointed out: "There are street committees, social movements, community based organisations, women's groups etc. They all have contributions regarding how this community functions. There are many organised structures."⁹ A youth leader described how social interactions are also organised for particular purposes: "As the youth desk, we are broad; there is nothing

⁷ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁸ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁹ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

we do not do. We have sports against crime, poem against crime, motivation against crime, events against crime.”¹⁰

As indicated earlier, to a certain degree locals consider foreign nationals from the SADC region to be insiders. They are therefore afforded greater opportunities to participate in community activities. When asked about this group, a local youth leader responded: “We can tell that this one is from here at home and this one is not from home but it is not a problem. Like I said, each block has a block meeting, and they come to block meetings. And we quickly get used to such people; we will know that’s miss so and so who sells cakes.”¹¹ However, there are limited interactions among local community members and foreign shop keepers of Somali, Bangladeshi, Ethiopian, and Pakistani origin. A focus group member stated: “The ones from Pakistan and Somalia are however difficult to understand because they spend much of their times in their shops and they do not seem to have a social life. They do not participate in any community activities and we only interact with them when we go to their shops.”¹²

This limited nature of social interactions seems to raise suspicions and consequently leads to negative perceptions. One youth leader recounted:

As I said earlier sister, I was new here...when I arrived to join my grandmother, but I did not isolate myself I moved around seeing what’s going on...they must come together and meet with us since they found us here. I can say this, they should not remain sitting in their containers, they don’t have to all come, and they can send one delegate. There those boys who sit near the containers when shit happens they start with taking the Indians’ food and stuff.¹³

The above respondent and several others believe in links between limited interactions among groups and a high level of suspicions which may eventually lead to violence and looting of foreign owned businesses. Some of the community members however also indicated that the foreign shop owners do take part in social activities like drinking, but when they do they use an exclusive club which only the shop owners are allowed access to. This is perceived by locals as a display of superiority.

Community members and their leaders are well aware of the negative consequences limited social interactions have in terms of social cohesion in the township. Indeed, respondents indicated that there are efforts by community leaders aimed at increasing social interactions between foreign shop owners and locals. Community leaders are deliberately trying to increase social interactions through sport, which they perceive as a unifying activity. A youth leader responsible for setting up such sporting activities illustrated:

We had sports against crime where we had the Bangladeshi, Pakistani and others. We said we would disqualify any team that had South Africans only; each team must have 3 or 4 foreigners. As youth, we did not allow any team with South Africans only into our tournaments. And the

¹⁰ Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

¹¹ Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

¹² Focus group discussion, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

¹³ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

tournament comes with money so when teams are disqualified the community start holding meetings...¹⁴

Other sources of limited social interactions between foreign shop owners and local residents happen through intermarriages usually between Ethiopians, Bangladeshis, and local women. A number of Ethiopian shop owners are also Christian and attend local churches.

3.2.2 Interactions with institutions of authority

Most respondents, both local and foreign, expressed their lack of trust and hesitancy in dealing with certain institutions of authority, particularly the police and certain council officers. As discussed later, both institutions are widely accused of corruption, nepotism, and criminal activities. In addition to a generalised lack of trust, foreign nationals indicated that certain institutions of authority like the police extort bribes from them and have particularly discriminatory and sometimes violent behaviours towards them. A Zimbabwean shop owner recollected:

In some of the offices you will be threatened because you are from Zimbabwe...you speak to people and they start referring to foreigners and you get hurt and whatever you came to do is derailed. Or they will say something bad about foreigners; you are a human being you feel they mean you or your people, but we didn't bring this on ourselves it is the situation [back home].¹⁵

A Malawian respondent who was beaten up by a local gang, supposedly for failing to speak *tsotsi tal* (local slang), did not report the incident to the police. When asked for his reason of failing to report his brutal beating, he said, "What can I say, you are a foreign guy in a foreign land, so there are policemen who share the same ideals with those guys who are...[beating you up]."¹⁶ Foreign nationals also reported random searches by police, which lead to demand for bribes if one lacks appropriate documentation. One foreign national narrated his encounter with the local police: "So these policemen they stopped me and asked for my documentation. So I told them my documentation right now I don't have them but I am in the process of getting them so they said they would take me to the station and then they asked how much money I had..."¹⁷ He said this conversation took place while the police drove around with him in their vehicle. They eventually picked up another 'suspicious' looking man: "They had picked up another guy from Mozambique, and he said he had a passport but his days to be here had expired, so they took him to his place they asked for money and then after they turned on him and locked him up. It happens a lot, they do that."¹⁸

Foreign nationals, particularly business owners, interact most with community leaders from groups like the CPF, street committees, and the police as the main institutions of leadership and authority. However,

¹⁴Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

¹⁵ Interview with Zimbabwean business owner, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

¹⁶ Interview with Malawian national, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

¹⁷ Interview with foreign national, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

¹⁸ Interview with foreign national, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

foreign shop owners are reluctant to deal with the police even when attacked. A local community leader observed that they do not always report all incidents of violence perpetrated towards them. A local youth leader observed that, “Language barrier could also be the other reason the shop owners fail to come and explain and open a case.”¹⁹ Yet the foreign shop owners say the police extort bribes from them and are indifferent to suffering. As a result, they do not see the point in reporting some of the attacks and robberies they experience. One tuck shop owner said about the police:

They do not help us in anyway, Somalis and the people who are like them including Ethiopians and Bangladeshis. I do not know about the other people but this is how they treat us. I even remember a day when my money in my pocket has been taken out by the Metro police. They told me that if I speak, they will shoot me. They do more harm to us than the others do to us. I like the ordinary local people more than I like the police.²⁰

Foreign shop owners relate more to community leaders like the CPF and street committees. However, the relationship between foreign shop owners and local leaders is a delicate one largely mediated by exchange. As one youth leader reflected:

If they can come out when they hear a whistle in the community, if there is a house burning, we are not saying we want their money, but they could run with a bucket of water to help put out the fire. So the people will say ‘my friend’ is a person or has *Ubuntu*, Thokozani’s place was burning and he ran with a bucket. Not that when things are happening their shops are open and business as usual, and if a child dies in the community they could close their shop in respect. This is why sometimes when the Nyaope boys loot them we sometimes just fold our hands.²¹

There is therefore an expectation that foreign business owners should make certain contributions to the community in exchange for their safety and protection. An elder community leader said, “we now ask them to provide water for events.”²² Another one recounted, “So we said to them, let us work together, be part of the community and also put local people in your shops because they are able to identify local criminals and they can be traced.”²³ Another prominent community leader similarly noted, “We know that the Pakistanis are good cricketers. They can arrange cricket games and training sessions that will also benefit other members of this community. We can learn from them and they can also learn from us.”²⁴

In sum, foreign nationals in Orange Farm have limited social interactions with local residents as well as with local institutions of authority, leadership, and service. This limited nature of social and institutional interactions leads to mutual suspicion and negative perceptions between locals and foreign nationals and does not augur well for social cohesion in the township.

¹⁹ Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

²⁰ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

²¹ Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

²² Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

²³ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

²⁴ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

3.2.3 Outsiders' main livelihood activities

Respondents indicate that many foreign nationals in Orange Farm are self-employed within the informal economy and others do professional and skilled work in and outside of Orange Farm. Some survive on casual labour while those with skills and documentation have formal jobs. Foreign nationals do jobs including running wholesale shops, tuck shops, selling wares on the street, collecting and selling recyclable plastics and scrap metal, hairdressing, domestic work, teaching, electricians, plumbing and other general work. In one local's words, "The immigrant people are self-employed. Some are sitting outside selling vegetables and some go and work in the town. They generate their livelihoods on their own...people from these countries dominate small businesses and run shops."²⁵

Although foreign nationals from Zimbabwe and Mozambique run a few tuck shops, the Somalis, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Ethiopian nationals dominate the area of trade. This group of foreign nationals (generally referred to as *Amakula*) mainly run small tuck shops but some of them have medium sized wholesale shops which supply tuck shops and other shop owners with bulk goods. One of the wholesale shop owners explained that their shops also supply goods to foreign nationals who work as street vendors or petty traders:

You see in the morning many people coming to you and buying something and resell it. Some sell in front of schools, some sell it in front of their houses, some sell it street sides. Most of the people neighboring us support their livelihood with this type of activities. The majority of them are the foreign nationals, all the groups are involved but the Zimbabweans and Mozambicans are the main ones. There are also Congolese people involved. The role of Mozambicans can never be overlooked in this petty trade.²⁶

Although foreign nationals take on a wide variety of jobs and livelihood activities, different nationalities are also identified with specific types of work. For instance, Amakula dominate the supply of household goods. Zimbabweans on the other hand are versatile and occupy both the informal and formal jobs. Respondents indicated that Zimbabweans occupy a number of teaching and medical professions. One shopkeeper said: "I heard that in the health sector, the number of Zimbabweans involved is high due to their high skills and the demand for it as well as their willingness to be paid less than the South Africans."²⁷ Respondents indicated a small presence of Nigerians in Orange Farm and this group is associated with the selling and repairing of electronic goods. A focus group discussion revealed that:

[Nigerians'] interest is mostly in gadgets, cell phones, laptops, they know how to fix those things. In terms of IT, and hacking and forging things like for instance if I buy a Samsung cell phone and

²⁵ Interview with Somali shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

²⁶ Interview with Foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

²⁷ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

everything to do with security is lost and it is sold to a Nigerian; that Nigerian is able to refresh or reboot that phone and wipe out everything that makes it mine.²⁸

Mozambicans and Malawians mostly occupy informal jobs such as buying and selling of foodstuffs in small quantities, as well as hairdressing and bricklaying among other types of work. There is a high rate of unemployment in Orange Farm and foreign nationals are not immune to unemployment. In fact the high popularity of the informal economy as a livelihood activity for many of the township residents is an indication of the lack of employment opportunities in and around Orange Farm. One respondent for example indicated: “The majority of people here do not work. The ones who are working, who happen to be a few are working as domestic workers, some people are informal traders and they are selling different things on the streets like vegetables and clothes”.²⁹

Although foreign nationals are also affected by unemployment and take part in low wage work such as buying and selling of scrap metals and recyclables, locals generally consider them to be doing economically better. Locals also widely hold a belief that foreign nationals are better trained and well experienced compared to them. One local respondent indicated that, “the difference is that most of the people from other countries they are making their own hand work but if you can check people from South Africa they don’t use their hands, I can say that we do not have that experience.”³⁰ As a result of their perceived better training and experience foreign nationals are accused of stealing jobs and livelihoods. Respondents indicated that although foreign nationals from the SADC region have been assimilated to a large extent, the perception that they steal jobs is one that still creates a major division between them and locals.

3.2.4 Community perceptions about outsiders

According to respondents, the majority of Orange Farm residents have strong negative perceptions and attitudes towards foreign nationals living in their midst. Their resentment is due to various reasons which include their perceived arrogance and self-exclusion, alleged shooting of children, stealing of resources and opportunities as well as taking part in marriages of convenience with local women in order to gain documentation.

Arrogance and self-exclusion

There is a strong sense among locals that foreign shop owners only want to take from the communities they operate in and are unwilling to give back or participate in any way. Locals consequently do not like *Amakula* whom they perceive as isolating themselves socially, not seeing themselves as Black, of being hostile and arrogant, and of lacking English language proficiency which leads to misunderstandings. As business owners, their relationship with the community is only transactional, while they want communities’

²⁸ Focus group discussion, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

²⁹ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

³⁰ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 17 May 201

money, locals believe they do not respect community members or have any desire to be part of the community. These sentiments were expressed by both local residents and community leaders. One youth leader lamented that: “They are rough, sister, rough, they don’t know how to talk to people the Pakistani and the Somalis, when you go to buy in their shops, they don’t know how to speak to people and they might offend some people since they also speak a language these people cannot understand.”³¹ Locals also accuse shop owners of refusing to hire local youth to work in their businesses. Community leaders indicated that residents are resistant to this behaviour and sometimes this resistance is demonstrated by violent attacks and dispossession of foreign shops. One respondent said, “The locals were saying when they were protesting, the shops of foreign nationals were operating. In other words, the locals were saying that these people [foreigners] were not showing solidarity with them.”³²

Interviews with foreign shop owners revealed that the shopkeepers avoid going into the settlement as a result of a high rate of muggings they experience each time they attempt to walk through or drive through with their wares. Local thieves and drug users believe that shop owners always carry valuables, and this makes them a target. A Somali shopkeeper observed:

The Bangladeshis are the main ones who walk in the township and they always come back to us crying saying that I was robbed today of my stock, of this and of that. They mostly use local person who go with them and they give that person some money. That person will recognize who robbed this person...hence if a South African walks in the township with you, they will not rob you. You will be safe.³³

Although most foreign shop owners from Ethiopia and Somalia refer to themselves as Africans, some respondents from this group refer to locals as Blacks thereby perpetuating the idea that they themselves do not identify as black. One shop owner said of his counterparts: “Ethiopians and the Somalis are so proud people and they think that they are brighter, clever and more hardworking than the people they came to in the townships.”³⁴ Some shopkeepers indicated that in addition to language, culture and religion also play a role in their self-exclusion from local activities. One respondent also expressed that lack of mingling is as a result of lack of trust relationships caused by the high incidence of robberies against foreign shops. This lack of trust was particularly evident in his perception that all high school children are gangsters:

Students participate in robbery activities particularly when the student is in high school level. The robbery and crime activities are high when the school is closed. All the high school children are gangsters. We become extra vigilant when the schools are closed. That is when the robberies are at their peak.³⁵

³¹ Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

³² Interview with local community leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

³³ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

³⁴ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

³⁵ Interview with Somali shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

Shop owner violence against locals

One of the widely held perceptions by locals is that shop owners are trigger happy and will not hesitate to kill people who steal from their shops even if these people may be school children. Most incidents of violence and looting of foreign shops are preceded by the rumour that a foreign shop owner shot a school child. Although the shooting of a child only happened once as confirmed by the police, a local respondent said: “they have tendencies of shooting people during protests and people are beginning to be more hostile.”³⁶ Community leaders believe that this rumour originated with the local shop owners battling for business and failing to compete with foreign shopkeepers. This rumour has proved to be effective in creating tension between local residents and foreign shop owners.

Stealing resources and opportunities

Local residents consider foreign nationals such as Zimbabweans and Nigerians to be more educated and skilled and therefore both ‘steal’ jobs. This occurs because they are preferred by employers or because they accept lower wages. According to respondents, these perceptions are held by locals who view themselves as victims of a lack of education and skills training. One local resident observed: “The most skilled people here are foreign nationals. You see our education system is not up to standard, they teach you how to solve for X for twelve years and when you come out you are useless.”³⁷ The perception that foreigners are more equipped for the job market generates resentment among the local people.

Foreign nationals are aware of such accusations and resentment as one of them narrated:

Sometimes you hear someone talking say, eish, this place is now full of these ‘things’, they are finishing our jobs they should go back where they belong. They may not address you directly but everyone knows I am from Zimbabwe. So you will get those who will agree with that person and those who will intervene.³⁸

Most respondents felt that any job or opportunity a foreign national may have is a direct disenfranchisement of a local resident. A focus group discussion revealed this perception: “they come from their country coming in our country so if that person is going to get a job it means there is one South African who will never get a job because he took that job.”³⁹ Locals also expressed their unwillingness to work for low wages and to engage in livelihood activities they believe are beneath them such as selling food stuffs and clothes along the roadsides. One youth leader indicated that: “So we have somewhere where we are lacking, especially us the youth, I find it difficult to stand in the street selling tomatoes.”⁴⁰

³⁶ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

³⁷ Interview with unemployed local resident, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

³⁸ Interview with Zimbabwean Shop Owner, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

³⁹ Focus group discussion, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁴⁰ Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

Similarly, many locals believe that Amakula outcompete and undermine local businesses through low prices. Some local residents believe that foreign shop owners are exempt from paying tax⁴¹ and this leads to an unfair and competitive advantage. In a focus group discussion with the youth, one respondent said “In terms of running a tuckshop and buying stock, I have heard this, I haven’t actually witnessed it, they do not pay tax.”⁴² Local youth also believe that foreign shop owners have high business acumen due to training they receive in their own countries.

Some respondents also accused foreigners of resources outflow. They indicated that foreign nationals who carry out business in South Africa send all the money they earn to their countries of origin instead of investing it in the local economy and contributing to the country and local resource base. One respondent linked the presence of foreigners to a perceived depletion of the South African Rand: “to add on that these people are not welcome here because they come here and work, save the money in the bank and take it with when they go home; that’s why our currency is going down.”⁴³

Marriages of convenience

According to respondents, local residents believe and resent the fact that most of the increasing number of marriages between foreign men and local women are transactional. Most of these marriages are motivated by the fact that local women need money and foreign men need identity documents. Accusations of transactional relationships seem to be directed mainly at Amakula and Nigerian men. A foreign shop owner observed the existence of marriages between Amakula and local women: “People from Bangladesh got married to the local women; they live among the local community with their local wives and families. I know seven or eight people who are married to the local women.”⁴⁴ A local community worker indicated that inter-marriages between local women and Amakula are on the rise and are motivated by money, she said:

They [inter-marriages] do happen a lot, because you can see at Home Affairs when they go in. Like yesterday there was a Somali guy and a Xhosa girl, you can tell from her attire that she is a Xhosa girl. She was dressed like a brand new bride...they say these foreigners they were marrying these girls from South Africa. They were being paid, something like R3000 or R5000. The guy will pay her like R5000 because they want like the citizenship of South Africa. After 5 years then he will be a South African.⁴⁵

Another local responded similarly explained: “There seems to be conflict and misunderstanding in the community, the others say they take our wives, others say they like it...they say you marry me for a certain

⁴¹It is important to note that all informal traders and business owners (local or foreign) do not pay tax in Johannesburg

⁴² Focus group discussion, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁴³ Focus group discussion, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁴⁴ Interview with a foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁴⁵ Interview with community worker, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

duration and I give you money, after that thing you and me we are done.”⁴⁶

Involvement in illegal activities

Some respondents indicated that foreign nationals also participate in illegal activities such as robberies and drugs. Drug abuse is one of the most prevalent problems among the youth in Orange Farm and the perception among youth is that foreign nationals are responsible for supplying illegal drugs. A youth leader indicated: “The Orange Farm youth also think that the foreigners are the one responsible for bringing drugs into South Africa.”⁴⁷ However, one of the community leaders who led the biggest drug bust in Orange Farm in 2007 indicated that there was no proof of the involvement of foreign nationals as all the drug users who were caught were locals. Yet he did not rule out the involvement of foreign nationals, “On this issue of drugs we are not quite sure if they are involved because what we are getting are end-users, there were only a few drug dealers we saw actually, from the local people not from foreigners.”⁴⁸

The presence of foreign nationals in Orange Farm is linked to the loss of economic and livelihood opportunities among locals and to social ills such as crime, drugs, and transactional marriages. As a result the majority of Orange Farm residents have strong negative perceptions and attitudes towards foreign nationals living in their midst.

3.3. Livelihoods and Socio-economic Conditions

Unemployment, poverty and poor service delivery are the main challenges which the residents of Orange Farm blame for high rates of crime, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, violent attacks on foreign-owned businesses and corruption. According to some respondents almost 90% of the population are unemployed and most survive on government grants, general jobs and informal trading. Residents also complain of uneven development in the area and blame incompetent and corrupt local government officials for this; as a result the community of Orange Farm is characterised by frequent service delivery protests. Some of the services residents complain about include the absence of a hospital, lack of tarred roads, lack of inside toilets, lack of title deeds for their RDP houses and inconsistent supply of electricity and water.

Orange Farm started off as an informal settlement and over the past 20 years the government has been building RDP houses for people who were allocated stands. The building of houses has however taken a long time with some people only getting their houses in 2015. The people who have spent the last 20 years on the waiting list for RDP houses were forced to build makeshift dwelling places on their allocated stands. As a result the area has a remarkable mixture of new and old RDP houses, privately built well developed

⁴⁶ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁴⁷ Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁴⁸ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

houses as well as shacks. Some residents have access to in-door water and electricity and some do not. Some residents with in-door toilets in the government built houses also complain that the toilets and sinks are sub-standard and cause leakages which forces them to use outside toilets.

Access to water and electricity is not consistent and the cost is also highly contested between the residents and the local municipality. While there is a well-developed highway which cuts across Orange Farm and connects it to nearby businesses and neighbourhoods, most roads within the settlement are not yet tarred. During the rainy season the roads are impenetrable due to large puddles of mud. These factors together contribute to the residents' perception that development is uneven. One community member commented on development in Orange Farm in the following words:

This community is not like Randburg. Comparing these two locations, you can clearly see the inequality of development. You can't even compare Orange Farm with Sandton. The development done for us in Orange Farm is substandard, a development meant for poor blacks. There is development for blacks and development for whites. This was the case during the apartheid period. Today, we have development for the rich and development for the poor.⁴⁹

Another local resident shared similar views: "There are no proper areas for recreation facilities here, our kids do not even have good places where they can play. The dumping sites are not being attended to like they used to some years back. The roads are not being maintained and there are malfunctioning sewer systems."⁵⁰ The view that development is uneven and unfair causes disgruntlement among local residents. A local leader concurred with other interviewees and said:

Yes we have the Golden Highway passing near Driesik 3, but if you go inside you will see that there is no development. The improvements are usually done along the highway so that the place may look developed to passersby. When the rich folks come here, they go to Extension 2 and go through the mall this is why those places look a bit better, but when you come to our side, it is a disaster.⁵¹

Unfinished development projects work together to compound the problems in the area. A local community leader said: "Another thing in terms of our challenges, the street names and house numbers are lacking so ambulances get delayed. Also when it rains it's a challenge to access some roads you will also see with Pick-it-Up trucks, when it really rains it cannot go in".⁵² Although residents are unhappy about the uneven and lack of development, the perception that some of the councillors who represent them are incompetent and corrupt contributes to the anger which fuels the frequent service delivery protests. This view was shared by most of the respondents who were interviewed. One of them for example stated about the councillors:

Once they are there in the offices, they have tendency of not listening to us. This is the case with the Councilor of this ward 4. He is busy with his own projects. He is up there at Savanna, he has a

⁴⁹ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

⁵⁰ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

⁵¹ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁵² Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

lot of contracts here and to my understanding, councilors are not supposed to own projects, instead they have to monitor these projects. People got angry of that and they say they want him out.⁵³

Councillors are also blamed for the high rate of unemployment in Orange Farm as one local leader explained:

It terms of getting jobs, it is difficult to find jobs in Orange Farm, a few projects come in people fight over them and it goes on like that. But if you look closely you will see that the councillors own the franchises operating the mall and the security companies. Their relatives are the ones who get jobs, so it is difficult to get a job.⁵⁴

Other respondents also see a correlation between unemployment and frequent service delivery protests. One respondent pointed out that: “There is a close relationship between unemployed community members and service delivery issues. Whenever there are service delivery protests, many people participate because they are not working. They spend a lot of time doing nothing in this community.”⁵⁵ The high rate of unemployment which affects both the youth and the adults is also linked to the persistent socio-economic issues that beset Orange Farm. A local leader tried to explain the despair connected to unemployment:

Orange Farm is a place of starvation, a lot of people are sustained by grants and these don't cover much. SASSA gives a lot of food vouchers here because the place is dominated by poor people. There are also a lot of sick people with other diseases and HIV, they are supposed to take pills but they end up dying because of hunger.⁵⁶

In addition to hunger, poverty and disease, there is a high rate of drug abuse by the youth, teenage pregnancies and crimes such as house robberies and hijackings. Residents complained that a lot of young people are dropping out of schools and also said teenage girls engage in intergenerational and transactional relationships in order to get money. This behaviour results in teenage pregnancies and communicable diseases such as HIV and AIDs. One respondent said: “It is no longer a matter of dating a sugar daddy; it is me sleeping with you and you give me money so one can have five guys for such services.”⁵⁷ Teenage boys and young men on the other hand are accused of doing drugs, forming gangs and committing crimes. There is a prevalent culture of initiation of young men into manhood, and residents say this practise has now been hijacked by opportunistic people. As a result young men who come from initiation exhibit hardened masculinities; they form gangs which terrorise residents. Residents however say the youth partake in criminal activities because they cannot find jobs. One youth leader said:

Unemployment is one of the main challenges that we are facing as community. We have a lot of young people who are educated but they are not doing anything. They lack employment opportunities. There is that lack of access to information regarding opportunities. Crime and drug

⁵³ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

⁵⁴ Interview with local leader, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁵⁵ Interview with community member, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁵⁶ Interview with local leader, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁵⁷ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

abuse are also very serious challenges we are facing here and it is affecting our youths. Drug abuse is very high in region G (Orange Farm). There are high rates of house-breaking and car hijacking. These are the most serious crimes committed.⁵⁸

Residents blame young men who smoke a drug called Nyaope for leading the attacks and looting of foreign owned shops whenever there are service delivery protests. Residents also join in on the looting and this is blamed on hunger and poverty.

To sum up the socio-economic challenges facing Orange Farm residents, a community/social worker explained the dynamics of Orange Farm as follows:

Women get killed by their spouses more especially in Orange Farm, it happens regularly. They sometimes burn the women and the children in the shack. You know the common problem in Orange Farm is poverty. Its poverty and because of poverty they end up fighting. And drugs also, it's very rife in this area, yes, teenagers, girls and boys are both into drugs. This Nyaope everybody is fighting about it and it is also a contributing factor to the domestic violence because whenever, both parents, when they see that the other one is not playing her part in disciplining the child because of these financial problems most of them end up having affairs with older guys, and you find that a child does not even matriculate, because they are pregnant, because this guy does not want to use a condom, so they end up getting pregnant. And also teen pregnancy is very high, very rife in here. So lack of communication and understanding again between parents and children. And again what I can say is that it is lack of education from the parents...again rape is very, very high. Orange Farm, is the highest in Gauteng with HIV. So the orphans are so many here in Orange Farm, so most children are being there by themselves, the grannies can no more take care of them...Dysfunctional is the highest number.⁵⁹

Unemployment and poverty is therefore blamed for what is perceived as the breakdown of the family unit. A social worker said families in Orange Farm can best be described as dysfunctional as parents fight over insufficient economic resources which in some cases end up in the killing of women by their partners. Respondents also highlighted the absence of firms and industries that can create local employment. Moreover, the long distance between Orange Farm and employment hubs like Johannesburg and Vereeniging means that those who find jobs spend much of their wage on transport. Some community leaders offered solutions to unemployment. One stated: "What I think might be a solution in Orange Farm is that we have land, so we can have factories here, so if the government may open doors to people with money. If we can have industries locally, it will be cheaper to go to work and they could be permanent jobs and people can stop fighting for useless things."

3.4. Community Leadership and Conflict Resolution

3.4.1 Leadership structures and their relationship with community

⁵⁸ Interview with youth leader, 19 May 2016

⁵⁹ Interview with community/social worker, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

There are formal and informal leadership structures which work together (and are sometimes in conflict) in an effort to lead and to service the Orange Farm residents. As one community leader pointed out: “There are street committees, social movements, community based organisations, women's groups etc. They all have contributions regarding how this community functions. There are many organised structures.”⁶⁰ These organised structures usually bridge the gap between formal leadership structures and the community members. Formal leadership structures include political parties, ward councillors, the community policing forum (CPF), the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO), and the South African Police Service (SAPS).

Orange Farm is a highly contested area politically, between the ruling party ANC and opposition parties, the EFF and the DA. The municipality is expected to deliver basic services to the community such as housing, electricity, water, sanitation, refuse removal, roads, clinics and other services. SAPS are expected to maintain the rule of law and to control crime, and the CPF is expected to work in conjunction with SAPS to patrol the area and expose criminal activities. Ideally street committees are also supposed to help both SAPs and the CPF on the ground through whistle blowing and communicating with and on behalf of community members. SANCO helps to identify needy families for economic relief. Their assistance to the community however cuts across and also includes, security, crime, and service delivery issues. SANCO is the largest organised and formal entity responsible for leading the community in service delivery protests.

Of all the leadership structures, residents seemed to have strained relationships with the municipality, the ward councillors, the CPF and the police for various and sometimes interrelated reasons, according to respondents. Failure by the municipality to provide basic services has resulted in high tensions which lead to repeated protests. On the other hand, local residents expect councillors to lobby both local and national government for the provision of basic services. Many residents blame ANC ward councillors’ corruption and incompetence for their lack of services. One respondent said: “if they fix the roads they will have nothing to campaign with,”⁶¹ implying that the state of under development is in fact what keeps the politicians relevant. Residents were unhappy with most of the councillors and particularly consider the councillor of ward 4 to be illegitimate and forced upon them by ANC officials in higher offices. One respondent said: “I think politicians are busy with their own and selfish interests and not that of the greater society in SA. They do not even know what is happening in the community. Everyone is busy to get a nice car and house.”⁶² Another concurred: “The Councillors are selling projects that are supposed to benefit the community to companies who bring their own people instead of hiring the locals.”⁶³ Some councilors are also accused of nepotism and violence. A community leader implicated the councilors in the violence which surrounded the May 2016 protests. In his words:

⁶⁰ Interview with human rights leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

⁶¹ Discussion with local resident, Orange Farm, 16 May 2016

⁶² Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁶³ Interview with unemployed local resident, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

Even with the *toitoi* we had, we discovered that some Nyaupes among us had been paid, obviously on our side it would be our councillor because he realised that once the protests start he will have to be answerable to say why is Ward 5 *toitoin*? And Councillor Mota (Ward 4) did the same. Ok, listen to this, they pay them to infiltrate the *toitoi* and vandalise property and people's cars and looting from people. So the protests are turned into anarchy and they paint everyone involved as bad, eventually anyone involved in planning the protest is called to the police station to explain and then you realise that you are not safe ...this is hugely political, it is dirty, it is deep, very deep.⁶⁴

The relationship between councillors and the community is therefore a volatile one which is marred by lack of trust. This lack of trust also seems to apply to the relationship between the police and community members. Community members reported that the police are slow to respond to calls, are selective in the calls they respond to, participate in criminal activities such as selling the drugs they confiscate, sometimes participate in looting foreign owned shops and are reluctant to arrest criminals they know. A community volunteer shared his own experience:

[...] depending on particular crime, domestic violence apparently they respond quickly. They don't respond fast when there is hijacking, burglary, robbery on the streets. The cops here have a problem I don't know if maybe 50% of them are volunteering or what, is like they are getting paid for the criminal activities, I can make an example they fetch me with their vehicle the whole day chasing the Nyaope bosses after that they take the money then they release those people, the bribery is too high.⁶⁵

The same community leader also lamented that the frequent transfer of police officers from Orange Farm hampers efforts on following up on existing crime issues.

Foreign nationals claim they live in fear of the police who target them for bribes. A foreign shop owner reflected: "We survive with the police by giving something to them. They feel happy when they see us. They like us more than other people. They do more harm to us than the others do to us. I like the ordinary local people more than I like the police."⁶⁶ In some cases foreign shop owners believe that police are behind robberies. "Sometimes we suspect them they are part of the robbery. When they come, they come late and make siren and come after the robbers leave the place, and they do not investigate further or follow up the incident."⁶⁷ Foreign nationals also complained that the police practice structural discrimination:

They brought to the justice anyone who harms the lives or the properties of the citizens of this country. They investigate further and follow up the cases submitted by the local citizens and it goes up to the courts. If a local person accuses you something, the police will deal with you strictly. But

⁶⁴ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2017

⁶⁵ Interview with community volunteer, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

⁶⁶ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁶⁷ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

if you accuse a local person and go to the legal enforcement agencies, your case will be ignored. I encountered this experience several times.⁶⁸

Despite these criticisms, the local police are adamant that they have a good relationship with the communities and their leaders. When asked about their relationship with the community, a police representative opined that the community has confidence in his institution:

Let me say generally the community of Orange Farm is so cooperative with the police, what I am saying is that we are in good partnership with them in fighting crime, we have structures like CPF, it is assisting us a lot in fighting crime. We receive information from them about crime and at some point it yield good results, in short we are in good partnership with our communities.⁶⁹

Despite his claims, interviews suggest that most community members do not regard the CPF as a legitimate structure. Although they have an office on the premises of SAPS because they are supposed to work hand in hand with the police to reduce crime, they are not trusted by residents. Membership to the CPF was formerly voluntary but now CPF members receive a stipend. Respondents alleged that this stipend makes members reluctant to vacate their positions. Most importantly members of the community and other community leaders implicate CPF members in some of the robberies taking place in the community. One community leader said:

They now get appointed as people who want jobs because it now attracts payment. But once they are in they don't want to leave and they build up forces internally to vote for them so they don't have to leave. Their existence does not help with anything; they don't take responsibility or give insurance for anything. They have no public liability and when break-ins happen it is none of their concern. They take off their reflector jackets and leave them on chairs and go to taverns to drink. So when the criminals who break into the schools are arrested they say they see them drinking, they will be drinking together and the criminals sneak out to go and steal.⁷⁰

Residents feel that the absence of a legitimate CPF body leaves families led by single parents and the elderly more vulnerable to crime. SANCO is one body that fills this vacuum by helping to fight crime and poverty among the community members. Residents regard SANCO's leadership as legitimate because they help elect representatives. However, the organisation has its share of challenges. In some sections SANCO leadership suffers from self-interested leaders who do little to assist needy community members. Nonetheless, the organisation generally tries to cater to families in need, and to identify and lead service delivery needs and protests. SANCO leaders indicate that they make decisions involving the community in consultation with community members. One explained: "Our procedure as SANCO if there is going to be a protest we lead the community because if they go alone they will not have any direction. They tell us their grievances and then we lead the protest so that we avoid things that might bring danger to them as well."⁷¹

⁶⁸ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

⁶⁹ Interview with the SAPS representative, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁷⁰ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁷¹ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

3.4.2 Conflict resolution mechanisms

According to respondents, conflict resolution mechanisms in Orange Farm include local community leadership structures, public protests, mob justice, and the police. The following discusses the workings of these mechanisms.

Community leaders

As stated earlier community leadership includes those elected officially into leadership positions and those who offer their services voluntarily in different interest groups as well as the elderly and in some cases property owners who advocate for peaceful resolutions to community conflict. Local community leaders are trusted to lead public protests, deal with criminals, and preside over domestic issues as well as to mobilise the community against xenophobia attacks. As indicated above, local SANCO leaders admitted to giving leadership and guidance over service delivery issues and leading most of the public protests which occur as a response to lack of service delivery. They were also at the forefront of the public protests which occurred shortly before the first round of the research in May 2016.

Residents also typically approach local leaders before alerting police of challenges they face. Local leaders are generally more trusted in dealing with conflict because of their accessibility. Residents also reported that local leaders respond faster than the police and councillors. At times, community leaders ‘help’ police apprehend criminals, sometimes taking on a role they believe the police has neglected. A local leader recounted how they investigated, identified, and busted a crime syndicate in 2007:

Yes, because their operation became quite huge, it wasn’t just about drugs because there was this big yard which was used to strip people’s cars, we also helped them to arrest those people. They brought a break-down truck to remove the cars they found there and it took them the whole day from 9:30am to 4pm in the afternoon. Some of the car seats were found with blood to show that they were killing the owners during the robberies. So there was a lot of work we did with these two officers and the province recognised their work and took them away.⁷²

In some cases (such as the one described above), residents entrust community leaders to apprehend and punish criminals before handing them over to the police. The result is that vigilantism has become an accepted means of dealing with community conflict. Local leaders are also the immediate contact people in cases of conflict involving foreign nationals, although some foreign shopkeepers think leadership is biased against them. One shop owner told of his experience:

⁷² Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

When we do something wrong to a local person, we go to the family of that person and the Street Committee accompany us. We try to solve the issue in a negotiation. However, the problem is when the victim is from us. Normally in these situations, no one tries to solve it. We try by all means that a problem caused by us should not be left unsolved.⁷³

Public protests

Orange Farm residents see public protests as the most effective way to get the attention of local and national government in issues regarding lack of service delivery. Residents believe that government officials are complacent and corrupt. For them, it is only protests - which often turn violent—that can attract attention. A local resident explained: “As I have told you that we elect people hoping that they will bring some change in this community. Once they are there in the offices, they have tendency of not listening to us.”⁷⁴ A local leader further explained the logic behind public protests:

People used to look for the causes of these poor service delivery and the migrants were soft targets. These people are not many in terms of numbers. Community members have come to realise that they were wrong. They have shifted the blame to the state because it is the state's responsibility to provide good services to its citizens. By neglecting the poor, the government is promoting these issues of protests and violence.⁷⁵

Residents therefore see public protests as a legitimate reaction to neglect by local and national government as well as an effective mechanism to get the authorities' attention to their various grievances.

Mob justice

As informal settlements across the country, Orange Farm local residents accept mob justice as a trusted way of dealing with local criminals. Residents take the law into their own hands to deter crime because, they say, police respond slowly, selectively and let criminals off the hook. Although residents could not confirm the frequency of mob justice incidents, one occurred in Section 4 during our interviews. In some cases violent beatings end in alleged criminals' death as described by a local leader:

One Nyaope guy was beaten to death in extension 9 after being accused of having stolen something. These days, its either people take no action or they take matters into their own hands. If you are caught stealing, people will beat you up and call the police once they are done with you. They say there is no use calling the police in the first place because the police take long to respond and at times they will tell you that there is no van.⁷⁶

The police

⁷³ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁷⁴ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁷⁵ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

⁷⁶ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

Although most respondents highlighted distrust in the police, community members felt they have no choice but to rely on the police given the rate of criminal activity in the area. Community leaders and residents noted that where the police respond quickly, death by mob justice can be averted. A community leader recalled the fate of a local thief: “The person had mugged about five people at a bush this side. They chased him, caught up with him and beat him up. It was the police who intervened when they arrived and the person ran into their van.”⁷⁷ He continued that when residents overlook the police, it makes it difficult for them to carry out their duties. He said “But when you look closely you also see that the approach of the residents... the police cannot handle crime without the participation of the residents.”

In sum, the absence of a fully trusted local authority and of formal and peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms remains a serious obstacle to social cohesion. Orange Farm residents and their local leaders rely heavily on violence to resolve conflicts. This is a major threat to social cohesion, the rule of law, and due process. Indeed, in a diverse and fluid space like Orange Farm, individual and group conflict is to be expected. However, “a socially cohesive community is one which is able to deal with and resolve its conflicts in ways that do not result in violence, chronic tensions, or extreme marginalisation of certain sub-groups.”⁷⁸

3.5. History of Group Conflicts and Violence

Orange Farm has a well-known history of group conflict and violence as demonstrated by frequent violent service delivery protests, regular attacks on foreign nationals, taxi violence and gang violence from boys who take part in initiation schools. Service delivery protests are organised around residents’ frustration because of lack of and inconsistent development in the area. As discussed earlier, the protests attract different groups with varied objectives; community leaders mobilise residents to march; politicians are summoned to address the residents; and criminals loot from foreign nationals.

As indicated, residents suspect local politicians of hiring drug users to cause violence and destabilise protests. When looting and attacks on property occur the police respond by beating up and using tear gas indiscriminately on protestors. Sometimes the local politicians are themselves attacked by the protestors if they do not respond as expected. As a result of the different political positions of the protestors, such gatherings regularly degenerate into violent internecine attacks. A respondent’s recollection after the May 2016 protests demonstrates group conflict and also that criminal activities during protests are wide spread and not only attributable to the criminal ‘group’ as most leaders and residents highlighted during interviews: “...see people were striking and vandalizing things, well is good for people to strike but not

⁷⁷ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁷⁸ Monson, T., Takabvirwa, K., Anderson, J., Polzer, T. and Freemantle, I. (2012:20). *Promoting Social Cohesion and Countering Violence against Foreigners and other Outsiders*. ACMS Research Report

vandalize but you know how black people are; they like to vandalize to get the attention from the cops so they will throw stones then the cops will shoot with rubber bullets then they will run away”⁷⁹

Fights between those who support councillors and those who do not are slowly turning into a form of distinct group conflict which often turns into violence as one respondent pointed out:

Whenever we ask our councillor to address us, he does not take us seriously. At times he can even come to the meetings drunk. He did this recently during the voter registration process and he was confronted by community leaders. The confrontations turned into fights and there were clashes between two groups, those who supported the Councillor and the other group who supported the community leaders.⁸⁰

Attacks on foreign owned shops are also a regular occurrence which accompany protests. Although residents attribute these attacks to Nyaope users, shop owners reported that whenever they are attacked, residents also take part in the looting of their stock. Attacks and stand-offs between local and foreign residents are a source of frequent group conflict. A shop owner narrated one such stand-off:

There was violence that continued for several days. A Somali shop was looted in this incident and one local person was wounded by a Somali man and this is one of the things that Somalis are always accused of. They sometimes get a gun and when the local people try to threaten them because they are foreigners or a group of local young people get to gather to rob a Somali shop.⁸¹

Respondents highlighted taxi violence as another regular type of group violence in Orange Farm. The taxi owners typically fight among themselves over routes and clients. A focus group discussion revealed the following: “They fought at Palm Mall, they were shooting each other... that fight was started by one person who is in prison as we speak, he is the owner; he want to have more taxis on the road, he want to dominate and take different routes.”⁸²

The focus group discussion mentioned above and interviews reveal that group conflict is also caused by boys coming from initiation schools and forming gangs that terrorise other groups and communities. When boys come back from initiation from nearby mountains they form gangs and demonstrate hardened masculinities which are considered a necessity for coming of age and manhood. One such group is reported to be responsible for the abduction of six youths and the killing of four when they attempted to initiate them in a disused mine in 2014. According to respondents, other examples include group tensions and regular bouts of violence between two youth groups/gangs at Thamsanqa High School, the ‘Wrong Turns’ and the ‘Colombians’ who fight each time another group comes back from the initiation school. One respondent said, “it started when the initiation schools were brought here in the location because initially it

⁷⁹ Focus group discussion, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁸⁰ Interview with local resident, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁸¹ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁸² Focus group discussion, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

was done in the mountains, and then... we know you can't go to another extension yes, I can't go to see my girlfriend in Extension 1 they will beat you, so if I am from one area to the other then they will see that you don't belong there then they will beat you."⁸³ A member of the local youth group confirmed that boys from initiation schools are often involved in gang activities. He stated:

It has turned more into a gangsterism culture than what it used to be. Now, crime has gone up rapidly. Even though they are measures to try and stop crime, but initiation schools in Gauteng have impacted badly. And the killings again, people have died and mostly people who kill are those who come from initiation schools. They establish the idea that they have to be feared and it has split the community into half. Sometimes if they just pass and you laugh at them, they kill you. In schools, learners are not safe and education is not exciting, some are not even allowed to go to the toilets.⁸⁴

3.6. Violence against Outsiders

3.6.1 Profile of violence

Violence against outsiders occurs regularly in Orange Farm. Dating from 2008, it has resulted in many injuries, deaths, looting and destruction of property and livelihoods, along with displacement of foreign nationals. (Respondents were adamant that in the 2008 violence no foreign nationals died in Orange Farm.) According to community leaders, Orange Farm is one of the areas that did not participate in the violence against foreign nationals in 2008. Community leaders say they mobilised widely against the attacks on foreign nationals. A community leader said about 2008: "No, no one was killed. There was no attack; they were in Alexandra, in Ramaphosa Squatter Camp, Yeoville, and somewhere in Berea there. That's where there were serious attacks there."⁸⁵ Over the years, most notably in 2010, 2013, 2015 and 2016, local residents have perpetrated violence against those of Somali, Pakistani, Ethiopian and Bangladeshi descent. Although attacks on foreign owned shops are often associated with public protests, they also occasionally occur in the absence of protests as foreign shop owners present a lucrative source of free goods and money for local criminals. A community leader observed: "The reason why they target them is because the Somalis are the ones with flourishing businesses, the other foreign businesses run the same as ours, they are also battling, but the other ones are at the forefront [of success]."⁸⁶

Discussions with local residents revealed that shop owners are not only targeted because they present a source of free income and goods. The attacks are a form of violent exclusion on shop owners as they are perceived to be different from locals. One shop owner for example opined:

⁸³ Focus group discussion, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁸⁴ Interview with a member of the local youth group, Orange Farm, 4 May 2017

⁸⁵ Interview with local community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁸⁶ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

It is the Somalis, Pakistanis and the similar people who can easily be identified and targeted. I think it is because of the easily recognizable physical appearance and the possibility that they are less integrated due to the differences of the two groups including also the religion. They may think that as Somalis resemble Asians more than they resemble Africans and hence they could be pushing Somalis to the Asian side. I think these are some of the reasons.⁸⁷

Foreign shop owners run the highest risk of violent attacks in Orange Farm. As these attacks occur on a regular basis, shop owners and those who may not own shops but possess similar physical attributes as Amakula reported living in fear. One responded said: “Things of this nature usually happen to us may be in every several months, you will experience an incident of this type.”⁸⁸ Another shop owner reiterated: “No I do not feel safe. I have nearly been mugged several times before and my colleague in the shop has also been mugged and his cell phone was taken from him. Drug addicted young men with knives did this to him and they have tried me several times but thanks to Allah, they have not harmed me so far.”⁸⁹

Others from across the SADC region who are perceived to be relatively safe from attacks in Orange Farm reported that attacks on them do occur in isolated incidents and in secluded areas, and as a result these attacks do not attract media attention. These attacks reveal deep seated xenophobic resentment towards foreign nationals. A community leader explained: “Although the people from outside try to learn the South African languages in order to be welcomed, in a place like Orange Farm, they have the freedom to speak their languages... until the time of xenophobic attacks.”⁹⁰ A survivor of several isolated violent events in 2015 and 2016 shared similar sentiments: “Here, although I enjoy being in Orange Farm, there are days when I am afraid because I don’t know when this thing will come. It is random, you don’t know what to expect, and they don’t announce it. It just happens, you find that somewhere they are just beating up some foreign guy.”⁹¹

As a result of these rather isolated attacks on foreign nationals, there is a tendency to brand Orange Farm as a relatively peaceful area. The residents see violence on foreign nationals as something that is either imported from elsewhere or as something that only happens elsewhere. One shop owner also concurred:

This area of the township is relatively good and that types of incidents do not normally take place. But there were a time when people were protesting against poor services of electricity and people were angry. They brought paraffin and got a matchstick and wanted to set a light of the shop. There was that attempt once but in general the situation is calm here.⁹²

A rumour about a foreign shop owner who shot a local school child has long circulated in informal settlements around the country. It also surfaced in Orange Farm. According to community leaders such

⁸⁷ Interview with foreign shop owner1, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁸⁸ Interview with foreign shop owner2, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁸⁹ Interview with foreign shop owner3, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁹⁰ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁹¹ Interview with foreign national, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

⁹² Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

rumours are started and spread to incite violence against foreign shop owners by local shop owners whose businesses are failing to compete for customers. While it may well be a rumour in many instances, in April 2016, a South African high school student who attempted to loot a foreign shop was shot. This incident resulted in protests and threats of violence against the shop owner who subsequently went into hiding. Other shop owners helped to expose the identity of the shooter to the police and community leaders. This was followed by peace negotiations between the community of foreign shop owners, the family of the injured child and the community at large. The shop owner responsible for the shooting agreed to financially assist the injured boy's family and calm was restored to the community. However, when service delivery protests broke out in May 2016, school children, drug users, and some local residents took the opportunity to loot from foreign shop owners. In one foreign shop owner's description:

[...] a group of such people attacked a Somali shop, and one of the men in the shop shot the attacking boys. One of the attackers was hurt. This caused that the shop was looted entirely in the same minute. In another incident, a group of young people who use drugs gathered in front of a Somali shop in the middle of the night at the time when the protestors went to their homes and organizers also went to sleep, they broke the shop and started looting the stock. In another shop that I do not know how far it is from here, a Somali man who use to bring deliveries to the township was killed. He delivered stock to one of the shops and when he wanted to leave, he was shot and died. Yes 2015, it was either in November or December.

This and other isolated attacks on foreign nationals serve as evidence that there is still more work required in order stop violence against foreign nationals in Orange Farm. The relative calm experienced in Orange Farm can be attributed to various civic organisations such as the Orange Farm Human Rights Advice Centre (OFHRAC), African Diaspora Forum, SANCO, and others who are working tirelessly within the informal settlement to try and raise awareness against violent crimes and human rights abuses.

3.6.2 Organization and mobilization for violence

According to respondents, attacks on foreign nationals are usually planned by local business owners and informal leaders. In particular, respondents reported that local business owners hire the 'nyaope boys' and other local gangs such as a gang known as 'short-left' to carry out the attacks after service delivery protests. Ordinary community members including women and school-going children join in and participate in looting and pillaging of shops after gangs have broken down shop doors. One respondent explained:

There are local business people although they are not very many, but they are there. It used to be that many kilometers in the township will have one shop and that shop was owned by a local person. This shop owner used to charge people whatever price he wants as there were no competitors with him. He also used to charge interest on those who want to borrow something from him. These types of shops used to charge different prices when the local people are buying from them cash or when they are borrowing. However, when these foreign nationals came and people see that these people charge lower prices than the local people and that they have even more stock than them, they tended to buy from the foreign owned shops. Hence the local shop

owners became jealous about the foreign shop owners. They start inciting people against the foreign shop owners and hence they are part of those creating the negative perception against foreign nationals.⁹³

3.6.3 Logics, underlying causes and triggers of the violence

Violence against foreign bodies and property manifests as both a criminal and a political activity used for strategic purposes. These include chasing foreign nationals from the area, direct material gain from looting, and attracting local and national government attention to the issues of service delivery and other community challenges. As noted earlier, violence is also used to create anarchy and divert attention from what the community considers to be real issues such as corrupt politicians.

Respondents indicate that the violence is informed by perceptions that foreigners increase competition for scarce resources and opportunities such as jobs, housing and local businesses. Most interviews revealed that locals perceive foreigners to be more educated and experienced and thereby to create unequal competition as they are favoured by both business and job markets. Some respondents also felt that foreign nationals are mostly undocumented and can contribute to crime without accumulating a criminal record and therefore have no right to be in the country. These negative perceptions about foreigners act as a fuel which justifies the attacks on them, and each time these attacks take place the locals who loot stand to gain by either ridding the area of foreigners or by benefiting directly from stolen goods which they loot from foreign owned shops. Most of the violent attacks in Orange Farm involve crime against foreign shop owners and their shops and these attacks have become an income generating activity. One shop owner had the following to say about the logic behind the violence:

This type of work that Ethiopians have here is very hard one. We serve the people and we do not look for high profits. It is a work that needs patience. But the people here particularly the youth are adapted to drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes and other similar substances. When they want to use these substances and they do not have money, the short way to get money is to rob people. I think that is why they mostly come and rob and hurt the businesses of the foreign nationals here in the Orange Farm Township.⁹⁴

Local community leaders said that their own investigations revealed the involvement of local business people in organizing violence against foreign shop owners. Local business people with struggling businesses are said to pay criminals to attack foreign shops in order to decrease competition. In some cases they also loot and fill up their shops with stolen goods. One community leader stated:

We then found out that the perpetrators were local shop owners. The local shop owners' shops were more expensive than the other ones; they did not know what the secret of the other shop

⁹³ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁹⁴ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

owners was, so they are the ones who started spreading the rumour about the child who was shot. They knew that in the ensuing commission their businesses would make money.⁹⁵

As noted earlier, foreign shop owners are also perceived to be aloof and arrogant as they exclude themselves from activities in the community. There is a general expectation among community members that shop owners should participate in all major activities of the community. One respondent, a community leader, said:

The attacks that were there were not necessarily because people wanted to loot. The locals were saying when they were protesting, the shops of foreign nationals were operating. In other words, the locals were saying that these people (foreigners) were not showing solidarity with them. We were protesting and they were working. Whenever there are protests, they (foreigners) have to close their shops in solidarity with us all because they are also part of this community. If they are asked to close their shops, they are quick to conclude that it's because they are foreigners yet when there are protests here, even schools at times do close.⁹⁶

Interviews with other respondents also highlighted that violence, whether through protests or attacks on foreigners, is used to try and gain the government's attention to the service delivery challenges that beset the area of Orange Farm. For example community leaders and residents said although they organised the May 2016 protests around service delivery issues, the real reason for the protests was to force government to recall corrupt councillors from the area.

The discussion above indicates that the underlying causes and triggers of violence against foreign nationals include negative attitudes and strong resentments towards foreign nationals due to socio-economic hardships faced by locals. Respondents believe that foreign nationals are resented, and/or attacked because they steal jobs, steal local women, agree to work for lower wages and commit crimes. Foreign shop owners on the other hand are perceived to undermine or kill local businesses. Chasing them from the area and destroying their businesses means that the much resented unfair business competition is eliminated. There are therefore different and sometimes overlapping reasons for local resentment towards foreign nationals such that whenever they are attacked locals are most likely to participate or walk past. One shop owner shared his views:

People in general have the perception that foreigners are taking their jobs and gaining their income, so if the individual criminals hiding among the protesting crowd start violence against foreign shops, then the crowd will not stop them but will take their part in looting. They share the same sentiments towards these foreigners who are regarded as aliens in their township.⁹⁷

As noted earlier under the discussion of service delivery protests, some protests are used by different actors to gain political mileage. Protests which are politically charged (as the one where residents were

⁹⁵ Interview with local community leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

⁹⁶ Interview with local community leader, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁹⁷ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

calling for corrupt politicians to step down) are triggers for violence against foreign nationals when politicians respond by hiring thugs to disrupt such protests as alleged by residents and when local business owners hire local gangs to specifically attack foreign owned businesses during or after these protests.

3.6.4 Responses to threats and violence

Community leaders, property owners, the police and councillors are some of the people who respond swiftly to threats of violence. It is in property owners' interest (including those whose properties are rented by shop owners) to be vigilant against violence on property. Shop owners also reported that sometimes they receive prior warnings about impending violent attacks from local councillors. The community leaders also play the role of identifying and reporting perpetrators to the police as well as making space for dialogue. One local leader said: "now we have a programme that includes locals and people from Africa and it is called African Diaspora, and it deals with social cohesion with locals and international people."⁹⁸

The police usually intervene to disperse looting crowds and escort foreign nationals to places of safety such as the police station. According to some foreign respondents, there have been recent improvements in how police are responding to violent attacks. Rather than evacuating/escorting them out of the area, police tell foreigners to keep their shops open and provide them and their shops with better protection. According to one foreign respondent, "the police are stricter now and they protect us better than before."⁹⁹ Foreign respondents attribute this change to the heavy domestic and international criticism the South African government received last year for its lack of appropriate response to violence and protection of immigrants in the country. Respondents believe that, as a result of this criticism, the police are now under strict orders not to allow any looting or violence against foreign nationals in the township. After the violence, community leaders and community-based organisations organise community dialogues to calm the situation down and preach tolerance and peaceful cohabitation. One leader narrated their response to recent violent attacks:

We made bold statements to denounce issues of attacks on foreign nationals. We went to the local radio station Theta FM and voiced our concern over these attacks. We condemned these attacks. The community radio station is vocal when it comes to issues regarding xenophobia. The majority of these attacks are perpetuated by the youths and children. We challenged parents to monitor their kids. Parents should not allow their kids to bring home looted groceries. We also encouraged the churches to condemn acts of attacks. We used different platforms.¹⁰⁰

An interview with a youth leader revealed that they are also implementing dialogues and programmes to curb xenophobic attacks. The youth leader said:

⁹⁸ Interview with local leader, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

⁹⁹ Interview with foreign respondent, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

¹⁰⁰ Interview with local community leader & human rights activist, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

We saw the attacks on foreigners so as Orange Farm we needed to engage with that challenge. I can tell you this sister, from all of Gauteng, the CPF, youth desk, and SAPS of Orange Farm we got the award for/from the South African Diaspora because we carried out a lot of tournaments which engaged with foreigners.¹⁰¹

Although interviews revealed concerted effort from different actors, some shop owners are still disgruntled and feel that not enough is being done to protect them. One shop owner said: “If something happens and you go to the elders and community leaders to stop it, they will tell you that they can do nothing to assist you. They will say that there are other people behind this and people are angry and this and that.”¹⁰²

3.6.5 Return, reintegration and current concerns

People displaced by violence are typically able to come back immediately after the situation has calmed down. Most reopen their businesses. According to respondents, locals call for their return and reopening because in their absence, community members have to walk long distances or spend money on transport to get to shopping centres. There are coordinated efforts from different sections to assist with reintegration. A community leader said: “We go all out as SANCO and organisations like the ANC and NGOs get involved. Most of the time it is the NGOs who get involved because they know that at one time South Africans lived in other parts of the world and they were treated well.”¹⁰³

Respondents feel that peaceful cohabitation and tolerance between locals and foreigners is possible in Orange Farm as long as foreigners, and foreign business owners in particular, stop excluding or isolating themselves and socialise more with locals. A human rights activist registered his concern as follows: “My only concern is the response of foreign nationals to community integration. I think the foreign nationals should participate more in community projects and should come open instead of living their secret lives. They belong to this community and they have to be involved in all the things that happen here.”¹⁰⁴

Foreign respondents however indicated that, despite improved police response to violence, foreign nationals still live in fear, particularly during periods of violent service delivery protests which often end with attacks on foreigners and their businesses. A foreign shop owner narrated his security concerns: “Like the security situation is bad. If you are driving a car, you will constantly check your mirrors to remain vigilant. If you are in a shop, you do not know if your customers will turn to be your robbers. Your attention is very high and you are always unsure of your safety”. Part of the fear is caused by the fact that these attacks and robberies continue to take place amidst all the interventions and they are unpredictable.

3.7 Perspectives on future interactions

¹⁰¹ Interview with youth leader, Orange Farm, 18 May 2016

¹⁰² Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

¹⁰³ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

¹⁰⁴ Interview with community leader and human rights activist, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

Respondents expressed a mixture of sentiments and views about future interactions in Orange Farm. Community leaders were hopeful that the increase in cultural and sporting activities which involve locals and foreign nationals are contributing to better relations. Community leaders and residents mostly see the attacks on foreign nationals as a criminal element caused by poverty as opposed to hatred. When probed about the existence of xenophobia related attacks community leaders shift the blame to the foreign nationals for failing to engage more with the community. The foreign nationals however say it is precisely because they fear for their lives that they do not mix as freely as they would like.

Although foreign nationals from SADC are attacked less frequently than Amakula, they generally live in fear of possible isolated attacks. They reported experiencing hate speech in some cases from locals who see them as competition for resources. Some foreign nationals expressed their desire to leave South Africa and yet also said their circumstances do not allow them to leave the country. One respondent said:

I do not know what will happen in the future...only Allah knows. The future of foreign nationals in this country is not bright. I am thinking of leaving this place because of the killing, injuring, robbing and burning are all taking place without even a help from the police. I am disadvantaged by staying here more than I gain advantages.¹⁰⁵

Another respondent hinted that they did not have long term plans for being in the country:

We live in a survival basis in this country. We remain here as long as we need survival but it is not a place that people think of having a longer future here. We do not think of having houses and other properties here. People here are like people who are in a transit. The best place that I like to live is in the East African countries. The reason is that this country has a lot of problems...Like the security situation is bad.¹⁰⁶

Yet another respondent tried to explain the complexity of leaving the country as some foreign nationals have established families, he said:

I think Somalis will not all leave this country as they have come here in large numbers. They have a productive time where many people were generating their livelihoods from this country. Many others created families and hence had children. Others studied here in South Africa. Others have expanded businesses and have different branches of their businesses. Furthermore, others bought land and properties and hence I can say Somalis can be small in numbers and many can leave. It is possible that their number will decrease but it will never happen that all of them will leave the country.¹⁰⁷

It was made clear by local respondents during interviews that if foreign nationals expected to live and work among locals, they needed to participate in community activities, show solidarity with local politics as well as extend economic opportunities by employing local youth. Failure to comply with these expectations will lead to continued violent exclusion. Ultimately, both local and foreign respondents did not have the

¹⁰⁵ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 19 May 2016

¹⁰⁶ Interview with foreign shop owner, Orange Farm, 20 May 2016

¹⁰⁷ Interview with community leader, Orange Farm, 17 May 2016

confidence that incidents of violence against foreign nationals will cease. One respondent predicted that: “Expectation of such incidents to take place in the future is 50/50. The South African government has been blamed greatly of the xenophobic incidents in the past and it has stated in different times that the past event types of violence will never happen.”¹⁰⁸ In the same vein, local residents indicated that promises made by political leaders are not usually followed by concrete programming on the ground. One resident for example stated:

Government responses are reactive instead of continued engagements after the violence. [...] Exactly, for example on the 28th of March 2017, we were in the anti-xenophobia march. We were marching with the premier. The premier was saying no one is going anywhere, we are going to work hard to make sure that there are amicable solutions so people outside can be comfortable and those inside also. And so, after that anti-xenophobia march there is no follow up of how far are they. Nothing, I think such activities like social cohesion plus the leadership of the African Diaspora Forum plus the civil society here in South Africa, maybe they can work out a way in which they can just work or a committee that is mixed that can pressurise the government. [...] Yeah, but the programmes are not going to be in the union buildings [the presidency]. They have to be here. Here where people live, not just marches, if they promise programmes then the programmes have to be on the ground. After that march, then we came back, there is no any progress report.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Ibid

¹⁰⁹ Interview with a local community leader, Orange Farm, 4 May 2017

4. CONCLUSIONS: SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Orange Farm is a case of uneven development. The juxtaposition of formal properties next to informal dwellings; tarred and untarred roads; as well as heaps of uncollected litter speak to both the presence of resources and their starkly uneven distribution. The area is home to a heterogeneous population of local and foreign nationals of mixed ethnicities, cultures and religions. Like other informal settlements in South Africa, the area is beset with socio-economic and political challenges which together foster violence while decreasing residents' quality of life. Socio-economic challenges include a high rate of unemployment; high rates of communicable diseases including HIV/AIDs; crime and poverty; poor service delivery; teenage pregnancies; drug and alcohol abuse; domestic abuse/violence and dysfunctional families. The township is also fraught with serious social cohesion challenges evidenced by limited social interactions between locals and outsiders; locals' negative perceptions and attitudes towards outsiders; and repeated incidents of violent anti-outsider exclusion. The following are the main social cohesion challenges and opportunities in Orange Farm:

1. *Socio-economic challenges and hardships:* As indicated above, many of the Orange Farm residents face significant socio-economic challenges ranging from unemployment, poverty, poor service delivery, violence and crime. Socio-economic hardships are a serious obstacle to social cohesion because they lead to other social ills that have the potential to fray the social fabric and are often the source of negative perceptions and attitudes towards outsiders. Such attitudes often lead to marginalization and discrimination and at times to outsider violent exclusion;
2. *Outsiders' limited social and institutional interactions:* South African citizens treat foreign nationals differently based on physical appearance, mastery of local languages, shared cultures, and religion. Those more similar to locals integrate more easily and therefore have a higher level of social and institutional interactions. This contrasts with the *Amakula* (or foreign nationals of Somali, Ethiopian and Pakistani origin) who have remarkably limited social interactions with local residents and institutions. This limited nature of social and institutional interactions leads to mutual suspicion and negative perceptions between locals and foreign nationals;
3. *Negative perceptions and attitudes towards outsiders:* Locals generally perceive foreign nationals as threatening their lives and livelihoods. The accusations are familiar from elsewhere: stealing jobs and business opportunities; supplying offering cheap labour; stealing local women through transactional relationships and marriages of convenience; and contributing to crime by running crime rings and operating drug cartels. Locals also accuse foreign nationals of excluding themselves from local activities and not showing solidarity with local politics and challenges. They therefore perceive them as both aloof and arrogant and this fuels the negative perceptions against them. Whether informed by myth or reality, these negative perceptions are not only a symptom of strained social relations but also an

obstacle to building social cohesion as they are often mobilised for anti-outsider violence;

4. *Lack of trust in authorities and lack of non-violent conflict resolution mechanisms:* There is widespread distrust in structures of authority in Orange Farm. In most cases, the approach to conflict resolution is violent as residents believe the government cares little about them and only pays attention when they loot, burn property, or kill immigrants. Residents also believe local councillors lack the will to address service delivery challenges as they use these challenges as campaign strategies to stay in power. Politicians are also implicated in the use of violence to destabilise protests and divert attention from genuine local residents' grievances. Violence as a conflict resolution mechanism is a major challenge to social cohesion as it undermines the rule of law and due process, and leads to anti-outsider violent exclusion;
5. *Xenophobic violence:* Dating back from 2008, Orange Farm has repeatedly experienced violence against foreign nationals. The results include injury, death, property destruction and displacement. Violence against outsiders is fuelled by negative perceptions linked to fights over scarce resources and space. As indicated above, locals blame foreign nationals for increasing the socio-economic challenges which give rise to poverty and crime. The perception held by locals that foreign nationals have no right to be in South Africa is used as a justification for either attacking them, participating in looting their goods, or turning a blind eye to their suffering. As elsewhere, violent exclusion of outsiders makes visible social cohesion fault lines among local residents themselves. The presence of local leaders and civic organisations that are invested in eradicating xenophobic violence has contributed to the lower incidents of such violence in Orange Farm and has mitigated its impact when prevention was not possible. Eradicating impunity and holding instigators and perpetrators of violence accountable may also act as a deterrent;
6. *Local politics as trigger of violence against foreigners:* Local politics plays itself out through the fight for political and leadership positions, corruption in political and other institutions, the use of violence to retain political offices/power, and failures to deliver primary services. Local politics triggers violence against outsiders when local political players and other influential groups such as local business owners take advantage of service delivery protests to instigate such violence (hiring local gangs and drug addicts) to claim or consolidate their power; to attract relevant authorities' attention to local socio-economic grievances or get rid of business competition the presence of foreign nationals represents;
7. *Uncertain future interactions:* Both local and foreign nationals could not express certainty in non-violent future interactions. Some community leaders expressed hope for peaceful interactions but were uncertain when violence would end. Foreign victims of violence were less confident about future interactions, although foreign shop owners demonstrated that they now try to take a more proactive role in the communities. Failure by relevant institutions to address service delivery issues is seen by

some community leaders as a direct cause of violence now and in the future. The perceived impunity perpetrators enjoy means that they remain in the community and their presence increases the uncertainty and fear among foreign nationals that they may strike again.

The study concludes that these threats to - and symptoms of lack of - social cohesion in Orange Farm need to be taken into consideration if interventions to promote social cohesions and sustainable peaceful cohabitation are to be successful.



Freedom House is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that supports democratic change, monitors freedom, and advocates for democracy and human rights.

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