Xenophobia and Outsider Exclusion

Addressing Frail Social Cohesion in South Africa's Diverse Communities

Synthesis Report
October 2017
This report was developed by Freedom House under the Justice as a right in Southern Africa project. For more information about Freedom House visit our website at [www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org)

**Table of Contents**

1. **INTRODUCTION** ................................................................................................................................................. 3

2. **OUR RESEARCH: OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES** .............................................. 4

3. **SOCIAL COHESION: A CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING** ............................................................................. 5

4. **SOCIAL COHESION AND XENOPHOBIC EXCLUSION IN SOUTH AFRICA** ............................................. 7

   5.1 Social Cohesion in Contemporary South Africa ......................................................................................... 7

   5.2 Xenophobia and Related Violence in Post-apartheid South Africa ......................................................... 8

5. **FINDINGS** .......................................................................................................................................................... 11

   5.1 Social Cohesion challenges and opportunities in diverse communities ................................................. 11

      5.1.1 *Socio-economic deprivation* ................................................................................................................ 11

      5.1.2 *Low levels of social integration* ........................................................................................................... 12

      5.1.3 *Negative attitudes and perceptions towards outsiders* .................................................................... 14

      5.1.4 *Lack of trust leadership and conflict resolution mechanisms* ............................................................ 16

      5.1.5 *Group conflicts and violence* .............................................................................................................. 18

   5.2 Xenophobic Violence ...................................................................................................................................... 21

      5.2.1 *Nature of the Violence* ........................................................................................................................ 21

      5.2.2 *Drivers of the violence* ....................................................................................................................... 22

      5.2.3 *Responses and interventions* .............................................................................................................. 23

   5.3 Opportunities for sustainable social cohesion ............................................................................................... 25

      5.3.1 *Collective efficacy* ............................................................................................................................. 25

      5.3.2 *Trusted leadership and effective conflict resolution mechanisms* ..................................................... 26

      5.3.3 *Peace building initiatives* .................................................................................................................. 27

6. **CONCLUSION** .................................................................................................................................................... 27

REFERENCES ........................................................................................................................................................... 29

APPENDIX 1 ............................................................................................................................................................. 31
This report was written for Freedom House by Jean Pierre-Misago and provides a summary and synthesis of the research carried out in 16 targeted sites by Freedom House and research partners the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS) at the University of the Witwatersrand and the Safety and violence Initiative (SAVI) at the University of Cape Town. For the full individual site briefs please visit our website at www.freedomhouse.org

Published in Johannesburg, South Africa

November 24, 2017 by © Freedom House

On the Cover

Motherwell Peacebuilders assisting migrants to evacuate and salvage their belongings from a building that was set alight in Korsten, Port Elizabeth, August 2, 2017.

Cover image by Mpangi Kwenge
1. INTRODUCTION

This report is a synthesis of social cohesion community profiles resulting from empirical research in sixteen diverse South African communities. Each of these communities faces social cohesion challenges, particularly xenophobic exclusion or discriminatory attitudes and behaviours targeted at those deemed to be ‘outsiders’. Although primarily intended as a summary of key findings and discussions contained in these case studies, it outlines the main cross-cutting or area specific obstacles to and symptoms of frail social cohesions in communities covered by this research. It explains how these are simultaneously threats to social cohesion and symptoms of its frailty. They are mutually reinforcing and feed off each other in complex symbiotic ways that make the task of addressing them all the more difficult. To be effective, interventions must consider and tackle this full suite of factors. The report also discusses potential opportunities for social cohesion i.e. conditions and factors that could potentially be used as solid building blocks to promote and indeed build sustainable social cohesion in diverse communities. In sum, the report indicates that while diversity is not inherently conflictual, it can and indeed does breed serious social cohesion challenges under certain conditions such as socio-economic hardships and shaky governance regimes.

Findings from this research clearly indicate that promoting and building sustainable social cohesion in diverse communities requires interventions capable of taking advantage and reinforcing existing opportunities while tackling challenges that are simultaneously threats to social cohesion and symptoms of its frailty. To be truly effective and enduring, these interventions need to be multipronged and holistic to simultaneously address all socio-economic and political challenges affecting cohesion in these communities.

The report is divided into six sections. After this brief introduction, Section two provides a brief overview of the research and its methodological approaches. Section three provides a conceptual understanding of social cohesion that has guided our research and analysis. Section four discusses the meaning and strategies to achieve social cohesion in South Africa and offers a brief overview of xenophobic exclusion as one of the main temporary symptoms of frail social cohesion in the country. Section five and its subsections summarize the research findings and their implications for social cohesion in respective communities. Section six offers a brief conclusion.
2. OUR RESEARCH: OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

This report summarizes findings of a research conducted in parallel by the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) and the Safety & Violence Initiative (SaVI) across sixteen South African communities in (February- April) 2016 and (March-April) 2017. The research’s overall aim was to document, understand, and explain the status of social cohesion in those communities. More specifically, the research endeavoured to identify and explain the causes of group-based conflicts, communal violence, and patterns of violent exclusion. Through these efforts, the research opens possibilities for more effective interventions promoting social cohesion and inclusive communities.

The findings presented here are informed by extensive comparative qualitative empirical data collected through qualitative individual interviews and focus group discussions with residents and relevant key informants in 16 areas or communities in six provinces. SaVI conducted research in six sites: four (Khayelitsha, Masiphumelele, Dunoon, and De Doorns) in the Western Cape and two (Motherwell and Grahamstown) in the Eastern Cape. ACMS conducted research in ten sites: five in Gauteng (Alexandra, Diepsloot, Orange Farm, Makause and Mamelodi); two in KwaZulu Natal (Isipingo and KwaMashu); two in Limpopo (Musina and Elim); and one in North West (Brits/Marikana). We identified these sites because of observed challenges to social cohesion, in particular xenophobic tensions and recent violence.

At each site, research teams conducted in-depth, qualitative interviews with South African residents, foreign nationals, relevant government officials, community leaders, and representatives of different civil society, faith-based, and community based organisations operating in those areas. In addition to individual in-depth interviews, the teams conducted focus group discussions at each research site. For more details on research design/protocol and instruments, please refer to Appendix 1.

We supplemented original empirical data collection with secondary accounts that provided additional background and insight. Recognizing that perceptions drive social interactions and mobilization as much as facts (Misago, 2011), our approach sought to document and where possible distinguish between the two.
3. SOCIAL COHESION: A CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Perhaps due to its complex and multidimensional nature, the social cohesion concept has proven difficult to pin down (Novy, et al 2012). Literature systematises social cohesion as an ‘open concept’, with different meanings for different people and societies (Monson et al, 2012), and as a ‘problématique’, with often competing aspects within its socioeconomic, cultural, ecological, and political dimensions (Kearns et al, 2000; Novy et al, 2012; Cassiers et al, 2012).

However, while attempts by policy makers and academics to define and conceptualise the concept have resulted in a multiplicity of understandings (Cassiers et al, 2012), social cohesion broadly refers to “the positive nature of relationships between individuals, groups, and institutions within a shared space, community, or society” (Monson et al, 2012: 19). In a similar vein, Janmaat, et al (2009:18) define social cohesion as, “the property by which whole societies, and the individuals within them, are bound together through the action of specific attitudes, behaviours, rules and institutions which rely on consensus rather than pure coercion.” Novy et al (2012: 1974) offer what they term a “generic but helpful approximation” by defining social cohesion as “the capacity of people to live together differently or [...] to have the opportunity to be different and yet be able to live together.”

Analysts and scholars (see for example Monson et al, 2012 and Novy et al, 2012) identify concepts commonly associated with social cohesion. These include belonging, inclusion, social trust, equality, solidarity, political and social participation, the legitimacy and transparency of institutions, and the recognition of and tolerance for difference and diversity. These concepts correspond with the social cohesion multiple constituent elements or dimensions: i) social networks and social capital, ii) common values and a civic culture, iii) place attachment and group identity, iv) social order and control, and v) social solidarity and a reduction in wealth disparities; political membership and participation (see details in Kearns et al, 2000).

Citing other scholars (such as Murie et al, 2004; Guenter, 2009; Hillmann, 2009) in the field, Novy et al (2012:1874) observe that the ‘problématique’ nature of social cohesion requires addressing difficult questions and challenges including how to live together differently without being homogenized or excluded; how to be at the same time entitled to be different and to receive equal treatment; how to tackle unity and diversity, difference and equality, autonomy and inclusion; and how to reconcile tensions between cooperation and competitiveness.

Scholars in South Africa (see Monson et al, 2012) have offered that they term a ‘minimal’ definition for social cohesion (at least in this particular national context), which, by emphasizing the centrality of conflict resolution, can potentially help address the above-described ‘problématique’. They
define “a minimally cohesive community to be the one which is able to deal with its [inevitable] conflicts [and tensions] in ways that do not result in violence, chronic tensions or extreme marginalization of certain sub-groups” (Ibid: 20: 12). Along with this definition and drawing from research evidence, these scholars have identified six key social cohesion indicators or prerequisites: i) the practice of non-violence (requires effective peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms); ii) inclusion and tolerance of difference (all treated as part of the community regardless of their differences); iii) legitimate and effective institutions (that are accessible; serve clear public interests and fairly uphold the rule of law); iv) positive social relations (regular interactions built on mutual trust and acknowledgement of common challenges); v) civic engagement and participation (promotes a sense of civic unity and inclusion of all groups); and vi) fair life chances (fair treatment by institutions and equal access to resources and opportunities) (Ibid: 29).

It is this conceptual understanding of social cohesion, as multidimensional and a ‘problématique’, that has guided our research and the analysis presented in this report.
Social cohesion has become a common and important construct in post-apartheid South Africa (Palmary, 2012). Judging from its prominent feature in development debates, government planning documents, academic panels, media debates and parliamentary hearings (Struwig et al, 2011), social cohesion appears to be one of the key priorities of contemporary South African society, the ruling party (ANC) and country’s government. Struwig et al (2011: 2) correctly note that “It is evident from government documents, announcements, speeches and deliberative actions that a robust political will exists to ensure social cohesion in South Africa, both in terms of the legitimacy of the state and in promoting active citizenship in the country.” Given the country’s past dominated by racial segregation and inequality, this is hardly surprising.

In these documents and debates, social cohesion generally refers to unity in diversity, solidarity and aspirations to “a safer, caring, more equal and harmonious national society (Ibid). Analysts observe that building a truly cohesive society might be a difficult task in a country “of racial, cultural, linguistic, economic, and many other forms of diversity and divisions” (Monson et al, 2012: 5). Indeed, Struwig et al (2011: 2) note that:

 [...] the National Planning Commission’s diagnostic document on nation-building (NPC, 2011) refers to a series of fault lines that serve as an impediment to social cohesion and that need to be addressed urgently. These are: the divisive effects of institutionalised racism; class divisions; social fragmentation; language; spatial exclusion; sexism; unemployment; crime, corruption, unequal experiences of the law; and moral decline.

Probably as an effort to address these fault lines, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) adopted, in 2012, a ‘National Strategy for Developing an Inclusive and Cohesive South African Society” (DAC, 2012). An analytical review of this strategy reveals an overall emphasis on national building, building a cohesive citizenly, and addressing socio-economic imbalances particularly related to race and class. Freemantle (2015: 4) for example notes:

The main strategic focus of South Africa’s current social cohesion initiatives remains on issues of race and class. As such, the strategy has two primary objectives: firstly, to reduce poverty and economic inequality between black and white citizens, and secondly to foster national unity and a shared sense of identity and belonging amongst all citizens regardless of background.
Similarly, Palmary (2015: 63) observes that “social cohesion in South Africa is uniquely understood as a project of nation building” and that “In the strategy […], social cohesion is conceptualized as centrally about the making of citizens and the invention of a citizen identity” (Ibid: 66).

For these analysts, by limiting its focus on race and class, fostering nation building and strengthening the institution of citizenship over other forms of membership, the strategy suffers from significant blind spots (Freemantle, 2015). It particularly fails to recognize and design approaches to address other forms of social tension such as those based on ethnicity, nationality, migration and human mobility, political affiliation, gender and sexuality; and seems to exclude non-nationals from the social cohesion project at the time of increasingly pervasive xenophobic exclusion (Ibid; Palmary, 2015).

Our research looks beyond the national strategy and general theoretical approaches to focus on communities where these other (neglected but important) forms of social tension manifest and are mediated. It is indeed in communities where the really engagement with difference and diversity actually occurs and where the outcome of these encounters (e.g. conviviality, tension, violent exclusion, etc.) can be observed and understood.

5.2 Xenophobia and Related Violence in Post-apartheid South Africa

Since the 1990s, studies consistently document strong negative sentiments and hostility towards foreigners amongst the general public and government officials (see Dodson 2010; Crush, 2008; HSRC, 2008; Joubert, 2008; Nyamnjoh 2006). Danso and McDonald (in Nyamnjoh, 2006: 38) note that “anti-immigrant sentiment is not only strong; it is extremely widespread and cuts across virtually every socio-economic and demographic group”. Although there are examples of hospitality, tolerance, and South Africans defending the rights of non-nationals, there is strong evidence that South Africans are generally uncomfortable with the presence of black and Asian non-nationals in the country. This is reflected in various statistics, produced at both national and local levels (see for example SAMP, 1998; Landau, 2004; IDASA, 2011 and GCRO, 2014). Such attitudes are aptly summarised in Crush’s (2008: 1) finding that within the region: ‘South Africans are the least open to outsiders and want the greatest restrictions on immigration.’ Amongst South African citizens, he notes that a third would be willing to take action against foreign nationals, typically to protect ‘local’ jobs or fight crime.

It is not only non-citizens who face discrimination: people moving within South Africa are often equally labelled ‘outsiders’ and excluded based on ethnicity, language, and geographic origins. We must remember that the Apartheid system worked to turn black South Africans into ‘foreign natives’ within the country. They did this by creating a system of homelands (i.e., Bantustans) to which the black
population ostensibly belonged. As a 1921 Transvaal Province Commission argued, “the Native should only be allowed to enter urban areas, which are essentially the white man’s creation, when he is willing to enter and to minister to the needs of the white man, and should depart therefore when he ceases to minister” (Posel, 197:40). Although widely derided, such a system has nonetheless imbued South Africans citizens and officials with deep suspicions of those who move – particularly those moving to urban areas—whether they move across a provincial or national border. For municipalities, ward councillors, local leaders and some citizens, uncontrolled urbanization remains nothing but a financial, political, and security threat. It is, therefore, not surprising that we continue to see tensions and discrimination not just against non-citizens but also against certain minority ethnic groups (Landau, et al, 2013).

In South African and perhaps in other contexts, xenophobia manifests in various forms, ranging from everyday street-level abuse to discrimination and harassment by government officials and recurring bouts of popular xenophobic violence in varying intensity and scale. There is strong evidence that non-nationals and other outsiders living and working in South Africa face discrimination at the hands of citizens, government officials, the police, and private organizations contracted to manage and provide services, promote urban development or manage detention and deportation processes. More specifically, ‘outsiders’ face disproportionate difficulties in accessing employment, accommodation, banking services, and health care, along with extortion, targeted corruption, arbitrary arrest, detention and deportation (Landau, 2004; Crush, 2008). While arrest, detention and deportation are fundamental components of the country’s immigration regime, research over the last two decades suggests such practices are carried out in ways that are not only highly prejudicial, but often extend well beyond legal limits (Amit, 2010).

Xenophobic violence in particular has become a longstanding feature in post-Apartheid South Africa. Xenophobic violence generally refers to any acts of collective violence (by local communities, groups or crowds) targeted at foreign nationals or ‘outsiders’ because of their being foreign or strangers. It is an explicit targeting of foreign nationals or outsiders for violent attacks despite other material, political, cultural or social forces that might be at play (Dodson, 2010). Its main characteristics include murder, assaults causing grievous bodily harm, looting, robbery, arson attacks (burning of people and property), displacement, intimidation and threats, harassment, eviction notices, etc. This type of violence has become a longstanding feature in post-Apartheid South Africa (Landau, 2011). Indeed, since 1994, tens of thousands of people have been harassed, attacked, or killed because of their status as outsiders or foreign nationals. Despite government claims to the contrary (Black Sash, 2009), violence
against foreign nationals in South Africa did not end in June 2008 when the massive outbreak that started a month earlier subsided (Misago, 2011). Hostility towards foreign nationals is still pervasive and continues to result in rising cases of murder, injuries, and threats of mob violence, looting and the destruction of residential property and businesses, as well as mass displacement (UNHCR, 2015; Misago, 2016).

While violence once seemed concentrated in the townships and informal settlements around the country’s big cities, it is now increasingly spreading across the country’s nine provinces and into rural areas. The most affected provinces remain the Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Eastern Cape where some locations and sub places have become scenes of repeated occurrences of violent attacks.¹ In all provinces, this violence occurs mostly (but not exclusively) in poor and economically marginalised informal settlements where citizens (many of whom are themselves internal migrants) and immigrants meet amidst poor living conditions and a general scarcity of public services, employment and business opportunities (Misago et al, 2015).

¹ ACMS/OCHA - Xenophobic violence incidents database 1994_Aug2012 (Unpublished)
5. FINDINGS
5.1 Social Cohesion challenges and opportunities in diverse communities

Most of our research sites are hosts to highly heterogeneous populations with great ethnic, national, religious, linguistic and cultural diversity. This diversity is primarily due to residents’ different origins: different provinces and localities within South Africa, neighbouring countries, the rest of the African continent and beyond. While diversity is not inherently conflictual, this research shows that it has the propensity to bring about social cohesion challenges particularly in contexts of socio-economic hardships and weak governance. Drawing from the detailed sixteen case study reports, this section summarizes the main obstacles to inclusivity, symptoms and potential causes of frail social cohesion in the studies communities. It also discusses a number of social cohesion opportunities i.e. factors that could potentially be used a building blocks for sustainable cohesion or at least peaceful cohabitation.

5.1.1 Socio-economic deprivation

This study indicates that socio-economic deprivation (real or perceived), is an obstacle to social cohesion, particularly when it is blamed (through social and political scapegoating) on the presence of outsiders. To varying degrees, residents of the 16 communities covered in this research face serious socio-economic hardships and ills including high rates of unemployment, poor service delivery, poverty, overcrowding, high crime rates, gangsterism, drug and alcohol abuse, and general lack of livelihood opportunities particularly for the youth. Perhaps not surprisingly, socio-economic hardships lead to fierce competition for scarce public services, livelihood resources opportunities which often leads to tensions and conflicts among individuals and groups.

The Masiphumelele case for example illustrates how socio-economic hardships threaten communities’ stability. Added to overcrowding, unemployment, and drug abuse continue to be a source of poverty and crime in the area, features that critically threaten harmony and social cohesion in the community. Indeed, drug-related problems and unemployment, which drives robbery and crime, have led to the rapid escalation of community tensions, indicating the social fragility of a community under stress.

Together, these socio-economic hardships and ills mean that many residents in these communities are generally angry, frustrated and dissatisfied with their living conditions. When these frustrations are linked to the presence of outsiders (generally understood to be foreign nationals) they represent an acute threat to security and social cohesion. Indeed, this research reveals that under such conditions of severe hardships and fierce competition for resources and opportunities, citizens
(hereinafter ‘locals’) often evoke their sense of entitlement to their spaces and resources held within, as well as a internalized feeling that the competition brought about by the presence of outsiders is ‘illegitimate’ and therefore should be eliminated or at least minimized by any means necessary.

Socio-economic deprivation (real or perceived) is an obstacle to social cohesion when blamed (as often is) on the presence of outsiders. It has the potential to frail the community social fabric by engendering negative attitudes and discriminatory practices towards outsiders as discussed below).

5.1.2 **Low levels of social integration**

There are low levels of social integration of foreign nationals in all communities included in this study. This is particularly evidenced by their limited interactions not only with locals but also with local institutions of authority, leadership and service delivery. Indeed, while regular interactions do occur and are indeed inevitable, both foreign nationals and locals feel that these interactions are generally not socially satisfying because they are mostly utilitarian, transactional and riddled with mutual suspicion, misconceptions and distrust, overt ‘othering’ and antagonism. In many of these communities, foreign nationals reported being excluded from meaningful engagement and public participation or equal access to basic public services and protection.

In Dieplsoot for example, both locals and outsiders feel that their interactions and relationships are limited due to a number of reasons including negative perceptions and suspicion between the two groups, lack of sense of belonging for outsiders and fear of risky or unnecessary identity exposure through social participation and engagement. Similarly foreigners, particularly those without a legal status, have limited interactions with institutions of authority and service, and this has negative implications with regard to accessing essential services such as protection by law enforcement, health care, banking and education.

In Orange Farm, locals treat foreign nationals differently based on physical appearance, mastery of local languages, shared cultures, and religion. Those more similar to locals (e.g. those originating the Southern Africa) enjoy relatively better social and institutional interactions compared with the Amakula (or foreign nationals of Somali, Ethiopian and Pakistani origin) who have remarkably limited social interactions with local residents and institutions.

In Motherwell, social relations between locals and foreign nationals are generally perceived to be good but remain weak and mostly occur only on a business level. Social cohesiveness between the two groups is weak partly because of a lack of opportunities for positive encounters between groups in public spaces like mingling in public transportation or around recreational activities. Recent
interventions to promote social cohesion in the area seem to have had little impact as foreign nationals remain suspicious of locals.

In Khayelitsha, the mere fact that the population of foreigners is small facilitates the process of ‘othering’ of those who look different, or cannot speak the dominant language fluently. Foreign nationals are treated differently than locals. Locals feel a stronger sense of community with their resident compatriots than they do with resident foreigners. For instance, they are more likely to collectively intervene in fighting off criminals when the victim is local. Secondly, foreign nationals do not get the same opportunities for interaction and participation in the community. They are purposely excluded from community structures such as street committees and effectively excluded from participating in community meetings where isiXhosa (a language few foreigners speak fluently) is used. As a group, foreign nationals are excluded in many ways from community life in Khayelitsha. They are referred to in derogatory terms, their ability to interact and participate in community activities is limited, and they are disproportionately more likely to experience violent and non-violent crime than their South African counterparts.

In Grahamstown, outsiders, particularly foreign nationals are generally treated with suspicion because they are seen to distance themselves from the existing community, and are perceived to treat Grahamstown primary as a place to generate an income and then leave. The ‘othering’ language often used is a constant reminder that they do not belong. The general lack of their involvement in their communities has contributed to making foreign nationals de facto outsiders within Grahamstown.

In Masiphumelele, there is evidence of generally good interactions, relationships and social networks between locals and foreign nationals with violence against foreign nationals being limited since 2008. Shebeens and braai areas are hotspots where foreigners and South Africans happily mix. Foreign nationals and locals seem to get along and are living in relative peace in the area. Masiphumelele was (in 2008) awarded and praised by the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation Commission (IJR) as a model community for promoting social cohesion and protecting harmonious living between nationals and foreigners. That said however, foreign nationals are denied fair life chances and equal access to livelihood opportunities by an unlawful arrangement that limits the number of foreign owned shops in the area. This arrangement is a symptom of weak social cohesion and is likely to pose problems in future should other desperate foreign national decide to go against that illegal rule.

The lack –or low levels– of social and institutional integration is evidently a symptom of frail social cohesion. In particular, residents of areas such as these -where interactions are mainly transactional and not informed by a sense of common belonging and future- create ‘cities of strangers’ and ‘communities
of convenience’ (Landau, 2014) that enable different forms of exclusion and “modes of accommodation that enable people to extract usufruct rights: to live in but not become fully part of the cities [or spaces] they occupy” (Ibid: 359).

5.1.3 Negative attitudes and perceptions towards outsiders

In almost all communities, residents and the local institutions of authority generally hold strong negative perceptions and attitudes towards outsiders and particularly foreign nationals who they perceive to be the cause of most problems in their respective locations or communities. They blame foreign nationals for most of the socio-economic ills in their communities and perceive their (foreigners’) presence as a threat to their lives and livelihoods.

In Musina for example, locals speak broadly of foreigners stealing jobs by providing cheap labour; undermining local businesses by their ‘illegitimate’ competition; using corruption to access social services. Others are reportedly criminals or a bad influence on the local youths. Many are ostensibly irresponsible for impregnating and later abandoning local women and their children. Perhaps most fundamentally, foreigners are accused of taking over the place and robbing locals of their pride.

In Isipingo, locals similarly complain that foreigners i) contribute to already high unemployment rate because they steal jobs by offering cheap labour; ii) sell drugs which kill the young (given parents’ complaints over high school dropout rates and drug use, this is a serious concern); iii) steal women by using their money; iv) invade/flood the space and loot public benefits intended for South Africans (e.g. getting RDP housed through corruption) without paying taxes.

In a yet a similar vein, Mamelodi local residents believe that foreign nationals steal jobs and business opportunities by offering cheap labour and low prices for basic commodities; steal local women through transactional relationships and marriages of convenience; contribute to crime; are a heavy overburden to local public services; do not pay tax and are responsible for resource outflows which undermines the local economy and negatively affects the country/local resource base.

In Alexandra, while some locals hold positive or at least neutral views about foreigners and occasionally express sympathy for their plight, the majority of locals maintain strong negative perceptions and attitudes towards foreign nationals living in their midst. Locals are prone to blaming foreigners for the scarcity of resources and opportunities, crime, for carrying deadly diseases, for not paying tax, and failing to contribute to the local economy because they send money made in Alex to their home countries. In Orange Farm, in addition to familiar accusations, 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.

In DeDoorns, residents and their leaders blame foreign nationals, particularly Zimbabweans and Sothos (from Lesotho) for most of the crime (including rape and theft) in the area. One community leader for example states: “Like now at the moment we have a big problem with the Sothos. They don't have IDs and they can't find work. Now I hear it's rape and theft, because they have to survive, so they have to steal. That's our biggest issue, the people who can't find work.”

In Dunoon, locals perceive foreign nationals, Nigerians in particularly, as criminals and drug dealers. Many locals, including the ward councillor, think that the Nigerian foreign nationals use their hair salons as a front for their lucrative drug businesses, and that the Nigerians have access to guns more than anyone else. Nigerians are well aware of these stereotypes as one of them states: “Our relationship with police was that once police see that you are a foreigner, you are selling drugs. To police, we are all selling drugs. And especially if you are Nigerian like me, you are selling drug [...]”.

Foreign nationals believe that such perceptions are informed by local's lack of knowledge and their nativist understanding of rights and entitlement. In addition, the discussion above suggests that these perceptions may also be informed by scapegoating by local political leaders and authority (including the police) as an attempt to cover or justify their service delivery failures. Scapegoating is a well-documented source of negative attitudes and perceptions towards outsiders. Crush et al (2009:16) not for example that in South Africa, “the failures of the government to deal with endemic poverty, joblessness, lack of shelter and basic services had led to the scapegoating of foreign migrants by frustrated citizens.” Other scholars similarly argue that South Africa’s xenophobia and negative attitudes towards foreign nationals are primarily a result of past and current social and political scapegoating (see for example Tshitereke, 1999 and Rupert, 2006) and “the result of political ideologies and consciousness” (Neocosmos, 2008: 587).

Whether informed by myth or reality, these perceptions strain social relations among locals and foreign populations. They are not only a symptom of social cohesion fault lines in respective communities but are also an obstacle to sustainable building social cohesion as they to undermine any prospects for positive and mutually beneficial social interactions among all residents, and are often mobilised for anti-outsider violence (as discussed later in this report).

---

2 Interview with councillor, De Doorns, 24 November 2016
3 Interview with Ward Councillor, Dunoon, 2 June 2016
4 Interview with Nigerian national, Dunoon, 2 June 2016
5.1.4 *Lack of trust leadership and conflict resolution mechanisms*

The research identifies lack of trusted community leadership and authority, as well as lack of trusted, fair and peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms as another composite variable or factor that undermines social cohesion in communities affected. This is indeed a major challenge to social cohesion as it undermines the rule of law and often leads to mob justice and outsider violent exclusion.

The research documents a general lack of community trust in local authorities (particularly the police and municipalities in some cases) and community leadership structures including ward councils, street committees, and Community Policing Forums (CPF), civic organisations and political parties. Generally speaking, this community distrust is informed by the leaders’ (perceived) lack of capacity or willingness to address service delivery challenges and their inability to control crime and resolve chronic conflicts in communities. The following example illustrates this point.

In KwaMashu, residents expressed a generalized sense of dissatisfaction with the local structures of leadership and authority. They also voiced a deep sense of fear and safety concerns due to on-going political tensions, violence and crime. These safety concerns compound existing unhappiness about unemployment and poor service delivery in the hostel and shack areas and make community dissatisfaction with leadership structures even more bitterly felt. This community dissatisfaction results in – and is in turn reinforced by - residents’ pervasive belief that the local authority and community leadership structures have no capacity to effectively resolve individual and or group conflicts in KwaMashu. In particularly, local residents are of the opinion that all local institutions of authority and leadership (including the police) have thus far not been able to get crime under control and intervene and resolve political and group conflicts in the hostel. This helps explain why communities often prefer using mob justice as an alternative conflict resolution mechanism.

Similarly, widespread community distrust in structures of authority in Mamelodi is evident in varying degrees in both locals and outsiders view of these structures. This distrust leads to the election of informal structures of authority such as the local residents’ associations. Such informal structures of authority are also associated with vigilantism. Such leanings may not promote law and order but does help further leaders’ political and economic interests. Community members feel neglected by the government and have little confidence in opposition parties. Not only does this undermine faith in the police and other institutions, but it creates incentives for performative attacks on outsiders. Indeed, residents believe the government only pays attention when they loot, burn property, and in some cases kill immigrants.
In Diepsloot, the police, CPF and street committees are particularly distrusted because they are perceived as incompetent and/or corrupt. In the eyes of the public, distrusted local authority and community leadership cannot possibly offer trusted and fair conflict resolution mechanisms. It is for this reason that residents often use mob justice and violent public protests to resolve personal and communal conflicts and disagreements. Mob justice or vigilantism is clear evidence of the lack of rule of law which puts everyone at risk. Perhaps even more worrying is the fact that some community leaders, who are supposed to be active custodians of the rule of law, are also involved. For example, according to respondents, some members of CPF were in prison due to their mob justice actions. In the words of one respondent: “CPF are respected because in the past it was difficult; it was a must that you respect them because they used to beat people up. Most of those people are now in prison because they took matters into their own hands, they once beat some guy who died at the hospital”. The research also documents community leadership’s involvement in mob justice in other communities including Mamelodi, Elim, Brits, DuNoon, Isipingo, and KwaMashu.

In Orange Farm, the lack of trust in the local authority stems from generalized public belief that local councillors lack the will to address service delivery challenges as they use these challenges as campaign strategies to stay in power. Residents also believe local politicians are also implicated in the use of violence to destabilize protests and divert attention from genuine local residents’ grievances. In this area, violence has become the most preferred conflict resolution mechanism.

In DuNoon, the almost absolute power of the Councillor, has led to a breakdown of trust between community leadership and residents. The dominance of the Councillor means that almost everything with regards to the community has to go through him in a system of top-down leadership. Without the councillor’s approval, other leadership structures have failed and been unable to function in the community. Meanwhile, the lack of resources and inadequate service provided by SAPS Milnerton, as well as the confusion about the jurisdictional divisions within DuNoon, has led to generalised dissatisfaction with police efficiency. As a result, the DuNoon Taxi Association has risen in influence as an effective and trusted conflict resolution mechanism. This research shows that this dependence on extra-legal and informal leadership structures incites mob violence and condones vigilantism.

In Motherwell, while community leadership structures seem to function well, the lack of formal structures such as municipal oversight around commercial/business premises including the opening of

---

5 Interview with a South African respondent; Diepsloot, 21 April 2016
spaza shops, as well as the lack of safety of foreign shopkeepers, has led to the creation of extra-legal activities (e.g. limiting the number in foreign owned shops in the area) that attempts to resolve or at least mitigate the effects of group conflicts and tensions. These measures do not only exclude foreign nationals from business opportunities but also result in tensions amongst community members themselves.

In sum, the discussion above indicates community leadership and conflict resolutions mechanisms are important factors for social cohesion in communities. Where they are lacking or not trusted, we observe chronic conflicts and tensions, mob justice and the normalization of violence (individual or collective) as an effective mechanism to resolve conflicts and restore order. This is a major challenge to social cohesion as it undermines the rule of law and often leads to outsider violent exclusion. Indeed, links between mob justice (as a perceived effective means of resolving conflict, particularly dealing with crime) and anti-outsider violence are not difficulty to make given how frequently outsiders are associated with criminality and considered a serious threat to locals’ lives and livelihoods.

5.1.5 Group conflicts and violence

Excepted Isipingo, all other 15 communities covered in this research have a relatively extended history of group-bases conflicts and violence. Common types of conflicts include violent service delivery protests, ethnic tensions, political tensions and violence, taxi violence, mob justice, gangsterism and xenophobic violence. The following briefly describes some of these conflicts except xenophobic violence discussed in Section 5.2.

Violent service delivery protests are a regular occurrence in these communities. Respondents indicated that residents and their leaders’ often mobilize and use violent public protests as a political tool or an effective mechanism to attract (local or national) government’s attention and responses to their otherwise neglected socio-economic grievances and other community concerns and dissatisfactions such as poor service delivery, crime, dissatisfaction over leadership performance and sometimes the unwanted presence of foreign nationals. Organising these protests is apparently easy given the high number of unemployed people in these settlements. One Diepsloot resident responds when asked how violent protests are organised:

There are many people in this community who are not working. They spend time in the communities doing nothing. This is when they will start mobilising ideas as they just sit and talk
about everything. Some things start as small issues but grow big as some people join in until it becomes a major issue with the support of a number of the residents.6

Political violence has similarly become endemic in some areas such as KwaMashu and Isipingo and regularly results in the killing of local political leaders and/or political candidates. KwaMashu for example is renowned for a multi-decade history of political rivalry, violence and politically motivated killings mainly involving members of ANC, IFP and the NFP political parties. These struggles over power and monopoly of local leadership and authority continue to characterise KwaMashu and its political landscape and often intensify during periods leading to local government elections. With no effective preventive measures in place, residents expressed their fears that political conflicts and violence, which affect entire communities and not just the political antagonists, are likely to continue and even intensify in the area.

Taxi violence is another type of group-based conflict and violence that is common in many communities inclosing Alexandra, Mamelodi, Diepsloot, Orange Farm, Makause and Khayelitsha. Taxi disputes and deadly violence are usually over lucrative routes and commuters. In Alexandra, the Alex Taxi Association (ASA), other taxi associations and local taxi owners operating in Alexandra or surrounding areas are regularly involved in violence and disputes that often result in the murder of taxi owners and drivers. One respondent states: “The taxi one is bad because there is AMSTA and ATAH and they kill each other because of routes and positions”.7 In Makause, taxi violence is also often experienced when taxi owners fight over routes. The community leaders who also transport children to school for a living attest to the fact that transportation is good business but still attracts a lot of violence from competitors. One of the leaders pointed out that “taxi business is thriving but you will spend the money while running”.8 There is also a documented history of taxi violence in Mamelodi as taxi operators fight amongst themselves over customers and routes. It regularly pits local taxi associations such as the Mamelodi Taxi Association against bigger bus companies such as PUTCO, City-to-City, Tshwane Metro Buses, and Uber over routes and commuters. Taxi violence is an equally regular occurrence in Diepsloot. Respondents indicate that taxi owners and or/drivers often fight over routes and commuters. One respondent states: “Sometimes owners disagree on roads ownership and stop other taxis to operate on that route and if they operate, that’s where they start to fight. The community members, as passengers, come for transport and get killed in the process.”

6 Interview with a female South African respondent; Diepsloot Ward 95, 20 April 2016
7 Interview with a Zimbabwean national; Alex, 4 may 2016
8 Informal discussion with community leader, 05 May 2016
Mob justice is another well-documented type of group-based violence in most of our communities. As indicated earlier, while residents use varied institutions (including families, community leaders, the police and local courts) to resolve individual and group conflicts, they often rely on this type of collective violence to deal with common challenges. This is particularly so regarding crime. Respondents indicate that mob justice is necessary given the police’s and the justice system’s failures in controlling crime. The following Khayelitsha case illustrates what happens in most communities. Indeed, respondents indicate that Khayelitsha residents often beat or burn to death ‘skollies’ (criminals). When a suspected skollie steals, rapes or robs a person, the community members apprehend the suspect, beat him to death or leave him in a serious injured state. The community in some instances also damage or burn the family’s home down to chase the suspect and his family out of the neighbourhood. For example, in January 2002, an incident occurred in Khayelitsha (Site C) where residents killed three suspected criminals by means of the ‘necklacing’ method.

Gangsterism is also common in a number of communities but perhaps more pronounced in Orange Farm, Diepsloot and Khayelitsha. In Orange Farm, respondents indicate that boys returning from initiation schools and form gangs that terrorise other groups and communities. On return from initiation in 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 gangs at Thamsanqa High School, the ‘Wrong Turns’ and the ‘Colombians’ who fight each time another group comes back from the initiation school. A member of the local youth group confirms that boys from initiation schools are often involved in gangsterism: “[...] 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.” 9 Khayelitsha has similarly experienced sporadic waves of gang violence. Gangs using dangerous weapons (knives, pangas and guns) fight over drug turfs but also over other issues such as territorial marking and girls. According to respondents, the main gangs were Vura, Veto, and Italians. Like in Orange Farm, schools are often battlegrounds for gang violence10. Indeed, respondents indicate that gang membership was demarcated by two high schools - Kwamfundo Secondary in Harare, and Esangweni Secondary in Kuyasa- and fighting would happen in areas in-between the schools. In Diepsloot, respondents indicate that gangs of Zimbabweans work

9 Interview with a member of the local youth group, Orange Farm, 4 May 2017
10 Interview with former skollies or gangs, 25 May 2016
together with South African gangs to commit crime, particularly targeting foreign nationals. One foreign respondent for example states: “We feel very unsafe. Even when there is no xenophobia, armed gangs are attacking us every day. Police are not protecting us”.

The types of group conflicts and violence discussed above, together with xenophobic violence discussed below, are not only symptoms of social and political fragmentation but also obstacles to any prospects of future peaceful cohabitation as they create long-lasting tensions, a climate of mutual suspicion among population groups, and institutional structures dependent on violence for their survival.

5.2 Xenophobic Violence

5.2.1 Nature of the Violence

Collective or communal violence against ‘outsiders’ is probably the most visible and brutal symptom of lack of social cohesion in any affected community or area. As indicated earlier, this type of violence has become a recurrent feature in post-Apartheid South Africa, and has been experienced in almost all communities covered by this research. Indeed, Except Musina, all other 15 communities have experienced xenophobic violence (and some on numerous occasions) in the recent past (see Table I below).

Table I: Xenophobic violence incidents by area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Year (s) of main xenophobic violence incident (s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>2008; 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brits/Marikana</td>
<td>2014; 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Doorns</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DuNoon</td>
<td>2001; 2008; 2009; 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elim</td>
<td>2009; 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grahamstown</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isipingo</td>
<td>2008; 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khayelitsha</td>
<td>2008; 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KwaMashu</td>
<td>2015; 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makause</td>
<td>2008; 2015; 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamelodi</td>
<td>2008; 2014; 2015; 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masiphumelele</td>
<td>2006; 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 Interview with A Somali national; Diepsloot, 21 April 2016
While in earlier incidents, particularly in 2008 and before, the violence targeted almost all foreign nationals regardless of nationality, length of stay or livelihood activities, more recent incidents indicate a shift trend as foreign owned businesses have become the main target. Regardless of the target group however, violence often results in deaths, injuries, looting and destruction of property as well as mass displacement of foreign nationals.

5.2.2 Drivers of the violence

The drivers of xenophobic violence are complex and multiple. Evidence from this research suggests they can be grouped into three main categories: underlying conditions, proximate and cause and triggers. Among the main underlying causes are i) locals’ perceptions of socio-economic and political deprivation linked with outsiders’ presence; ii) fierce competition over limited resources and opportunities and related locals’ sense of entitlement to the space and resources held within; and iii) negative attitudes and strong resentments towards foreign nationals due to the social ills they are often associated with (see earlier discussion for details on these underlying conditions).

In addition to these common and long-lasting underlying conditions, the violence is also driven by some more specific proximate causes. These include violence entrepreneurship: when local political and economic players mobilise community for violence to further their own interests. In Mamelodi for example, local politics drives violence against outsiders when local political players and other influential groups such as local business owners promote and instigate such violence to claim or consolidate their power; to attract relevant (municipal, provincial or national government) authorities’ attention to otherwise neglected local socio-economic grievances; or get rid of the business competition the presence of foreign nationals represents. Another proximate cause is favorable governance illustrated by the lack of trusted local authority and leadership as well as lack of trusted conflict resolution mechanisms. As this research shows, this often leads to mob justice and the normalisation of violence as a mechanism to resolve conflicts and restore order. Links between mob justice (as a perceived effective means of resolving conflict, particularly dealing with crime) and anti-outsider violence are not difficulty to make given how frequently outsiders are associated with criminality and considered a serious threat to locals’ lives and livelihoods. Another proximate cause this study identifies is “precipitants”; real
events or rumours that instigators use to mobilize community members to take part in the violence. In KwaMashu, a rumour that foreign nationals had abducted a local girl was used as a justification to attack foreign nationals in early this year (2017).

**Triggers** are the third category of xenophobic violence drivers. This include i) *mobilization* that refers to “the process through which violence entrepreneurs and followers seal temporary loyalties around a violent enterprise” (Guichaoua, 2013:70) -the hiring of unemployed youths by local business owners to attack foreign-owned shops in some areas such as Masiphumelele, Isipingo and Mothewell is one example of such mobilization--; ii) *violent service delivery protests* that are often followed by the looting of foreign-owned shops; and iii) *criminal opportunism* in terms of looting that provides direct material incentives for local gangs.

This study reveals that the violence causal factors outlined above are as important as their ‘interconnectedness’ due to their complex and multiple causal relationships and the value-added process or complementarity as violence co-determinants or important elements in the violence causal chain. Indeed, most of these factors are co-dependent (i.e. play a significant role in the making of one another) and often require their co-presence in order to produce an incident of xenophobic violence (see also Misago, 2016).

### 5.2.3 Responses and interventions

In addition to the lack of government political will, this research indicates that interventions have failed to address xenophobic violence in the country because i) they are not evidence-based and are not informed by a clear understanding of the drivers of the violence; and ii) they are based on untested theories of change. Indeed, by focussing almost exclusively on public attitudes, interventions neglect other factors and motivations (see discussion on drivers if the violence) that combine to trigger collective violent behaviour (see also Misago, 2016).

Indeed, interventions and responses to xenophobic violence in affected areas are often reactive and perceived as ineffective by the target groups. Indeed, there is usually no response to threats of violence despite visible early warning signs. The police usually respond to the outbreak of the violence, disperse perpetrators and facilitate evacuation of the victims to places of safety instead of protecting them and their property in situ. In those places of safety, the displaced receive humanitarian assistance while various stakeholders initiate talks with residents and leaders of affected communities to diffuse tensions and negotiate reintegration. Reintegration or return of the displaced is often hasty and imposed on the displaced when conditions are not conducive for return i.e. even before tensions have
been effective diffused and the causes of the outbreak addressed. The impact of social cohesion dialogues and conversations regularly organised by community leaders and the civil society since the 2008 violence remains to be seen as negative perceptions prevail and violence against outsiders continues.

In many communities, the victim expressed disappointment in the justice system. In general, perpetrators and instigators of the violence against outsiders are rarely arrested and held accountable and this sense of impunity means that they can and indeed do strike again whenever it suits their purpose. Indeed, as Table I above shows, some areas have become repeated scenes of the violence, and respondents indicate that the same instigators are usually involved. As an example, the government’s promise of setting up dedicated courts to speed up the prosecution of perpetrators of violence in Isipingo and KwaMashu in 2015 did materialize. Indeed in April 2015, the National Prosecuting Authority stated that it was working with the police and the judiciary to bring perpetrators of the xenophobic attacks in the country to book by dedicating special courts and magistrates to some of the affected areas. However, a journalist who followed the story indicated the government made empty promises in this regard. She wrote:

The South African government vowed swift action against xenophobic attackers: Jeff Radebe, Minister in the Presidency, announced that the Department of Justice and National Prosecuting Authority would set up special courts to fast-track prosecutions. But it seems this is not what has happened. Of the 87 cases brought before the criminal justice system, 83 cases have been postponed for further investigation. I followed up with foreign nationals who had been injured or their businesses looted. All said they have yet to receive any follow-up with regards to their cases. I also visited the Umlazi Magistrates court – one of the courts where these cases are supposed to be prioritized - as well as the Durban Magistrates Court. No one had any idea what I was talking about, and there were no special courts allocated.

In sum, this research clearly indicates that xenophobic violence is not only an indicator of social fault lines but also an additional threat or obstacle to social cohesion as it causes irreparable, or at least long lasting, social damage in terms of undermining any chances of future peaceful cohabitation and interactions between locals and outsiders. Due to repeated violent attacks, locals’ and foreigners in affected communities do not envisage peaceful cohabitation or cooperative socio-economic interactions; at least not in the foreseeable future. Foreigners live in fear that violence can erupt again

13 https://www.ecr.co.za/other/empty-promises-or-simply-slow-justice/
anytime and suspect that their neighbours will turn against them again as they have in the recent past. This Grahamstown foreign respondent expresses feelings shared by many across our research sites:

[...] there is that fear of the unknown. I am not saying 24/7 there is a fight or this thing going on, but people call me saying you are a foreigner, but there is a fear of what will happen next time. It can be tomorrow. Tonight somebody coming for you, there is that fear... Even if a foreigner stays here for the next 25 years, you will still have that fear and stigma of being a foreigner.

Attacks on foreign nationals in these communities are indeed likely to be repeated because there are no concrete preventive measures or interventions in place.

5.3 Opportunities for sustainable social cohesion

Despite the numerous challenges discussed above, the studies identifies a number of social cohesion opportunities in some communities i.e. a number of conditions and factors that could potentially be used as solid building blocks to promote and build sustainable social cohesion in diverse communities. These include collective efficacy, trusted leadership and conflict resolution mechanism and peace building initiatives.

5.3.1 Collective efficacy

With regard to collective efficacy (i.e. when community members work together to solve common problems), there is ample evidence that despite various differences (e.g. due to religious and political affiliations; language, culture and place of origin) community members are able to mobilize and fight collectively to solve common challenges such as poor service delivery and crime. This particularly evidenced by frequent collective service delivery protests, mob justice or even collective attacks on outsiders perceived to a threat to resident’s life and livelihoods. It is usually community leaders (formal or informal) who mobilize community members for such collective actions, as this Diepsloot resident states: [...] once a street committee says we have a problem, people are being mugged, then the message is spread across the community and then people come out to solve that problem. Most of the things happen because people work as a collective.”

In addition to community common struggles, this research documents examples where collective efficacy is used for more positive and socially acceptable goals. Indeed, in all communities, social events such as weddings, funerals, religious activities etc. regularly bring community members together. In other instances, community members come together for self-help when faced with service

---

14 Interview with A South African respondent; Diepsloot, 20 April 2016
delivery failures. As an example, Alexandra residents recently responded to a recent Pikitup strike by collecting and burning rubbish as the uncollected rubbish had become a health hazard. One local describes the action: “When Pikitup was on strike, we all came out and cleaned our own streets.” 15

That community members are able to mobilize and work collectively to address common challenges is an opportunity for social cohesion as long as approaches to solving problems and solutions sought are for the wellbeing of all residents (i.e., not discriminatory or intended to disadvantage those perceived not to belong). This is potentially possible if communities were to be reminded that the lack of social cohesion has negative implications for entire communities and not just excluded outsiders. Violent outsider exclusion for example undermines the rule of law which puts everyone at risks, and immigrants’ lack of investment in local economy and contribution to local resource base (i.e. resource outflows) could logically be explained by (at least partially) the prevailing hostility and lack of sense of belonging. Collective efficacy has a positive energy that can be mobilised to defend and protect everyone and build stronger and cohesive communities.

5.3.2 Trusted leadership and effective conflict resolution mechanisms

The research indicates that trusted community leadership and conflict resolution mechanisms are an important asset for sustainable social cohesion and peaceful cohabitation. In Musina for example, despite the occasional use of mob justice to punish suspected criminals when the police response is perceived slow or inadequate, residents generally regard local authorities and various community leadership structures as effective conflict resolution avenues. As evidence, they speak of instances when these mechanisms have been able to resolve conflicts before they escalated into violence. This is likely to be one of the primary reasons Musina has not experienced chronic group conflicts and anti-outsider violence seen elsewhere in the country.

Similarly, Elim’s relatively trusted traditional authority and community leadership seems be a solid building block for sustainable social cohesion as they offer an opportunity to build positive social interactions and peaceful coexistence where conflicts are resolved before they escalate into individual or group violence.

Masiphumelele is another example in this regard. Indeed, despite instances of mob justice due to perceived police ineffectiveness in dealing with crime and the lack of the DA councilor’s active involvement in community matters, other (formal and informal) leadership structures including NGO’s, street committees, and churches positively contribute to the harmonious living experience in

15 Interview with a male South African respondent; Alex, 5 May 2016
Masiphumelele. These structures, particularly the street committees, help to solve disputes (e.g. family feuds, conflicts between neighbours, etc.) amicably. They appear to be a positive source of peace building in the community, especially because they are seen as impartial.

5.3.3 Peace building initiatives

Although their role and successes still need to be verified and confirmed, community-based peace building initiatives such as those currently operating in Alexandra and Brits/Marikana appear to be agents of peace and peaceful resolution of conflicts and cohabitation. They could be a useful institution for social cohesion particularly in a context where trust in local official community leadership and authority is absent. If claims of success are indeed true, the mechanism warrants additional human capacity/capital and material resources. To be successful, these initiatives need to be inclusive and work closely with the local authority and formal community leadership structures to avoid being perceived as parallel leadership structures.

6. CONCLUSION

This synthesis report outlines the main cross-cutting or area specific obstacles to -and symptoms of frail-social cohesions in communities covered by this research. It explains how these are simultaneously threats to social cohesion and symptoms of its frailty. They are mutually reinforcing and feed off each other in complex symbiotic ways that make the task of addressing them all the more difficult. Effective interventions must consider and tackle this full suite of factors. The report also discusses potential opportunities for social cohesion i.e. conditions and factors that could potentially be used as solid building blocks to promote and indeed build sustainable social cohesion in diverse communities. In sum, the report indicates that while diversity is not inherently conflictual, it can and indeed does breed serious social cohesion challenges under certain conditions such as socio-economic hardships and shaky governance regimes.
Social Cohesion Community Profiles

Profiles have been developed for the following sites. Information about the exact geographies of the sites is contained in each of the profiles. These can be downloaded as individual PDFs from the Freedom House website. Alternatively, Freedom House Southern Africa can be approached for a print out of individual site profiles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexandra</td>
<td>Africa Centre for Migration and Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diepsloot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isipingo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KwaMashu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange Farm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makause</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamelodi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marikana/Brits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Doorns</td>
<td>Safety and Violence Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunoon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grahamstown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khayelitsha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masiphumelele</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motherwell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


SAMP (1998)


APPENDIX 1

SOCIAL COHESION COMMUNITY PROFILE RESEARCH PROTOCOL
By the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) and Safety and Violence Initiative (SaVI)
February 2016-September 2017
RESEARCH PROTOCOL

Study Investigators
Principal investigators:
Loren B. Landau (ACMS, Wits);
Guy Lamb (SaVI, UCT).
Co-investigators:
Laura Freeman (SaVI, UCT);
Alexandra Hiropoulos (ACMS, Wits);
Jean Pierre Misago (ACMS, Wits).

Introduction and Background
Commissioned and financially supported by USAID via Freedom House South Africa (FHSA), the ‘Social Cohesion Community Profile’ also known as ‘Rapid Conflict Assessments’ is a research project that will be conducted by ACMS and SAVI in 16 communities across South Africa to understand underlying causes and triggers of anti-outsider violence or group-based violent exclusion in at-risk communities. This research forms part of a broader intervention project into communities at risk of such violence. It will form the baseline and evaluative study, which will inform the nature of community interventions conducted by relevant provincial partners.

Anti-outside violence and xenophobic violence in particular has become a perennial feature of South African society. Since May 2008, attacks against outsiders have resulted in an ever growing number of murders and injuries at the hands of individuals and gangs. In every single year since 2008, violence has claimed more lives than it did during the May 2008 attacks. CoRMSA (2011)16 reports that since mid-2008, almost every month there has been at least one attack on groups of foreign nationals in the country; and that between mid-2009 and late 2010, there were at least 20 deaths, over 40 serious injuries, at least 200 foreign-run shops looted and more than 4,000 persons displaced due to violence targeting foreign nationals. In 2011, at least 120 foreign nationals were killed (five of them burnt alive), 100 were seriously injured, at least 1,000 displaced, and 120 shops/businesses permanently or temporarily closed through violence or selective enforcement of by-laws17.

In 2012, the number of violence incidents increased: UNHCR reported at least 250 incidents resulting in 140 deaths and 250 serious injuries. In 2013, UNHCR recorded an average of three major violence

---

17 Unpublished UNHCR stats on data compiled from the UNHCR xenophobia hotline
incidents per week\textsuperscript{18} with attacks regularly reported in many areas across the country during 2014. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees’ Southern Africa Regional Office (UNHCR ROSA), there were an estimated 300 incidents of violence against asylum seekers and refugees, an estimated 200 shops had been looted and 900 persons had been displaced between January and March 2014\textsuperscript{19}. In 2015, violence has continued in many parts of Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Eastern Cape provinces.

Despite numerous calls to action and public debates on combatting xenophobia, responses have thus far been frail and ineffective. There can be no stronger evidence of the failures of existing responses and preventative mechanisms than the persistence of xenophobic violence, often with repeated incidents in the same places. In many cases, government has chosen to ignore the problem or abandon initiatives before they are implemented, or has responded to xenophobic violence as they would other forms of ‘normal’ township crime – that is to stay, hardly at all. Although well intentioned, civil society efforts to foster peaceful cohabitation and tolerance through social dialogues and campaigns aimed at changing attitudes have also largely proven ineffective in reducing or preventing violence.

While many of government’s failures stem from a lack of political will, civil society responses have wanted for insight into the specific causes and triggers of violence in the locations where it occurs. Previous research (see for example ACMS at migration.org.za) shows that while there are often common enabling factors, there are also important variations across sites in which violence occurs. Local government officials, the police, and policy makers and civil society organisations seeking to prevent conflict and build social cohesion need to understand these variations not only to respond appropriately to the current conflict but also to address the root causes of area-specific social tensions in a more sustainable manner. It is therefore imperative to conduct regular and systematic investigations to reveal new and changing dynamics, contexts and triggers of violence.

Understanding the complexities and shifting trends of anti-outsider violence at the community level is central to this research. We, SaVI and ACMS, contend that further in-depth local-level work is needed to comprehend the changing nature, sites and narratives of xenophobic violence in South Africa. Simply put, we do not have enough local and comparative site-based research to fully understand the dynamics of social cohesion and anti-outsider violence. This project aims to contribute to our broader understandings, as well as assisting in informing more effective community level interventions.

**Aims and Objectives**
The overall aim of this research is to understand or identify the underlying causes and triggers of anti-outsider violence or group-based violent exclusion in at-risk communities. By providing an empirically-based and up-to-date understanding of the drivers of the violence, this research hopes to inform more effective interventions strategies not only to prevent such violent exclusion but also to build more 26

\textsuperscript{18} Communique by UNHCR’s Alphonse Munyanza at the UNHCR Protection Working Group meeting of 22 January 2013. Please note that these figures do not include incidents that occurred after March 2014. Information is not available at this stage.

\textsuperscript{19} UNHCR ROSA (2014). UN Protection Working Group Meeting Minutes. 7 March.
cohesive and inclusive communities. With this in mind, the research has the following specific objectives:
1. To provide accurate and up-to-date information on the levels of social cohesion and causes of anti-outsider/xenophobic violence in each community;
2. Contribute to the development of appropriate intervention strategies by the provincial partners;
3. Comparatively, to improve our overall understanding of the dynamics of at-risk communities, including the causes – historical and proximate – of anti-outsider/xenophobic violence;
4. To identify policy and intervention gaps by looking into factors such as who are the victims and perpetrators of xenophobic violence; where and how do xenophobic attacks take place; what are the triggers of xenophobic violence; and what kinds of intervention, prevention mechanisms and other measures are in place or needed to mitigate violence;
5. To make, using information from literature, newly collected empirical evidence, and comparative analysis, recommendations on best practice in durable conflict resolution mechanisms and building conclusive communities.

Research Design

Site selection
ACMS and SaVI will conduct this research in 16 areas or communities recently affected by anti-outsider/xenophobic violence in six provinces (Gauteng, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal, Limpopo and North West). SaVI will conduct research in six sites: four (Khayelitsha, Masiphumelele, Dunoon & Joe Slovo Park, and De Doorns) in Western Cape and two (Motherwell and Grahamstown) in Eastern Cape. ACMS will conduct research in ten sites: five (Alexandra, Diepsloot, Orange Farm, Makause & Cleveland/Denver corridor, and Mamelodi) in Gauteng; two (Isipingo and KwaMashu) in KwaZulu Natal; two (Musina and Elim) in Limpopo; and one (Brits) in North West.

Study population
The population of the study will consist of local South African residents, foreign nationals; officials and representatives of different organisations operating in selected areas. Interviews will be requested with a wide range of key informants including local government officials, NGOs, community leaders, SAPS and national and local civil society groups involved in leading response teams. Individual interviews will also be conducted with affected non-nationals and South African residents of the selected areas. Focus group discussions (involving existing groups such as youth clubs, burial societies, women clubs, stokvels, etc.) will also be organized.

Sample and sampling strategy
Key informants will be identified and selected in advance. For community-based interviews (both for South African citizens and non-nationals still living in communities), snowball and convenience sampling techniques will be used. In all instances, participation will be entirely voluntary. At each site, we will conduct 25-40 interviews (including focus group discussions) with the above mentioned groups. We will make every effort to include different groups: youth, men and women. No children under the age of 18 will be allowed to participate.
Data collection technique and instrument

Data collection will involve unstructured interviews, with broad themes and prompts (see interview guides in Annex I). The study will use in-depth, open-ended questions that will evolve as the research project proceeds. The interviews will be relatively unstructured to allow the respondents to express what is important to them in relation to causes and consequences of anti-outsider violence and to allow the research team to explore inconsistencies and surprises that emerge from the research.

Fieldworkers with relevant research experience and different language skills will be recruited to enable communication in languages in which people are comfortable. Prior to fieldwork, we will organise a training workshop during which field researchers will be trained in relevant methodological approaches and ethics and briefed on how to conduct semi-structured interviews.

Data analysis and reporting

We will apply content analysis techniques to analyse the collected qualitative data. Content analysis is a method of analysis used in qualitative research in which text notes are systematically examined by identifying and grouping themes and coding, classifying and developing categories. Where necessary, these categories may be computerised to generate quantitative summary outputs that help identify predominant views as well as commonalities and differences across sites. Data and analyses will be put together in descriptive case and cross-case briefs as well as comprehensible analytical reports to be submitted to provincial partners and FHSA according to agreed upon timeframe.

Ethical considerations

The research will strictly adhere to standard ethics requirements. Before the research is conducted, ACMS and SaVI will jointly apply for and obtain Ethics clearance from the University of Cape Town. For some respondents, interviews may present risks of re-traumatisation, social or legal risks (e.g. for perpetrators of violence, undocumented migrants, etc.). Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and anonymous (apart from institutional key informants, who will be identified according to their institutional affiliation). Respondents will be informed of how the information collected for the study will be used, and asked to judge for themselves whether they feel that participation will constitute a threat to them. If they feel threatened, they will be asked not to participate in the study. The anonymity of the interviews will especially provide protection for any non-citizens who are undocumented and wish to participate in the study. Researchers will first obtain written or verbal consent before interviewing any participant.

INTERVIEW GUIDES

I. For South African Citizens in Areas Affected by the Violence

Nature of communities

- Population composition (majority and minority groups) main language groups, religious groups, political parties, etc.
- Community organisation and leadership (existing local government and political institutions; community forums, youth organisations, etc.)
- Nature of relationship between residents and institutions (trust, legitimacy, authority, etc.)
- Main livelihood activities; current socio-economic conditions: food prices, etc.; service delivery
- Main problems faced in the area (what people consider to be the main challenges in the area: poverty, unemployment, conflict, different tensions, crime, violence, etc.)
- General atmosphere: main issues communities are and/or are not happy about
- Entries and exists: who comes and goes?
- Social efficacy: when does the community come together? Around what?

**History of violence and exclusion**
- Conflict, existing tensions, crime, violence and their history (how they started and what is their current nature and intensity?)
- Organised violence (taxi violence, service provision protests, etc.); How they are organised and mediated? Is violence a community accepted way of solving problems?
- Competing meanings of crime and justice, with a focus on informal justice.
- Non-violent exclusion (of those considered not to belong) – jobs, accommodation, opportunities.
- Existing conflict resolution mechanisms (mechanisms people use to resolve conflict in the community – how effective are they?).
- Levels of integration within the community, both prior to and after violence against foreign nationals. Who is an outsider?

**Understanding of underlying causes**
- General trust in institutions (elected officials, political parties & police).
- Political conditions: has there been a change of political leadership? Are elections heavily contested?
- Current socioeconomic conditions: food prices, services, etc.
- Knowledge of previous other cases of anti-foreigner violence – what did you think about violence in Alex?, etc.

**Profile of non-nationals**
- Numbers and demographics: which nationalities, length of time in community, etc.
- Non-national livelihood activities.
- Levels of success of non-national communities.
- Levels of pre-violence integration (use of services such as schools, health facilities, working and living together with South Africans, marriage, etc.)
- What are the perceptions about foreigners in communities? What is the source of these perceptions?
Profile of the violence

- What exactly happened during the violence?
- Understanding of triggers for -or immediate causes- of violence
- Level of coordination and organisation of attacks (who instigated, who carried out, who collaborated; who drove the violence once triggered).
- Role of community leaders and local authorities.
- Who was targeted during the violence – foreign nationals (which nationalities, women & men) – South African nationals and why? What exactly were they accused of?
- Meanings of the attacks: what was the intention?
- What happened to the victims of the attacks – where did they go – what happened to their homes & shops?
- Why in this particular area and not in others (establish any distinctive characteristics of the area, community)?

Institutional responses to violence or threats thereof

- What, if any, responses were there to threats of violence prior to actual outbreak?
- Who responded to the outbreak of violence: what events took place and by whom were they organised?
- Who were the peacemakers – what did they do; were they listened to?

Consequences of the violence and perspectives on futures interactions

- Views on social and economic impact of the xenophobic violence
- Views on future interactions with ousted immigrants (return, reintegration, etc.) and other immigrants in general
- Have you seen any effort by the government or other relevant institutions/organisations to reintegrate the displaced

II. For foreign nationals in violence affected areas

- Levels of integration prior to violence (e.g. legal status, etc.)
- History of experiences of violence and exclusion, personal or community level; gender aspect, exclusion from services
- Livelihood activities
- Experiences of recent violence: what happened and how affected?
- Interventions and assistance received
- Current concerns
- Opinions about causes
- Thoughts on future interactions with South Africans (reintegration), etc.
- Views on main issues raised by the residents of the places from where they were displaced